

RAPAD BOARD COMMUNIQUE

FIRST QUARTER 2025 | 1 JAN - 31 MAR

**A united organisation,
with a powerful voice for
our region and capacity
to deliver initiatives
that shape and create a
prosperous future for the
RAPAD region of Outback
Queensland.**



Objects of RAPAD

The objects for which the Company is established are:

- (a) to support, facilitate, promote and encourage the community, environmental and economic development of the region,
- (b) to formulate, develop, facilitate, maintain and implement, or cause to be implemented, strategies, policies and plans relating to the objects in Rule 1.5(a),
- (c) to advocate to, consult with, and advise, relevant State and Federal ministers and government agencies on matters of regional concern, and on the priorities of such matters and the means to ensure effective co-ordination and implementation of the policies, activities and programs of those State and Federal agencies, and
- (d) to facilitate, support, implement, or cause to be implemented, collaborative regional discussion and associated desired outcomes amongst, but not limited to, members.

Source: RAPAD constitution

RAPAD BOARD

Our Communiques provide an overview of RAPAD Board meetings.



Cr Rob Chandler
Mayor, Barcaldine Regional Council



Cr Sally O'Neil
Mayor, Barcoo Shire Council



Cr Andrew Martin
Mayor, Blackall-Tambo Regional Council



Cr Rick Britton
Mayor, Boulia Shire Council



Cr Francis Murray
Mayor, Diamantina Shire Council



Cr Tony Rayner
Mayor, Longreach Regional Council



Cr Cathy White
Mayor, Winton Shire Council



David Arnold
CEO, RAPAD



Morgan Gronold
AV/CEO, RAPAD

MEETINGS & ATTENDANCE

The Board held two meetings in this first quarter of 2025, one virtual on 7 February, and one face-to-face in Windorah on 25-26 February.

Directors' attendances and apologies for the meetings are in the table on the right.

	2 Feb	25-26 Feb
Cr Rayner	Yes	Yes
Cr Martin	Yes	Yes
Cr Britton	Yes	Yes
Cr O'Neil	Yes	Yes
Cr Chandler	Yes	Yes
Cr White	Yes	Yes
Cr Murray	Yes	Yes

REGIONAL GROUPS

The Windorah meeting was preceded by the quarterly meetings of the RAPAD Regional Water and Sewerage Alliance, the Outback Regional Roads and Transport Group and the Central West Regional Pest Management Group.

CEOs of the West (CoWs) also met ahead of the day two agenda in Windorah.

GUESTS & PRESENTERS

Meetings were also attended by council CEOs and various council member representatives. Guests and speakers at the February meeting in Windorah included:

- Hon Sean Dillon MP - Assistant Minister for Primary Industry Development, Water and Western Queensland (via Zoom)
- Dominique Lamb - Queensland Small Business Commissioner
- Dr Anita Milroy - University of Queensland
- Andrew Chesterman - Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteer
- Jarrod Hellmuth and Lucy Green - Local Government Association of Queensland
- John O'Brien and Joseph O'Brien - VisIR (via Zoom)
- Candace Vea Vea and Kristy Gear - Department State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
- Sammy Hemsley - Farm Business Planning NQ
- Matt Aberdein - Energy Queensland (via Zoom)
- Snr Constable Rob Edwards - QPS Windorah



GENERAL BUSINESS

As a part of responsible governance and business across all meetings, the Board received general YTD operating financial statements from RAPAD and RAPAD Skilling, noting there were no extraordinary operational or strategic budget matters to report.

The Board also:

- Endorsed support for the Outback Camel Festival Trail 2025 and the Rural Maternity Summit 2025.
- Noted a new DPI contract with RAPAD through RFCSNQ for an Industry Recovery and Resilience Officer.
- Noted that RAPAD will make a submission to LGAQ under the Climate Resilient Councils (CRC) seeking funding for RAPAD councils to undertake energy audits in their councils and communities.
- Endorsed the establishment of the RAPAD Waste and Resource Recovery Steering Group and the RAPAD Waste and Resource Recovery Working Group

FAREWELL LYNN MOORE

The RAPAD Board acknowledged the retirement of Boulia Shire Council CEO Lynn Moore.



The entire RAPAD Board extends its deepest gratitude to Lynn for her extraordinary leadership and dedication over the past 11 years.

Throughout her tenure, she consistently went above and beyond, shaping not only the success of Council but also the betterment of the entire region. Her leadership has been a guiding force, especially in such a unique and often challenging environment.

We will all miss her wisdom, integrity, and unwavering support and we wish her and her partner KJ all the best as they begin this new life chapter.

