



September/October 2024

Mid-October saw MITEZ host **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Diplomatic and Consular Corps** from the UK, EU, Canada, Belgium and India on a whirlwind tour of the North West corridor. Day 1 in Mt Isa, meeting Mt Isa City Council, Chamber North West, Industry proponents and a tour of Glencore's George Fisher mine and the smelter. Day 2 saw the delegates in Cloncurry at the Meeting of the Mines Conference, as well as meeting representatives from Cloncurry Shire Council and McKinlay Shire Council. Day 3 in Townsville, meeting Townsville City Council, Townsville Chamber, JCU, a tour of Vecco's Electrolyte Manufacturing Facility as well as a tour of the Port of Townsville and discussions with exporters.

Thank you gracious hosts and proponents for your time and efforts in making the delegation feel welcome. Thank you North West Queensland for the narrative we were able to provide to the delegates who had an economic, trade and investment interest in strategic and critical minerals. We ensured the group knew that Queensland is open for business and that we are a professional and welcoming mining jurisdiction to engage with. Plans are already in progress for another delegation to visit in 2025.





The Gulf Regional Water Assessment (GRWA) is well underway following the first meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) in July and the Working Group (WG) meetings in August and October 2024. The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) has engaged expert technical contractors to progress the delivery of the GRWA. GHD has been appointed as the lead contractor, ODHydrology as the water planning contractor, and Synergies Economic Consulting as the Service Needs Analysis contractor. Synergies has commenced the Service Needs Analysis work and has also commenced stakeholder consultation.

A crucial first step in the GRWA process is to engage with existing and prospective water users in the region to obtain an understanding of the current demand for water and the factors that could drive changes in water demand. It is also important to understand any issues or barriers to either accessing or utilising water within the catchment, and obtain feedback on any initiatives that could be progressed to improve the economic benefit of water in the region. MITEZ has been identified as a key stakeholder for the RWA engagement and we have been sharing our views on water needs in the Gulf.

The Service Needs Analysis involves undertaking a demand assessment to identify current and future water supply needs. It will also explore how market trends and climate change may influence water demand and availability. Stakeholder engagement during the development of the service needs provides critical local knowledge and experience of the needs and opportunities of the Gulf region.

Stakeholders can participate via the online consultation portal or email the GRWA team at regionalwaterassessments@rdmw.qld.gov.au.

Stakeholders have also been invited to participate in an Investment Logic Mapping (ILM) workshop on 15 October. Stakeholders will bring local knowledge and experience to ensure that all aspects of the service need are identified and will have an opportunity to gain buy-in to the needs targeted by the GRWA. The ILM will link service needs, targeted benefits, strategic responses, and business changes required to achieve the identified benefits. The outcomes of the Service Needs Analysis will be presented at the second SAG meeting in mid-November.



NWQROC Executive, Greg Hoffman PSM and Deputy Chair and Treasurer, Mayor Janene Fegan, welcome new Chair, Mayor Barry Hughes.

Construction Skills Queensland 2024–2025 Training Plan Regional Launch was held in Townsville on 18 September. Construction activity in Queensland is set to surge with a significant pipeline of work planned for delivery over the coming decade under tight labour market conditions. The construction industry needs workers with a more diverse skill set, they will be needed for longer and simultaneously across different sectors. The greater regional spread and diversity of projects coming down the line will heighten workforce constraints across all sectors and occupations. This will result in different sectors of the industry competing for workers from the same limited pool while competing for labour from other industries facing similar challenges.

The 2024–25 CSQ Training Plan outlines their \$52 million investment to boost the capability and agility of Queensland’s building and construction industry to meet this unprecedented demand. CSQ will continue to invest in research to understand the demand for a renewables workforce and support workers to develop the specialised skills needed to deliver these projects. Apprenticeships remain the critical pathway to address future labour shortages and renew the construction workforce. CSQ will continue the successful Construction Pathways initiative to work with schools, students and industry to promote trade careers.



The **Queensland Major Projects Pipeline Report** is the definitive guide to the major construction works that will define the success of Queensland’s contracting sector. Over the past few years, Queensland has seen the pipeline grow from \$48b in 2020 to over \$90b in 2023. Post the 2024 State election, what will the pipeline look like? Where is the projected investment? How does the industry respond to this, and what does the industry need to do to deliver this massive pipeline?

To be launched at a Townsville breakfast event on 19 November, the 2024 Queensland Major Projects Pipeline Report will be an essential guide to industry and the projects Queensland and North Queensland needs for long-term financial and social prosperity.

