

Letter of Compliance

The Honourable Mr Glenn Butcher MP
Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing
Minister for Water
GPO Box 2247
BRISBANE QLD 4001

26 July 2024

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament, the Annual Report 2023–24 and financial statements for Lower Burdekin Water.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

A Compliance Checklist (Attachment 7) outlining the annual reporting requirements is provided at page 30 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely



Helen Stanton
Chairperson
Lower Burdekin Water

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Lower Burdekin Water

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–24

1. General Information

1.1. Introductory information

Lower Burdekin Water (“LBW”) is a category two (2) water authority under the Queensland Water Act 2000 and was established under the Queensland Water Regulation 2002 on 18 February 2015.

LBW’s vision is to be a progressive water service provider delivering sustainable water resources for stakeholder and environmental benefit through collaborative partnerships.

LBW’s purpose is to sustainably distribute water within and around the authority area for aquifer recharge and stakeholder supply.

1.2. Agency role and main functions

Lower Burdekin Water

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PO Box 720

Ayr QLD 4807

Phone Number: 07 4783 1988

Fax Number: 07 4783 1264

Email: admin@lowerburdekinwater.com.au

Website: www.lowerburdekinwater.com.au

Contact Officer: David Sartori, Executive Officer, Lower Burdekin Water

LBW has an authority area of approximately 76,000 hectares, is shown on plan AP22327 and is comprised of a northern and southern division.

LBW was formed from an amalgamation of the North and South Burdekin Water Boards, which were both originally constituted by Orders in Council on the 13th May, 1965 and 31st March, 1966 respectively. The original constitutions of the former North and South Burdekin Water Boards were to constitute Water Areas and Boards to construct, maintain and administer proposed works to fulfil the purpose of the Boards. The North and South Burdekin Water Board Areas were shown on plans AP7349 and AP6512 respectively. The areas of the Northern and Southern Burdekin Water Boards were constituted to utilise part of the flow of the Burdekin River to replenish the subterranean water supplies of the northern and southern parts of the Burdekin Delta and to thereby increase the quantity and improve the quality of supply available from this source for irrigation, domestic, stock and industrial purposes.

The objectives of LBW as set out in its strategic plan and are:

- a) Safe, professional, positive workforce and workplace.
- b) Maintain a healthy aquifer and waterways.
- c) Provision of reliable and efficient services
- d) Financial sustainability
- e) Engaged and informed

The functions of the Authority as set out in the LBW Governance Policy are:

- a) to primarily replenish, recharge, manage, distribute and protect groundwater and surface water in the LBW authority area to the extent permitted by law for the purpose of maintaining ground water levels and to restrict/limit salt water intrusion by the promotion of the conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater.
- b) to represent the interests of ratepayers and customers in the authority area to the extent necessary to achieve the authority’s objectives

- c) to engage in water activities outside the LBW authority area, provided those water activities do not – limit the authority’s ability to perform its primary function; or financially prejudice the authority or its ratepayers or customers.
- d) to generate revenue, including by levying rates and charges upon ratepayers and customers.
- e) to construct, acquire, own, operate and maintain infrastructure for the purposes of water distribution and aquifer replenishment and recharge.
- f) to establish and maintain services of a commercial or non-commercial nature in accordance with the purposes of the authority.
- g) to carry out research and development in areas that will add value and/or improve the long term sustainability and health of the Burdekin aquifer and LBW authority area, and inform ratepayers and customers of the best practice for water use for the services provided by the authority.
- h) to borrow money and to secure funds in accordance with all legislative and regulatory requirements for the purposes of the authority and so as to enable the authority to carry out its functions.
- i) to expend money for the purposes of the authority and to enable the authority to carry out its functions.

LBW is a registered Service Provider under the Queensland Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 holding registration number SPID 571. LBW makes and levies rates and charges on ratepayers and customers within and outside of its authority area.

LBW reports to the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (“DRDMW”).

Details and copies of the annual report are available on LBW’s website and at LBW offices.

1.3. Operating environment

1.3.1. Administration

Summary details of Ordinary and Special Meetings/Inspections

Ordinary Meetings	
Board Meetings	9
Board Committee Meetings	14
Special Meetings/Inspections	8
Total	31

Details of Attendance at Conferences and Workshops

Staff and directors attended the following conferences and workshops during the reporting period:

- Ramsar Management Advisory Group – NQ Dry Tropics.
- Burdekin Customer Advisory Committee – SunWater.
- Burdekin Falls Dam Raising Project Community Reference Group – SunWater.
- Burdekin Regional Water Assessment Program – DRDMW.
- Burdekin Water Plan Review – DRDMW.

The Executive Officer of LBW participates in the Burdekin Water Futures (BWF) group. The BWF group’s mission is ‘to support a long-term, strategic, whole-of-system approach to understanding and managing the LBW water resources and associated systems, and thereby deliver long-term economic, social and environmental outcomes that ensure the region’s sustainability’.

Policy

There were no new major policies implemented by LBW during the reporting period, however, existing policies were reviewed and amendments implemented, where required.

Improvements

LBW continued with the implementation of its new Enterprise Resource Planning (“ERP”) software. Employee timecards and purchasing functions were activated during the financial year. Projects and the service modules will be activated in FY2024-25. The new system has enabled LBW to consolidate

many administrative and finance functions into one system.

LBW invested in two new additional automated water control gates and three new fishways within its water delivery system during the 2023-24 financial year. This investment is aimed at reducing operational hazards and improving water level and flow control within the water delivery system to enhance service standards and operational efficiencies.

The construction and commissioning of the new Warrens Gully Pump Station was successfully completed during the financial year. The additional pumping capacity will improve LBW's surface water delivery and groundwater recharge reliability within the Southern Division of its authority area and enable an expansion of irrigated agriculture within the district.

1.3.2. General

There were no personal contributions made to LBW by members, staff and others.

1.3.3. Review of operations

Benefits from Recharge Operations

LBW owns 255,000 ML of medium priority Water Allocation Entitlements ("WAE"), which it diverts from the Burdekin River via its six river pump stations. The water is distributed throughout LBW's authority area via its network of pipelines, water channels and natural lagoons. The water is used to replenish the large coastal aquifer beneath LBW's authority area and to supply water for irrigations of crops.

