

Community Reference Group Communique



ISSUE 9 | JULY 2026

The Community Reference Group (CRG) keeps the Darwin Region Water Supply Infrastructure Program open and accessible to the community. The committee aims to provide updates, hear community concerns and assist the program to reflect environmental, cultural, social and economic values.

The ninth meeting was held on 14 July 2026, at Pudakul Cultural Tours and was an opportunity for all CRG members to hear directly from the Kenyon family, Custodians of Limilngan-Wulna land. This was an insightful opportunity for the group to hear firsthand about their connection to the land, culture, and values.

The group was updated by representatives from Power and Water, the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure and the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment. A summary of the meeting is provided below.



Update from the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment

The Department of Lands, Planning and Environment (DLPE) presented on the recently completed Adelaide River water modelling. The key findings were:

- Impacts on the river from potential extraction for AROWS is small to negligible when compared with natural flow variability.
- Modelling indicates that the floodplains fill and function separately to river flows.
- There would be no measurable changes to the floodplains as a result of AROWS.
- Even with AROWS in operation, the river system is expected to stay in good health, with low overall risk to catchment scale.

The DLPE team will continue to work on the draft Adelaide River Water Allocation Plan, with current focus on cultural values assessment

Update from Power and Water

The Manton Dam return to service project, which includes stage 1 works for Strauss Water Treatment Plant, is on track for construction completion this month. Commissioning will then begin; this process is designed to confirm effective pumping and treatment process performance.



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MANTON DAM RETURN TO SERVICE

Manton Site Works:

- Refurbishment of inlet tower
- Construction of new pumping station
- Construction of new access and security fencing

Contractor Site Contact: Tom Jones 0421 970 313
Power and Water Site Contact: Liam Early 0412 909 684
Power and Water: 1800 245 092



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Parks and Wildlife NT will continue to manage recreation on the reservoir and maintain the recreational facilities, while Power and Water delivers a safe operational drinking water supply. For the safety of the public and the drinking water supply, access to the operational area below the dam wall will remain restricted.

Planning is underway for proposed upgrades to recreational infrastructure at Manton Dam including a new ablution block, improvements to parking and upgrades to the picnic area. Subject to funding approval, these upgrades will improve the amenity for recreational users and support water quality management for Darwin's water supply.

Power and Water has released their annual drinking water quality report which is [available on their website](#).

Darwin Region Water Supply Infrastructure Program Update

The team have been on site conducting detailed environmental investigations to inform the project's environmental impact statement. This includes surveys for listed threatened flora and fauna, hydrological modelling of river flows, water quality and aquatic ecosystem investigations.

The team is working on baseline monitoring, water models, extraction scenarios and ecohydrological risk assessments to understand the environmental impacts of the project. Through comprehensive data and monitoring the project will have a well-informed environmental impact assessment.

Some of this data is gained from the monitoring bore network with the project team looking to add to this network in coming months. This network is intended to capture comprehensive baseline groundwater data such as groundwater levels and water quality to establish reference conditions for technical feasibility and impact assessments.



Also part of the Program is the Middle Arm Water Supply Stage 1 project, which includes delivery of upgrades to the Weddell North Pump Station and construction of a new ground-level water tank and elevated water tank. These works will support current industrial operations and emerging expansion opportunities to further develop the Middle Arm Peninsula, while improving overall network capacity and reliability for future growth across Palmerston and Greater Weddell.



CRG Members

Members present at the CRG meeting included:

- Darryl Day, Chair
- Andrew Bourne, NT Farmers Association
- David Ciaravolo, Amateur Fishermen's Association NT
- Tarizma Kenyon, Custodian of Limilngan-Wulna land
- Kezia Purick, community member
- Stephen Hoyne, Litchfield Council
- Andrew MacKay MLA, Member for Goyder
- Ruth Palmer, Property Council of Australia and Lake Bennett Community Association Inc

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Apologies included:

- Dheran Young MLA, Member for Daly
- Gary Higgins, community member
- Natasha Chapman (observing on behalf of), CEO Coomalie Community Government Council
- Glen Hingley, NT Chamber of Commerce

Meeting Schedule

The next CRG meeting is scheduled for November 2026.

Contact information

Community members are encouraged to contact their CRG representatives directly to voice matters related to the program. Alternatively, community members can contact the NT Government project team directly via email or calling 8999 5106.

Stage 1 of the Darwin Region Water Supply Program is jointly funded by the Australian Government, through the National Water Grid Fund, and the Northern Territory Government, delivered in partnership with Power and Water Corporation.