Queensland Major Projects Pipeline Report cont

Tickets can be purchased via the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/qld-major-projects-pipeline-report-townsville-19-november-2024-tickets-1042329925867>

2024 QUEENSLAND MAJOR PROJECTS PIPELINE REPORT
TOWNSVILLE LAUNCH BREAKFAST
TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER - 7:00 AM TO 9:00 AM
TOWNSVILLE RSL CLUB
LEARN ABOUT THE MAJOR PROJECTS SET TO TRANSFORM QUEENSLAND AND YOUR REGION ACROSS THE NEXT 5 YEARS.

Category	Value
Public Unfunded	\$7b
Public Funded	\$38.29b
Private Unfunded	\$27.91b
Private Funded	\$18.75b

Other project values shown in the infographic:

- Energy: \$0.15b
- Water: \$3.76b
- Health: \$3.49b
- Education: \$24.24b
- Transport: \$4.46b
- Other: \$2.52b
- Other: \$2.74b
- Other: \$6.95b
- Other: \$18.23b
- Other: \$3.58b
- Other: \$3.18b

MITEZ was delighted to support the **CopperString 2032** Richmond Accommodation Launch on 23 September. Powerlink broke ground in Richmond on CopperString’s second workforce accommodation site along the 840km transmission line corridor. The ceremony in Richmond included local school children turning the first sod demonstrating the important connection between CopperString and future generations who will benefit from it for decades to come.

Just as in Hughenden, Powerlink’s construction delivery partner the UGL CPB Contractors Joint Venture together with ATCO Structures will deliver the workforce accommodation which is due for completion mid to late 2025. The workforce accommodation in Richmond will house up to 250 construction workers. These workers will construct the nearby substation and progress the transmission line heading west towards Mount Isa.





Industry leaders from the resources technology and critical minerals sector converged on Townsville in late September to discuss ways to boost this crucial industry in our region. **James Cook University** partnering with the University of Queensland and program lead Curtin University facilitated the inaugural **Regional Trailblazer Showcase & Stakeholder Forum**.

Critical minerals are used to manufacture several advanced technologies including mobile phones, computers, fibre-optic cables and have aerospace and medical applications. Many are also used in low- emission technologies such as electric vehicles or solar panels while others are found in common products like stainless steel and electronics. With a specific focus on Australian organisations in the sector, the showcase welcomed leading voices from all three partner universities, connecting them with government leaders and researchers for a series of presentations and round table discussions. The event created the opportunity to showcase the research being done in the region and open the door for more opportunities.

Attracting and retaining Queensland’s skilled resources workforce, challenges in water-related research, and mine waste management solutions were some of the topics discussed at the event.



The Australian Government has appointed an Independent Expert Panel to undertake a **review of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) Act 2016**. The Panel is seeking feedback on the effectiveness of NAIF, its governance arrangements, operational activities and whether its investment window should be extended beyond 30 June 2026.

Have your say here <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say/2024-review-northern-australia-infrastructure-facility-act-2016> A Discussion Paper, Fact Sheet and the Terms of Reference are also available for your reference at the above link.

The **CopperString 2032 Project Leadership Team** invited me to present at their 'Living and Leading our Culture' off-site. I spoke about the regional and community importance of this game-changing project. I gave an overview of the existing and emerging proponents and projects in the NW Corridor and how reliable, consistent and affordable energy will sustain and enhance the NWMP for decades to come, also allowing for industry diversification. Strong and competitive industry will underpin the regional communities.

CopperString is much more than a construction project, it is an enabling economic and community venture that will drive economic development across the entire MITEZ corridor.



An added bonus of the CopperString meeting was asking none other than Ian Healey for directions to the conference room, not that I realised it was him from a distance given my poor eyesight. Couldn't resist asking for a selfie. He's roughly my vintage and for all you youngsters he is a former Queensland and Australian cricketer and was the National team's wicketkeeper and a middle-order batsman. He played his first international match in 1988 and after just over a decade at his retirement held the world record for most Test dismissals by a wicket-keeper. His signature will always be his work standing over the stumps to Shane Warne, his "Bowling, Warnie", strained through pitch microphones, became a catch-cry.



Regional Development Australia, Townsville and North West Queensland (RDATNWQ) has commenced developing their Strategic Regional Plan, inviting stakeholders to participate in a consultation workshop to help shape the plan.