Replenishment of the aquifer is accomplished by pumping water into modified natural waterways, purpose-built channels and artificial recharge pits and allowing the water to percolate into the groundwater system under gravity. Fresh water contained in the aquifer is used by farmers to irrigate crops, residents for stock and domestic purposes and industry. The Burdekin Shire Council also sources water from the aquifer to supply potable water to the townships of Ayr, Brandon and Home Hill.

Given the close proximity to the Coral Sea, maintaining a freshwater head within the aquifer is crucial to prevent saltwater intrusion and long-term degradation of the groundwater system.

Additional to the aquifer recharge operations, LBW allow its customers to pump open water directly from water channels and lagoons. Open water is taken by customers under either a permit, licence or water supply agreement and is metered by LBW. Supply of open water to customers reduces demand on the aquifer and assists in conserving and managing underground water levels and improving the quantity and quality of water available within the aquifer.



Figure 1: Water Distribution Channel

Natural Recharge

Rainfall at the Home Hill Post Office gauging station measured a total of 792mm for the 2023-24 financial year and is below the median (885mm) and 15% below the mean (932mm) annual rainfall for the station. Approximately 23% of the rain was received in the first half of the financial year with the remainder being received between January and March 2024. The rain events within the authority area enabled large quantities of water to soak directly into the ground to recharge the aquifer. The natural recharge and reduced irrigation demand from the rainfall assisted in maintaining healthy groundwater levels within the authority area as shown in Figure 2.

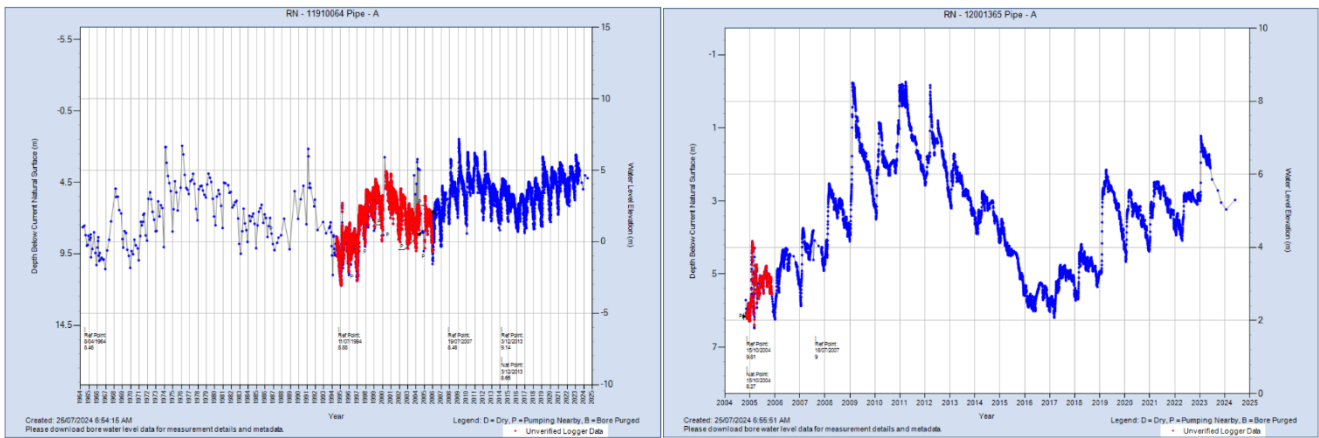


Figure 2: Ground Water Level vs Rainfall Within LBW Authority Area - Homestead Rd and Bowie Rd

The Burdekin River catchment received rainfall events which caused the Burdekin River to run in January 2024 through to April 2024. The run in the river washed away the temporary sand diversions (“TSD’s”) and delayed the construction of the new Warrens Gully Fishway. The water levels within the Burdekin River rose to approximately 6m with approximately 200,000 megalitres (“ML”) per day recorded at the Clare gauging station during the highest recorded flows for the year. It is believed the elevated river levels assisted with replenishment of the aquifer during the reporting period. The river levels and daily flow rates with the Burdekin River measured by the Queensland Government at the Clare Guage Station are shown in Figure 3.

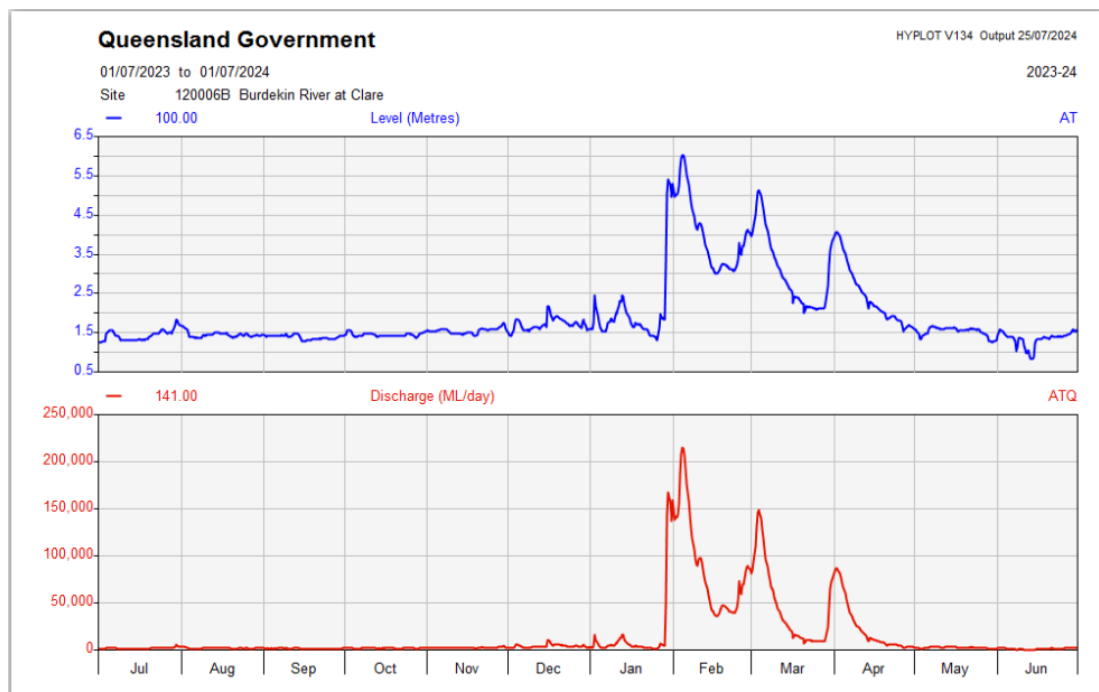


Figure 3: Burdekin River - Water Levels and Discharge (Source Queensland Government Water Monitoring Information Portal)

Artificial Recharge

Figure 4 shows that water levels behind the Burdekin Falls Dam (“BFD”) remained unusually high for most of the financial year and resulted in the BFD overtopping for a large portion of the year. Consequently, LBW’s announced Water Allocation entitlement (water available) to distribute within its authority area for aquifer replenishment and open water supply was 100% for the financial year.