RAPAD PROJECT UPDATES



CWQ Adaption to a Diversified Economy

- RAPAD, as the lead advocate for the CWQ member Councils, identified the need for a comprehensive investigation to be undertaken to better understand the current and future energy landscape for the region. Based on the outcomes of this investigation a roadmap will be developed to support the region to unlock the opportunities associated with the shift of the energy industry.
- To assist with this process, RAPAD with the funding from the Queensland Department of State Development, engaged Ener-G Management Group Pty Ltd (EMG) to complete a two stage Situational Analysis and Strategic Adaption Report.
- The Report has been finalised and published on RAPAD's website at: www.rapad.com.au/projects/central-west-queensland-adaption-to-a-diversified-economy



RAPAD Power Grid

- John and Joseph O'Brien from VisIR joined the meeting to update on RAPAD Power Grid progress. (Pictured above)
- Find out more about RAPAD Power Grid at: www.rapadpowergrid.com.au



Farm Business Planning North Queensland



Barcaldine-based Farm Business Planning Officer, Sammy Hemsley, joined the Board meeting in Windorah to provide an update and information on Farm Business Planning North Queensland (FBPNQ) and her role in the region.

- FBPNQ is an initiative of RAPAD, delivering the Australian and Queensland Government’s Farm Business Resilience Program across all of Northern Queensland.
- FBPNQ is an offshoot of RFCSNQ which delivered the Grazing Futures Livestock Farm Business Resilience Planning, however when RAPAD was asked to take on more Farm Business Planning officers, the decision was made to make a standalone planning area from the financial counselling focus of RFCSNQ.
- Governance oversight of FBPNQ is through the RFCSNQ Project Management Committee.
- The FBPNQ team collectively represents decades of experience across agriculture, agribusiness, natural resource management, financial counselling, business management and advocacy.
- A Farm Business Resilience Plan helps producers to:
 - support the productivity and profitability of their business
 - identify and assess risks that will impact their farm business such as drought, natural disasters, production risks
 - identify opportunities to build resilience, improve their business and track progress
 - develop strategies and actions on how to manage risks and progress opportunities.
- A Farm Business Resilience Plan (or equivalent farm business plan) is required to apply for QRIDA financial assistance including drought preparedness grants and loans.
- Sammy is available to support primary producers across the RAPAD region via phone, online or in person to develop their Farm Business Resilience Plan as well as prepare and apply for QRIDA assistance. The service is free, impartial and confidential.
- Sammy provided her details to the Board to share in their respective regions.
- Find out more at: www.fbpnq.com.au



CWQ Regional Waste Management Plan



RAPAD Project Coordinator, Kate Birse, presented an update on the region’s waste program to the Board at its meeting in Windorah.

- The Regional Waste Management Plan Coordination Program (RWMP Coordination Program) aims to support groups of geographically-aligned councils to implement their RWMP through the engagement of a coordinator.
- This program will support the implementation of the RWMP that have been developed for multiple regions across Queensland.
- The CWQ Regional Waste Management Plan aims to assist councils to identify and prioritise waste and resource recovery activities and necessary infrastructure on a regional basis.
- This program is supported by the Queensland Government’s Regional Waste Management Plan Coordination Program.
- To assist in implementation, RAPAD’s project coordinator, Kate Birse will work with councils across the CWQ region to implement the Plan.
- Kate joined the Board meeting in Windorah to provide an overview of the program and activities.
- Find out more: www.rapad.com.au/projects/regional-waste-management-program

CWQ Regional Drought Resilience Plan

- The final Central West Queensland Regional Drought Resilience Plan is still with the federal and state governments for endorsement/release.
- The Regional Drought Resilience Plans are a state-wide initiative.
- RAPAD was contracted by CQUniversity which had the overall task of developing the Central West Queensland’s plan.
- RAPAD is pursuing funding opportunities to enable the implementation of the plan.

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES



Regional Childcare Review

- RAPAD Project Officer Rachael Webster joined the Board meeting in Windorah via Zoom to provide an update on the childcare review.
- An initial report collating data on the current situation of Early Childhood Education and Care in the region has been drafted.
- Representatives from across all RAPAD council areas were engaged in this initial data review phase.

- While childcare is not within RAPAD's remit, as with similar region-wide issues, RAPAD is providing a facilitation role in bringing together data, councils, representatives and sector stakeholders to better understand the issues and opportunities.
- The resulting data collection will provide a better understanding of the challenges and pathways to solutions for our communities.
- Rachael will follow-up with Mayors and CEOs regarding possible next steps for each of their communities.

Queensland Small Business Commissioner

- Updated the board on the focus of red tape reduction and business disputes work her group is undertaking.
- The Board took the opportunity to address issues impacting regional and remote small businesses including financing and insurance.