The workshop aimed to identify key strategic opportunities and challenges facing our region and to discuss and develop initiatives that will be critical to addressing those challenges. RDA aims to ensure that the program they develop aligns with the broader regional priorities and that they effectively complement existing initiatives and strategic plans from stakeholders.

The outcome of this process will guide the regional focus over the next five years, ensuring that we maximise regional growth, collaboration, and sustainability.



Another embassy official visited Townsville, we welcomed Evan Morrissey, Chief of Political and Economic Affairs from the US Consulate General Sydney.

MITEZ facilitated the visit and hosted a collaborative meeting with key stakeholders in the city. Representatives from Regional Development Australia, Townsville City Council, Smart Precinct, Townville Chamber and Townsville Enterprise showcased the region, followed by insightful tours of the Port of Townsville and Vecco's manufacturing facility and a meeting with Critical Minerals Queensland.

Engaging with our stakeholders is crucial for fostering partnerships and driving regional growth, ensuring that our collective efforts align toward a prosperous future for the MITEZ corridor. Thank you to everyone who participated and made the visit a success.



A \$20 million Townsville project is planned to scale up production of iron flow battery chemicals from processes developed at a local pilot plant. Grid-scale battery company Energy Storage Industries – Asia Pacific (ESI) and Townsville’s Cleveland Bay Chemical Company are partnering for the project. It will see the JV’s existing electrolyte manufacturing facility expanded from 3 million litres per annum to 43 million litres.

The plant expansion along with a planned concept study into potential construction of a commercial chlor-alkali chemical plant (CACP) in NW Queensland has attracted \$3 million in Department of State Development and Infrastructure funding. The CACP would produce hydrochloric acid and other reagents used for refining, processing and the manufacture of critical minerals.

Both Stuart Parry from Energy Storage Industries and Geoff Whebell from Cleveland Bay Chemical Company spoke at the Townsville Industry Breakfast earlier this year.



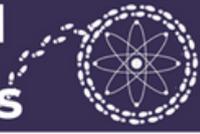
A French–Canadian aeronautical consortium is working towards launching a global airship freight network, including six Australian bases. **Mount Isa City Council** has signed an agreement to host the first base in Australia. A 200-metre-long piloted airship transporting freight could be flying over North West Queensland skies as soon as 2028, a net zero transport alternative.

The company plans to assemble the first airship overseas in 2025, with design finalisation and certification within two years. They are constructing three manufacturing facilities, one in France, Australia and Canada to be ready for 2028 with the long term goal to establish 46 bases across the Asia-Pacific region and 160 bases globally.

Charters Towers Regional Council is embarking on a review of their **Economic Development Strategy**, with a focus on providing a 5-year roadmap to drive sustainable economic growth. This project has been partially funded by the 2023–25 MITEZ Regional Economic Grant. To assist in this process, Council has engaged AEC Group to facilitate a series of meetings and workshops and provide recommendations. These workshops offer a unique opportunity for the local business community, to share your perspective on the region's strengths, challenges, and growth opportunities:

Wednesday, 30 October 2024, Council Administration Centre
Business and Industry Workshop: 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Community Workshop: 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Please RSVP to akeen@chartersowers.qld.gov.au or call 07 4761 5357

STEMM Strolls  **Townsville**
Grow Networks, Find Mentors & Foster Collaboration

Tuesday 29th of October at 12.00pm

James Cook University, Building 506 (Engineering)
 Networking and Refreshments Provided
 For more Information | To Register - Scan QR Code










MITEZ 
 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

UPCOMING EVENT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 MITEZ MEMBERS ONLY
 13:30 - 14:30

Followed by Member and Stakeholder collaboration

GENERAL MEETING
 14:30 - 17:00
*Featuring interactive panels
 Mining, renewable energy, logistics*

END OF YEAR NETWORKING FUNCTION
 17:00 - 19:00
Connect with MITEZ Members, Stakeholders, MITEZ Management Committee and staff for an evening of networking and collaboration

Registration open!

 November 7, 2024
 13.30PM- 19:00pm

 www.mitez.com.au

 RYDGES SOUTHBANK
 TOWNVILLE



Members link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/mitez-annual-general-meeting-for-2024-general-meeting-and-networking-event-tickets-1036452024907>

Stakeholders link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/stakeholders-mitez-general-meeting-and-end-of-year-networking-event-tickets-1036526979097>

Maria James
 Chief Executive Officer



14 October 2024

Our Members