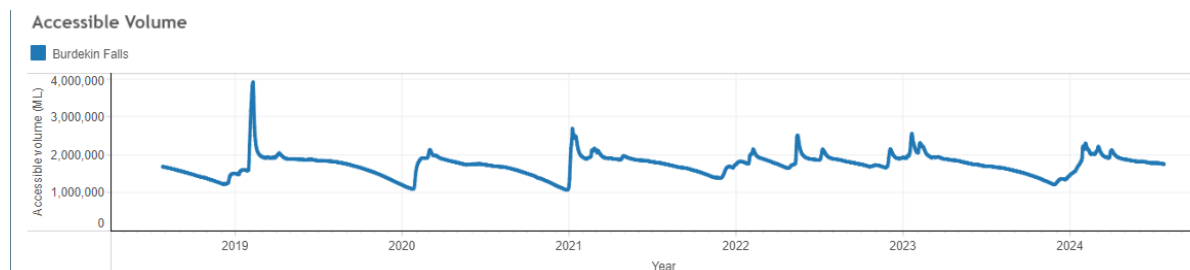


Figure 4: BFD Water Levels (Source Bureau of Meteorology Website)

Turbidity levels within the Burdekin River remained high during the financial year and effected LBW’s artificial aquifer recharge operations. Artificial recharge activities were reduced and minimised due to the elevated turbidity levels within the Burdekin River.

Irrigation demand within the authority area during the first half of the financial was reasonably high due to the dry conditions. Rainfall commenced in December 2023 and persisted until March 2024 during which irrigation demand reduced. Irrigation demand increased during April to June 2024. Groundwater levels within the authority area remained relatively high throughout the financial year.

The river pumping summaries shown in Table 1 and 2 below confirms a total of **220,630 ML** of water was diverted from the Burdekin River through LBW’s pumping infrastructure during the financial year. Open water pumped by ratepayers and other customers with access to open water totalled 157,728 ML for the full financial year.

Table 1: Pumping Summary - Northern Division Individual River Pump Stations and Totals

Month	Rocks	Plantation	Rita Island	2023 2024	2022 2023	2021 2022	2020 2021	2019 2020	2018 2019	2017 2018	2016 2017
Jul	936	1,560	546	3,042	408	8,043	6,996	9,025	9,452	10,442	499
Aug	2,673	4,433	1,354	8,460	5,223	8,864	6,639	9,789	10,630	11,517	8,054
Sep	4,406	8,123	1,483	14,012	8,225	5,653	11,580	11,205	15,065	10,196	11,621
Oct	5,444	9,377	1,560	16,381	7,927	15,869	17,609	19,623	15,961	8,332	14,036
Nov	8,193	14,131	2,664	24,989	13,047	9,382	20,234	18,039	20,238	18,490	21,634
Dec	7,252	13,694	2,477	23,423	10,115	12,952	19,419	28,323	10,485	18,157	24,390
Jan	2,640	3,850	1,206	7,696	2,499	15,659	1,045	17,415	12,372	13,972	8,555
Feb	3,442	3,981	748	8171	3,101	9,384	7,219	5,225	1,654	13,666	17,488
Mar	2,924	3,318	630	6,872	5,080	15,871	5,675	4,996	3,500	5,440	5,106
Apr	4,424	8,298	1,329	14,051	11,135	12,247	2,197	10,410	4,787	8,678	10,249
May	5,032	7,671	1,337	14,040	10,922	0	4,372	6,591	7,159	11,180	8,819
Jun	2,366	3,157	313	5,836	2,415	1,137	5,360	711	5,803	5,901	2,199
Totals	49,732	81,594	15,647	146,973	80,098	115,061	108,346	141,352	117,106	135,971	132,650

Table 2: Pumping Summary - Southern Division Individual River Pump Stations and Totals

Month	Warrens Gully	McDowells	Down River	2023 2024	2022 2023	2021 2022	2020 2021	2019 2020	2018 2019	2017 2018	2016 2017
Jul	126	291	47	464	1,554	4,515	4,064	5,045	7,585	5,974	0
Aug	2,055	2,920	198	5,180	2,522	5,207	4,689	4,173	5,399	5,170	4,873
Sept	2,926	3,350	695	6,813	5,760	3,623	8,845	6,659	7,721	6,892	7,172
Oct	3,881	4,771	1,571	10,223	4,902	10,412	9,884	8,510	8,240	4,087	7,891
Nov	3,696	5,494	1,213	10,403	6,031	8,050	11,719	11,708	10,917	9,924	9,330
Dec	4,138	5,395	763	10,296	7,757	9,073	11,479	11,143	7,087	12,930	10,799
Jan	3,284	3,632	436	7,352	2,003	9,035	1,994	10,316	7,036	10,888	6,757
Feb	1,338	1,717	254	3,310	4,810	7,602	5,510	3,054	1,534	7,991	9,097
Mar	1,725	2,511	325	4,561	5,124	10,783	3,935	4,582	2,037	1,203	7,000
Apr	4,170	3,538	273	7,981	3,176	7,149	1,322	6,870	2,704	3,436	6,980
May	2,073	2,556	254	4,883	5,761	443	3,670	5,204	2,450	6,261	2,318
Jun	174	1,091	775	2,040	2,309	1,554	1,922	667	4,334	4,287	1,490
Totals	29,587	37,266	6,804	73,657	51,709	77,446	69,033	77,931	67,044	79,043	73,707



Figure 5: The Rocks Pumpstation on the Burdekin River

Opportunities and Challenges

Challenges encountered by LBW throughout the 2023-24 financial year were:

- Major research project - LBW have continued partnering with Flinders University, Monash University, Charles Darwin University and the Queensland University of Technology on a research project with the Australian Research Council. The project is a three-year agreement to undertake groundwater research within the Burdekin Delta. The research project covers four main research areas:
 1. Influence of seawater intrusion on the Delta groundwater resource and the risk to this resource from sea-level rise and changing rainfall patterns;
 2. Predicting groundwater response (particularly for that part of the Authority Area influenced by seawater intrusion) to different irrigation allocation scenarios (i.e., exclusive surface water allowance/use vs. exclusive groundwater allowance/use vs.

conjunctive use);

3. Influence of the Burdekin River on groundwater recharge and potential impacts to recharge as a result of the modification of existing (Burdekin Falls) / construction of new dams (Urannah and Hell's Gate) in upstream areas;

4. Efficacy on LBW infrastructure (e.g. recharge pits, delivery channels, sand dams) on groundwater recharge including estimates of the benefitted area of recharge.