University of Queensland

- Dr Anita Milroy, Senior Project Manager, Inspiring Australia Queensland. Advancement and Community Engagement joined the Windorah meeting and updated the board on Science Week activities that are planned for the region in 2025.

Local Government Red Tape Reduction Taskforce

Andrew Chesterman, Taskforce Lead, Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers joined the Windorah Board meeting via Zoom.

- In January 2025, the Queensland Government established the Local Government Red Tape Reduction Taskforce to provide advice to government about reducing red tape for Queensland councils.
- The Taskforce will be active for 6 months, starting in January 2025 and finishing in June of 2025.
- The Taskforce is now scheduling engagement opportunities for Andrew to meet and present to the sector.
- Find out more: www.localgovernment.qld.gov.au/taskforce



Energy Queensland

- Matt Aberdein, Area Manager Central West Field Delivery Operations joined the Windorah meeting via Zoom and updated the board on activities in the region. (Pictured above)



CUC Jundah opening

On the return trip from Windorah the Board and meeting guests were pleased to join the celebration of the opening of CWQRAPAD Country Universities Centre's Jundah study hub.

Officially opened by Barcoo Shire Mayor Sally O'Neil, this marks a significant milestone for the area with locally supported tertiary study now available.

Find out more at: www.cucrapadcwq.edu.au



Hon Sean Dillon MP, Assistant Minister for Primary Industry Development, Water and Western Queensland

Member for Gregory, Hon Sean Dillon MP joined RAPAD Board meetings on 7 February and 25 February via Zoom.

Updated provided by Assistant Minister Dillon included:

- interim gravel pit permits are to extend under a temporary arrangement for impacted local governments and long-term solutions are being investigated
- new Department of Primary Industries team leader positions in regions with one to be placed in 'Gregory', with further positions to be advertised mid-year
- recent wind farm regulation announcement by the new government
- recent stamp duty removal for first home buyers of new homes by the new government
- advised that the review of Regional Water Plans is getting closer and will be led by Minister Leahy. The RAPAD Water for Economic Development Strategy will be genuinely considered

- a meeting between Minister Powell and Minister Last regarding National Parks was held with discussion continuing.
- funding received by Longreach and Barcoo for planning schemes.

Board members sought updates from the Assistant Minister on key issues in their council areas including:

- National Parks and opals
- roads programs and funding allocations
- regional locations for DPI positions
- vacant departmental housing
- State Infrastructure Fund details
- Outback Highway funding.

Assistant Minister Dillon committed to follow up directly with the respective mayors on the issues raised.



LGAQ update

- Jarrod Hellmuth, Lead for Roads and Transport provided an update to the board, includes carbon capture ALGA and SALGA insights at the Windorah meeting.
- A Policy Executive update was provided by Mayor Andrew Martin.
- For the latest LGAQ news visit: <https://www.lgaq.asn.au/news-media>



Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning

Central Queensland Region, Manager, Economic Development, Candace Vea Vea, and Senior Economic Development Officer, Kristy Gear, from the Department of State Development and Infrastructure attended the Windorah Board meeting and provided an update to the board.

 Sean Dillon MP is in Longreach, QLD. 21 January · 🌐



"Over the weekend, Premier David Crisafulli MP and I had the opportunity to meet with the Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD). We discussed key initiatives aimed at fostering growth and resilience across our region.

It's clear that collaboration between state leaders and local representatives is essential for addressing the unique challenges faced by our rural and remote communities.

Thank you to RAPAD for their proactive approach and commitment to shaping a prosperous future for our area. Together, we're building a stronger, more connected Queensland."



Queensland Police Service - Windorah

Senior Constable Rob Edwards, Windorah Police and his team joined the Windorah meeting.

They updated on activities and programs they are undertaking regarding missing persons in the region.

BOARD CALENDAR

The next meetings for the RAPAD Board starting the first quarter of 2025 are:

- 4 April – virtual
- 2-3 June – Longreach

Further detail can be provided by contacting the A/CEO, Morgan Gronold on 0428 583 301.

Further information on activities undertaken by RAPAD and its businesses visit:

RAPAD – www.rapad.com.au

RFCSNQ – www.rfcsnq.com.au

RAPAD Skilling – www.rapadskilling.com.au

RAPAD is proud to partner with UniSQ in the delivery of its Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNSW) Hub across the Central Western Queensland region.



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For individual and business training needs, contact the team at RAPAD Skilling.

RAPAD Skilling is a Skills Assure supplier approved to deliver subsidised qualifications funded under the Qld Government's VET Investment Plan and User Choice Scheme.



Give the team a call on **4652 5600** or visit rapadskilling.com.au