- Construction of the new Warrens Gully Pump Station - LBW received significant funding to design and construct new water infrastructure. Construction was impacted by elevated water levels within the Burdekin River. Despite the delays, the new pump station was successfully commissioned in March 2024. Further details are provided in section 1.3.4.
- Staff retention - Turnover of staff during the financial year placed additional pressure on recruitment, training and resources within the organisation. Notwithstanding these challenges, LBW was able to deliver on its major objectives during the financial year. Further details are set out in section 6.1 of this report.

Matters of Interest

- Native Title Claim - LBW is a party to an application for Native Title filed by the Bindal People #2 in the Federal Court. LBW owns and operates water distribution infrastructure on Queensland Government State lands within the relevant claim. Granting of Native Title (the connection to the land remains at issue at this stage) will require LBW to obtain access to continue its operations either by Court or preferably by an indigenous land use agreement. LBW will remain involved in the proceedings until either the application is dismissed or granted as the Court sees fit.
- QLD Government Non-Urban Water Metering Policy - The distribution of LBW's own surface water allocations to its customers is subject to the non-urban water metering policy. LBW's existing policies, processes and resources with respect to surface water metering are required to be amended, especially the maintenance and validation of the water flow meters.
- Burdekin Water Plan - The current Water Plan (Burdekin Basin) 2007 is due to expire on 1 September 2026. The plan is currently being reviewed and LBW is participating in the consultation process.
- Burdekin Regional Water Assessment Project – The State and Federal Governments have been working with a variety of stakeholders to investigate water demands and supply options within the region. LBW has been actively participating in the project.
- PFAS - On 25 May 2018, Queensland Health received results from water samples taken from groundwater bores located in Ayr which supplied part of the town's drinking water. Those results showed levels of polyfluoroalkyl substances ("PFAS") contamination above Australian drinking water quality guidelines. The Burdekin Shire Council undertook further testing with the results of that testing being received and has subsequently moved some bore fields. Further information relating to this matter can be found on the Queensland Government website (www.qld.gov.au/environment/management/environmental/incidents/pfas/sites) or on the Queensland Fire Department website at www.fire.qld.gov.au/compliance-and-planning/PFAS QFES is undertaking an off-site investigation in Ayr into the contamination. LBW considers this a watching brief with the responsibility for further investigation work and communications currently resting with DES and QFES.

These matters remain ongoing at 30 June 2024.

1.3.4. Capital works

The capital projects undertaken by LBW during the 2023-24 financial year are set out below.

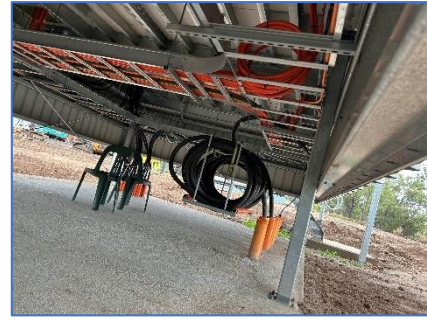
Infrastructure

There were several large capital infrastructure projects undertaken by LBW during the reporting period. These projects were initiated to address a range of issues within its water distribution system which

includes reducing workplace health and safety risks, increasing system capacity, improving water control and ecological function and reducing energy consumption and replacing aging assets.

Pest Board and Rita Island Electrical Upgrade

The existing electrical switchboards at the pump stations had reached the end of the economic life and were replaced with modern day equivalents.



Oats Road Automated Gate and Fishway

The Oats Road automated gate and fishway project involved replacing the existing timber water flow control structure and road culverts with a new, automated aluminum gate from AWMA Water Control Solutions and constructing a new fishway to provide better control of water flow, fish connectivity and reduce occupational health and safety hazards.

This project was undertaken in partnership with NQ Dry Topics and the Burdekin Shire Council and was successfully completed without incident and within budget.

Warrens Gully Fishway

A new permanent rock ramp fishway was constructed within the Burdekin River near the Warrens Gully pump station. The construction of the fishway was a requirement of the temporary sand diversion structure ("TSD") development permit to allow fish to move past the TSD, when installed.



Warrens Gully System Capacity Upgrade Project.

This is a significant water infrastructure upgrade project, which was completed with the assistance of a \$4.76M capital grant from the National Water Grid Fund. The project involved the design and construction of a new river pump station and capacity upgrades to existing road crossings and an inverted siphon. The total investment is approximately \$11.6M and was completed in March 2024. The project completion date was delayed due to delays associated with wet weather and high-water levels within the Burdekin River.

The project removes existing capacity constraints during peak demand periods, improve aquifer recharge capabilities and enable an expansion in irrigated agriculture within and around LBW's authority area.

Construction works associated with the replacement of several culverts and inverted siphon were successfully completed by August 2022. Construction works for the new pump station commenced in May 2022 and the rising mains, valve pit, metering pit and outlet structures were successfully completed in 2022. Construction works inside the Burdekin River were abandoned in December 2022 and recommenced following the cessation of wet season in May 2023. Despite, delays associated with the project, construction was completed and contained within the overall project budget.



Plant and Equipment

Two new vehicles, a new ridged tyre excavator rake and multiple new open water meters were purchased and commissioned by LBW during the financial year as part of its asset renewals.

1.3.5. Review of proposed forward operations

LBW has developed and approved the 2024/25 – 2028/29 strategic plan for the organisation. The objectives for the organisation are:

1. Safe, professional, positive workforce and workplace.
2. Maintain a healthy aquifer and waterways.
3. Provision of reliable and efficient services.
4. Financially sustainable.
5. Engaged and informed stakeholders.

The objectives are supported by a number of strategies set out in LBW's 2024/25 to 2028/29 strategic plan which is published on LBW's website at <https://lowerburdekinwater.com.au/documents/>

Operationally, the business will continue to deliver routine water delivery and aquifer recharge services and perform administration and maintenance activities. Service delivery activities will remain similar to previous years with the erection of temporary sand diversion structures within the Burdekin River, ongoing channel maintenance, aquifer recharge activities, reporting, administration, pumping and distribution of river water throughout the authority area will remain the focus of the operational staff at LBW.

There are no further borrowings proposed for the 2024-25 financial year from the Queensland Treasury Corporation (“**QTC**”). LBW’s budgeting process has considered all expenses to maintain the services and complete the capital works. LBW has reviewed and approved its rates and charges for the next twelve months. The current revenue regime is sufficient to cover all anticipated expenses and the entity has adequate reserve funds to cover unforeseen/urgent expenditure.

2. Non-financial performance

2.1. Government’s objectives for the community / specific initiatives

LBW contributes to the following Queensland Government objectives for the community: supporting jobs, backing small business, connecting Queensland, protecting the environment, growing our regions and building Queensland.

LBW meets these objectives by:

- Sourcing goods and services from local suppliers.
- Providing water to support the community, industry and environment.
- Providing critical services and investing in water infrastructure to support the local and regional economies.

Where applicable, LBW provides services that are consistent with whole-of-government plans and specific initiatives addressing issues for Queensland.

2.2. Objectives and performance indicators

LBW’s objectives, for the 2023-24 financial year as listed in its 2023-24 to 2027-28 strategic plan, are:

1. Safe, professional, positive workforce and workplace.
2. Maintain a healthy aquifer and waterways.
3. Provision of reliable and efficient services
4. Financial sustainability.
5. Engaged and informed stakeholders.

LBW measures its achievement of these objectives by reviewing and monitoring its strategies and success indicators, consistent with method outlined in the strategic plan.

LBW met its performance targets for the 2023-24 reporting period, as follows:

- Safe, professional, positive workforce and workplace – Metrics set for WHS system compliance, training and development and performance management were consistently achieved. However, results for hazard and risk management metric were inconsistent.
- Maintain a healthy aquifer and waterways – Metrics set for aquifer recharge, water monitoring, aquatic weed management and environmental projects were achieved.
- Provision of reliable and efficient services – Metrics set for service delivery (Complaints), asset performance and resource deployment were achieved.
- Financial sustainability – Metrics set for key finance ratios, cost containment and asset renewals were consistently achieved.
- Engaged and informed stakeholders – Metrics for stakeholder interactions and stakeholder communications were consistently achieved.

Performance results for the 2023-24 financial year were much improved compared with results from previous years. With regard to LBW's longer-term objectives, LBW is reviewing its business requirements and will amend its strategies accordingly to ensure the objectives can be met. These will be documented in the 2024-25 – 2028-29 strategic plan.

LBW pursues its objectives with a value for money approach. It is self-funded and operates on a cost recovery basis.

2.3. Service areas and service standards

LBW is self-funding and therefore funding 'service areas' and 'service standards' measures are not applicable.

3. Financial performance

3.1. Summary of financial performance for 2023–24

The primary source of LBW's funding during the reporting period was from its ratepayers, customers, Wilmar Sugar (local sugarcane milling company) and the Burdekin Shire Council. Further financial information is contained in LBW's audited 2023-24 financial statements.

Income received by the water authority during 2023–24 included:

Source	Received	Amount
Rates	Ratepayers	\$6,160,545
Water sales	Customers	\$3,868,643
Grants & Subsidies	NWGA and NQDT	\$1,405,000
Other		\$520,176

Expenditure by the water authority during 2023–24 included:

Expenditure	Amount
Capital Works	\$5,517,937
Administration	\$1,605,486
Depreciation	\$2,167,575
Operations and Maintenance	\$4,149,515

Borrowings by the water authority during 2023–24 included:

Source	Purpose	Amount
QTC	Capital Works	\$0

As at 30 June 2024, LBW's loan indebtedness was \$5,190,719. During the reporting period, LBW was financially viable and had sufficient funds to service its debts.

Further details are provided in Attachment 3 - Budget for the Financial Year Commencing 1 July 2024, Attachment 6 - Certified Entity Indebtedness Statement and audited financial statements.

4. Governance – management and structure

4.1. Organisational structure

Composition of LBW:

- As per LBW's constitution, a total of eight directors may be appointed to the board.
- Of the above directors, LBW's Governance Policy stipulates that the board be comprised of four persons nominated from and by ratepayers of the authority, two persons nominated by the owners of the sugar milling operations which contribute financially to the operations of the authority (Wilmar Sugar), one person nominated by the Burdekin Shire Council and one independent director.
- If approved, directors are then appointed by the Minister for Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water for a term of four years.

Directors appointed at 30 June 2024 are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Directors appointed at 30 June 2024

Name	Position	Current term	First appointed
Mrs Helen Stanton	Chair	26 Mar 2024 – 25 Mar 2028	26 Mar 2024
Mr Ian Davies	Deputy Chair	10 Nov 2022 – 09 Nov 2025	10 Nov 2022
Mrs Neomi Butler	Director	6 Jul 2022 – 5 Jul 2025	15 Jul 2019
Mrs Glenis Jones	Director	10 Nov 2022 – 09 Nov 2025	15 Oct 2019
Mr Eric Barbagallo	Director	10 Nov 2022 – 09 Nov 2025	10 Nov 2022
Mr Francisco Mugica	Director	29 Nov 2023 – 28 Nov 2026	29 Nov 2023
Vacant	Director		
Vacant	Director		

During the 2023–24 reporting period, the following directors left their position on the board:

- Mrs Lisa Parker.
- Mrs Kaylee Boccalatte.

4.2. Executive management

LBW employs a management team to run the operations, maintenance, capital projects and administration of the water authority.

The details associated with the management team are set out in Table 4.

Table 4: LBW Management Team at 30 June 2024

Name	Position
Mr David Sartori	Executive Officer
Mr Charles Papale*	Operations Manager
Mr Elliott Gullotta	Finance Officer

* Charles Papale is currently on long service leave.

4.3. Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)

Attachment 2 outlines meeting and remuneration information for the water authority for the 2023–24 reporting period. DRDMW will make this information available on its website alongside the 2023–24 Consolidated Annual Report of Queensland's category 2 water authorities.

4.4. Public Sector Ethics

LBW has in place a Code of Conduct approved on 21 June 2022 and is updated and reviewed on a two-yearly basis.

When appointment, directors of the water authority are reminded of their obligations to the water authority and are given access to the publication, *Welcome Aboard: A Guide for Members of Queensland Government Bodies, Committees and Statutory Authorities*. Upon commencement, employees of LBW complete an induction which amongst other topics includes LBW's Code of Conduct.

4.5. Human Rights

The *Human Rights Act 2019* (HR Act) includes reporting obligations on public entities.

In accordance with section 97 of the HR Act LBW discloses the following details of actions taken to further the objectives of the HR Act:

- Amendments were made to LBW'S Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy to include into the purpose and definition of the policy for "positive duty" to prevent workplace sex discrimination, sexual harassment and other unlawful behaviour from happening.

Details of human rights complaints received by LBW, including number and outcome of complaints and other information prescribed by regulation are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Human Rights Complaints

Complaint	Outcome	Other information as applicable
Nil	N/A	N/A

LBW's Human Rights policy was last reviewed in March 2023 and is scheduled for further review in March 2025.

5. Governance – risk management and accountability

5.1. Risk management

LBW uses a Risk Management Framework which is compliant with the requirements set out in ISO31000:2018 and Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009.

The Board utilises a Risk and Governance Committee and a Finance and Audit Committee to assist with managing both non-financial and financial risks within the business. Both Committees operate independently under their own charters.

Further details regarding the Finance and Audit Committee are set out in section 5.2 of this report.

The Prudential Assessment Questionnaire is provided at Attachment 6.

5.2. Audit committee

The Board established a Finance and Audit Committee to assist it with its role of ensuring the appropriate accounting standards are used and that there is proper examination of LBW's financial arrangements.

The Finance and Audit Committee provides assistance to the Board in fulfilling the Board's responsibilities relating to LBW's budgeting, accounting and financial management and reporting processes including the review of LBW's financial statements. To that end, the Committee will oversee

management's processes and activities relating to:

- maintaining the reliability and integrity of LBW's accounting policies, other relevant policies, financial reporting practices and financial statements.
- the independent auditor's qualifications and independence.
- compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- preparation of annual and other budgets and forecasts for Board review.
- financial risk management and the internal control environment.
- analysing financings and capital transactions being considered by LBW and the adequacy of its capital structure.

There were six Finance and Audit Committee meetings held during the 2023-24 financial year. Members of LBW's Finance and Audit Committee are set out in Table 6:

Table 6: Finance and Audit Committee Members during 2023-24 financial year

Name	Position
Mrs Neomi Butler	Chair
Cr Kaylee Boccalatte	Member
Mrs Glenis Jones	Member

5.3. Internal audit

When required, LBW undertakes internal audit functions. LBW does not have an internal audit unit, however, internal audits are completed by staff as well as consultants from time to time as part of self-initiated audits. Recommendations arising from internal audits are reviewed by the relevant Board Committee and actioned.

There is nothing in this regard to report for 2023–2024.

5.4. External scrutiny

LBW has not been reviewed by any external entities (apart from the Auditor-General's report on the financial statements) during the reporting period.

5.5. Information systems and recordkeeping

LBW has complied with all of its obligations under the Public Records Act 2002, including making, managing, keeping and preserving public records.

LBW did not lose any records due to natural disaster or other reasons, during 2023-24 financial year. Nor were any damaged records identified, as a result of insect infestation, pests or mould.

6. Governance – human resources

6.1. Strategic workforce planning and performance

LBW has a range of human resource policies in place to guide the behavior and performance within the workplace. LBW has an Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy to guide the business in respect to diversity and utilizes its Fitness for Work policy to assist in managing and supporting employee mental and physical well-being.

LBW operates under the Federal Water Industry Award 2020 and utilises external service providers from time to time to assist in human resource activities including policy review and development, recruitment and benchmarking of salaries.

LBW employed 19.42 of Full-Time Equivalent staff during the 2023-24 financial year, two of which were on extended long service leave during the reporting period.

There were nine (9) resignations and no retirements during the 2023-24 financial year.

Staff received training in the following areas:

- MYOB advance.
- Arc GFIS.
- Verification of Competences.
- Leadership.
- T0911 Introduction to Electrical Network Infrastructure for Authorised Person.
- Heavy rigid vehicles.
- First aid, CPR and low voltage rescue.

6.2. Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

No redundancy / early retirement / retrenchment packages were paid during the period.

7. Open Data

In accordance with the Annual Report Requirements 2023–24, several annual reporting requirements will be published by DRDMW on behalf of the water authority through Queensland Government Open Data Portal including:

- consultancies
- overseas travel
- Queensland Language Services Policy.

More information: <https://data.qld.gov.au>

7.1. Consultancies

Monies paid to consultants by LBW during the 2023-24 financial year are set out in Table 7. Legal consultancies are not included in these figures.

Table 7: Monies Paid to Consultants by LBW

Consultancy category	Expenditure
Consultants - Management	\$0
Consultants - Human resources management	\$27,345
Consultants - Communications	\$0
Consultants - Finance/accounting	\$25,622
Consultants - Professional/technical	\$0
Total cost of consultancies	\$52,967

7.2. Overseas travel

No overseas travel on water authority business was undertaken by directors of LBW.

7.3. Queensland Language Services Policy (QLSP)

No interpreter services were undertaken by directors of LBW.

8. Financial statements

In accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, general purpose financial statements have been prepared by the water authority, certified by the chairperson and secretary, and submitted to the Queensland Audit Office for audit. A copy of the auditor's report will be submitted to the Department Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water as soon as it is available.

8.1. Remuneration disclosures

Remuneration paid to chairpersons	\$ 6,240.00
Remuneration paid to directors	\$ 15,400.00
Total Paid	\$ 21,640.00

Further information on remuneration and meetings is provided at Attachment 2.



Chairperson
Lower Burdekin Water

Date: 26/07/24

Attachment 1

Annual Reporting 2022–23

CATEGORY 2 WATER AUTHORITIES STATISTICAL INFORMATION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

Name of entity: Lower Burdekin Water

<p>Number of rural and urban properties serviced by the water authority.</p>	<p>Urban:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial: Sugar Mills, Burdekin Shire Council groundwater sourced urban supply (underground bores) • Residential: N/A <p>Rural:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 644 farms
<p>Total hectares within the water authority's authority area.</p>	<p>76,028 hectares</p>
<p>Length in kilometres of all drains/pipelines/ channels (whichever is applicable) under the water authority's control.</p>	<p>Drains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 km <p>Pipelines & Channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 334km
<p>Description of other infrastructure owned by the water authority, e.g. weirs, pumps</p>	<p>River Pump Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 <p>Relift Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 <p>Automated Water Flow Control Gates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23
<p>Total volume (megalitres) of water supplied (if applicable).</p>	<p>Total water pumped from river:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 220,630 ML
<p>The rate or charge structure levied by the water authority in 2023–24.</p>	<p>Northern Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$ 20.26 per ML (Volumetric) • \$ 149.90 per hectare (Rates) • Other, Other, Excess \$16.85 per ML <p>Southern Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$ 20.26 per ML (Volumetric) • \$ 149.90 per hectare (Rates) • Other, Other, Excess \$16.85 per ML

Attachment 2

GOVERNMENT BODIES (STATUTORY BODIES AND OTHER ENTITIES)

LOWER BURDEKIN WATER						
Act or instrument	<i>Water Act 2000</i>					
Function	To replenish subterranean water supplies within its authority area on the coastal fringe of the lower Burdekin Delta.					
Achievements	<p>Lower Burdekin Water was able to successfully meet the irrigation requirements of ratepayers. A total 220,630 megalitres (“ML”) of water diverted from the Burdekin River through Lower Burdekin Water’s pumping infrastructure during the financial year. Open water pumped by ratepayers with access to channel water totals 157,728 ML for the full financial year. Aquifer heights were maintained during the financial year.</p> <p>Additional to the ongoing water distribution, Lower Burdekin Water successfully delivered over \$5.5 million of major capital works during the reporting period. A sizable portion of the capital works was to construct new water infrastructure to increase system capacity and improve the ecological function and system health.</p>					
Financial reporting	<p>Not exempted from audit by the Auditor-General.</p> <p>Transactions of the entity are accounted for in the financial statements, which are audited by distance audit procedures.</p>					
Remuneration						
Position	Name	Meetings attended <i>(insert number)</i>		Approved annual or daily fee <i>(half daily fee paid if under 4 hrs)</i>	Approved sub-committee fees if applicable	Actual fees received
Chair (Jul 23 – Dec 23)	Lisa Parker	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$520.00	\$520.00	\$1,300.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	3	\$260.00	\$260.00	
Chair (Dec 23 – Mar 24)	Ian Davies (Wilmar Representative)	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$520.00	\$520.00	\$1,560.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	4	\$260.00	\$260.00	
Chair (April 24 – June 24)	Helen Stanton	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$520.00	\$520.00	\$3,380.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	11	\$260.00	\$260.00	
Director Deputy Chair (Jul 23 – Dec 23) (April 24 – June 24)	Ian Davies (Wilmar Representative)	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$2,000.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	8	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director Deputy Chair (Dec 23 – Mar 24)	Glenis Jones	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	2	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$4,600.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	19	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director	Helen Stanton	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>		\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director	Neomi Butler (Wilmar Representative)	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$3,400.00
		<i>over 4 hrs</i>	15	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director	Eric Barbagallo	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	2	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$3,600.00

		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	14	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director	Francesco Mugica	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	1	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$1,400.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	5	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Director	Kaylee Boccalatte (Burdekin Shire Council Representative)	<i>over 4 hrs</i>	2	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$0.00
		<i>under 4 hrs</i>	11	\$200.00	\$200.00	
No. scheduled meetings	<i>Board – 9 Board Committee Meetings - 14 Special Meetings / Inspections – 8 Total - 31</i>					
Total out of pocket expenses	\$ Nil					

Attachment 4

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SIGNIFICANT ACTION

Section 580 *Water Act 2000*


Please tick ✓ statements applicable to the water authority:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The water authority has nil proposed significant actions to report to the Minister.
--------------------------	--

or

The water authority gives notice¹ to the Minister of the proposed significant action below, proposed to be undertaken by the board in the 2023-24 financial year:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Activities that the water authority believes may prevent or have a significant adverse effect on the Authority performing its main function— (a) <i>Unexpected weather activities like cyclones, floods, excessive and minimal rainfall</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The water authority proposes to purchase the following property for more than \$100 000— (a) <i>Lower Burdekin Water does not intend to purchase a property for more than \$100,000 for the 2023-24 financial year.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The water authority proposes to sell the following water authority property for more than \$100 000— (a) <i>Lower Burdekin Water does not intend to sell any property for more than \$100,000 for the 2023-24 financial year.</i>

Signed: 

Chairperson
Lower Burdekin Water

Date: 26/07/2024

Water Act 2000 — reporting requirements

580 Notice of Proposed significant action

- (1) This section applies if—
- (a) a water authority proposes to do anything that may prevent, or have a significant adverse effect on, the authority performing its main function; or
 - (b) a category 2 water authority proposed to sell or buy property for more than \$100 000.
- (2) Before doing anything (the **proposed significant action**) mentioned in subsection (1), and as soon as practicable after proposing to do it, the water authority must give the Minister notice of the proposed significant action.

Note: the Treasurer's prior approval and Departmental authorisation may be required before borrowing funds or purchasing land.

¹ To be given before undertaking the proposed significant action.

Attachment 5

FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to assess the entity's financial position, the entity is required to complete **ALL SECTIONS** in the following statement which is to be signed and dated by the Chairperson of the entity at the relevant time.

The statement must accompany the annual financial statements of the entity, prepared and submitted to the QAO, as soon as possible after 30 June in each financial year.

If the entity is required to state reasons or provide written commentary, the entity is asked to please attach all written responses and return with completed statement.

Question	Yes/No
BUDGETING	
Has the water authority developed <i>and attached</i> its budget for the 2024-2025 financial year?	Yes
If no, please provide reasons:	
Was there a material variation of actual results recorded in the 2022-2023 financial statements compared with the budget forecasts made at the beginning of that financial year?	Yes
If yes, please provide reasons.	
BORROWINGS	
At any stage during the 2023-2024 financial year was the water authority overdrawn at the bank ¹ ?	No
If yes, state reasons why:	
Is the water authority aware that it requires the Treasurer's approval to operate an account with an overdraft facility ² ?	Yes
Does the water authority need to seek the Treasurer's approval ³ ?	No

¹ Note a director's duty concerning insolvent trading at section 615 of the *Water Act 2000*.

² Note section 31 of the *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982*. [Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982 \(legislation.qld.gov.au\)](http://legislation.qld.gov.au)

A statutory body may operate a deposit and withdrawal account to the extent necessary or convenient for its day-to-day operations. However, the account may only be operated with an overdraft facility with the prior approval of the Treasurer.

³ The water authority should contact the Manager, Strategic Coordination and Economics, for advice on procedure.

Question	Yes/No
Did the water authority draw down any loan borrowings during the financial year?	No
If DRDMW authorised loan borrowings and the water authority has subsequently drawn down funds from the QTC, did the water authority meet all its loan repayments on time?	Yes
If no, state reasons why:	
RISK MANAGEMENT	
Considering the nature and scope of its operations and its size, has the water authority undertaken a risk management assessment to ensure the water authority is protected from unacceptable costs or losses?	Yes
If no, please provide a reason for non-compliance:	
If yes, please outline the actions taken and/or the key elements of these plans:	
If the water authority has discovered it is exposed to risk, has the water authority acted or put plans in place to avoid, minimise, control, and manage the risk?	Yes
INSURANCE	
Does the water authority have current cover for public liability and professional indemnity insurance?	Yes
If no, please provide the reason why:	
Are the water authority's insurance premiums paid up to date?	Yes
If no, please provide the reason why:	
Is the current level of insurance cover appropriate?	Yes
Has the water authority recently reviewed the adequacy of its insurance cover? (A copy of current policy may be requested)	Yes

Note

If the entity is to respond with a written statement to any of the matters mentioned above, the entity must also include in the written statement the action taken by it to remedy the situation.

If the entity has not taken any action to remedy the situation, the entity must state the reasons for its inaction.

If your water authority has a total gross revenue of \$1,000,000 or more—

Question	Yes/No
Does the water authority's gross revenue exceed \$1,000,000?	Yes
For how many years in succession has your water authority's gross revenue exceeded \$1,000,000? Nine years – the entity was established on 19/02/2015	
Are there any specific and exceptional factors that account for gross revenue exceeding \$1,000,000 that are unlikely to occur on an ongoing basis in future years (e.g. a special two-year subsidy program that is not expected to be ongoing)?	No
If so, please outline the nature of these exceptional revenue factors and state when these factors will no longer have an observable effect on gross revenue in your balance sheets.	

Signed: 

Chairperson
Lower Burdekin Water

Date: 26/07/2024

Attachment 6

INDEBTEDNESS STATEMENT

Does the water authority have outstanding loans?

(Indicate with a tick - ✓)

Yes

No

This statement must be dated and signed by the water authority's Chairperson.

If YES above is ticked, please address the following:

1	<p>The term of the loan when it was taken out and when final payment is due:</p> <p>Lower Burdekin Water currently has three outstanding loans with the Queensland Treasury Corporation's (QTC). Loan one commenced on the 16th of April 2020, as per the QTC loan pricing schedule the final payment is due on the 21st of January 2040. Loan two commenced on the 24th of May 2021, as per QTC loan pricing schedule the final payment is due on the 15th of March 2041. Loan three commenced on the 9th of December 2021 and as per Queensland Treasury Corporation's (QTC) loan pricing schedule the final payment is due on the 16th of September 2041.</p>
2	<p>The level of debt at the beginning of the current financial year (1 July):</p> <p>\$5,438,796</p>
3	<p>The level of debt at the close of the current financial year (30 June):</p> <p>\$5,190,719.</p>
4	<p>State how the debt will be serviced in the coming financial year:</p> <p>The repayments will be paid from Lower Burdekin Water's cash reserves in line with the fixed rate loan pricing schedules as provided by QTC.</p>
5	<p>How will payments be split between interest and principal:</p> <p>As per the Australian Accounting Standards, all associated fees and interest charges are expensed to the relevant section in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Principal payments will be deducted from the relevant liability section in the Statement of Financial Position</p>
6	<p>Other commitments the water authority may have for the current and coming financial years (e.g. financial commitments the water authority might have under existing or proposed contractual arrangements):</p> <p>Nil.</p>
7	<p>Additional information if required:</p>

Signed:



Chairperson
Lower Burdekin Water

Date:

26/07/2024

Attachment 7

COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

The Compliance Checklist outlines the specific disclosure requirements for annual reports and is referred to in the letter of compliance.

Water authorities must include a completed Compliance Checklist as part of their annual report that provides references to the relevant sections of the annual report where each disclosure requirement has been addressed.

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter of compliance from the statutory body to the relevant Minister 	ARRs – section 7	
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of contents Glossary 	ARRs – section 9.1	
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory Information 	ARRs – section 10	
Non-financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's objectives for the community / specific initiatives 	ARRs – section 11.1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives and performance indicators 	ARRs – section 11.2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service areas and service standards 	ARRs – section 11.3	
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of financial performance 	ARRs – section 12.1	
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structure 	ARRs – section 13.1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management 	ARRs – section 13.2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities) 	ARRs – section 13.3	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sector Ethics 	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights 	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5	
Governance – risk management and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management 	ARRs – section 14.1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit committee 	ARRs – section 14.2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal audit 	ARRs – section 14.3	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External scrutiny 	ARRs – section 14.4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information systems and recordkeeping 	ARRs – section 14.5	
Governance – human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic workforce planning and performance 	ARRs – section 15.1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment 	<i>Directive No.04/18 Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2	
Open Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement advising publication of information 	ARRs – section 16	

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Annual report reference	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancies 	ARRs – section 31.1	https://data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseas travel 	ARRs – section 31.2	https://data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland Language Services Policy 	ARRs – section 31.3	https://data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification of financial statements 	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1	

9. GLOSSARY

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

ARRs *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*