

From the ceo's desk.....

Last Friday MITEZ delivered the first of its forums for 2026: **Priorities, Advocacy and Activation**. Given my team and I are in the final stages of updating the MITEZ Strategic Plan, building on member feedback from a number of planning sessions, the forum began with me sharing some context around our plans to set a clear course to accelerate growth across the MITEZ region. Our mission is to position the MITEZ corridor as a globally competitive, sustainable and resilient region with world class infrastructure and liveability for our communities.

There has been a broadening of key economic pillars, with our focus on Mining and Renewable Resources; Processing and Manufacturing; Agriculture and AgTech; Tourism; Defence and Aerospace; and Community.

MITEZ key advocacy priorities include:

Efficient, cost-effective, game changing regional infrastructure

Strengthening regional resilience

Reducing barriers and cost of doing business in the region

A globally competitive and investment-ready region

Ensuring existing industry thrives and emerging industry is expedited

Outcomes from our advocacy are encapsulated as:

- Reliable, affordable and sustainable energy
- Competitive, cost-effective and resilient freight logistics
- Water availability, certainty and security
- End-to-end value chain optimisation
- Compelling, robust and profitable investment environment
- Regulatory reforms and streamlined approvals process
- Housing development and community infrastructure



MITEZ will not lead on all of these initiatives, we understand the intrinsic value of working with partners and experts, sharing the load and specialising on our strengths. To that end the MITEZ Management Committee has made it clear MITEZ will champion Energy, Water and Transport Logistics as our three top priorities.

I'd like to mention an advocacy initiative that MITEZ is about to embark on, one that aligns with all of the MITEZ advocacy priorities, and has the support of the MITEZ LGAs, together with a number of MITEZ renewable energy companies and other economic development and advocacy groups:

Government investment for a dedicated, fit-for-purpose, oversize/overmass transport corridor spanning the full MITEZ region

Existing infrastructure across the MITEZ LGAs cannot safely or efficiently support the rising volume of oversized-overmass (OSOM) freight. Tens of thousands of heavy-vehicle and OSOM movements occur annually, increasing pressure on freight routes, community traffic, and town centres. Significant overhead constraints—including hundreds of powerline crossings—add complexity, cost, and delays to major projects.

Without a coordinated, corridor-wide response, these systemic issues risk slowing renewable energy projects and critical minerals supply chains. Upcoming large-scale renewable and emerging mining projects will further intensify OSOM demand, increasing safety risks, project costs, and wear on road infrastructure while limiting the region's capacity to support economic growth.

MITEZ will be calling for government support to plan, fund, and deliver a dedicated OSOM corridor from Mount Isa to Townsville. Priority actions include targeted road and bridge upgrades, designated OSOM routes and bypasses, consistent engineering standards, improved safety infrastructure, coordinated solutions for overhead constraints, and forward planning for future demand.

MITEZ and its regional partners are ready to work with government to advance this strategic initiative. If we neglect development, growth and diversity in the MITEZ corridor, we will miss out on opportunities to boost Queensland's future economic prosperity.

Earlier in March Infrastructure Australia launched its new Infrastructure Priority List – a strategic blueprint identifying 68 of Australia's highest priority infrastructure proposals for investment now and over the next decade – the Mount Isa to Townsville rail corridor upgrade was dropped from the list.

MITEZ expressed strong concern following the removal of the Mount Isa–Townsville Rail Corridor Upgrade and the Queensland Inland Freight Route from Infrastructure Australia's national priority list. The decision highlights the ongoing challenge of ensuring productive infrastructure in regional Australia receives appropriate national recognition and investment. The Mount Isa–Townsville corridor is one of Australia's most strategically important freight and export routes, connecting the North West Minerals Province to the Port of Townsville and supporting Australia's critical minerals, resources and manufacturing supply chains. Strengthening this corridor is critical to supporting the growth of the North West Minerals Province and Australia's critical minerals supply chains.

Improving logistics and freight capacity across the corridor is essential to ensuring regional communities, industries and national supply chains remain competitive. Investment in corridor infrastructure must remain a national priority as Australia seeks to expand its critical minerals sector and strengthen sovereign manufacturing capability. Regional infrastructure investment was essential to unlocking the economic potential of North and North West Queensland.

Key priorities for the corridor include:

- Upgrades to the western sections of the Mount Isa–Townsville Rail Corridor
- Investment in energy and logistics infrastructure supporting the North West Minerals Province
- Infrastructure that strengthens the Pit-to-Port and Paddock-to-Port supply chain linking North West Queensland to the Port of Townsville

Strategic investment in regional infrastructure is critical not only for North and North West Queensland, but for Australia's future economic growth.

MITEZ will continue working with government, industry and all levels of government to advocate for infrastructure that strengthens regional productivity and long-term economic resilience.

The final Working Group meeting for the Gulf Regional Water Assessment (GRWA) was also held this month, marking a major milestone in a long running process to better understand how future water needs across the Gulf region can be met.

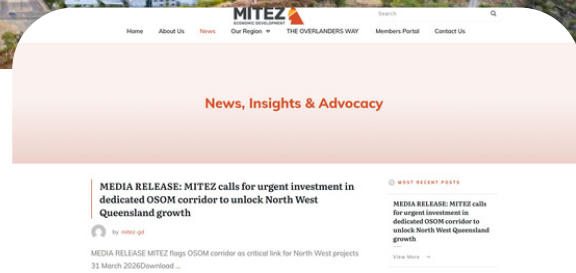
One of the key takeaways was the diversity of water supply options considered, and the significant differences in their scale. The assessment examined solutions ranging from small scale underground storage and water harvesting through to large pipeline duplications from Lake Julius. Notably, many of the most cost-effective options were localised approaches, such as groundwater use and private off stream storages, rather than major new dam infrastructure.

Future water demand projections reflect growth across multiple sectors, including copper and critical minerals, alongside strong expansion potential for irrigated agriculture, particularly cotton. The assessment highlights both the challenge and opportunity of aligning water access with broader regional development priorities that support industry, jobs and communities.

Environmental and cultural considerations were a consistent focus throughout the assessment. All shortlisted options carry environmental implications, and many intersect with areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Early and ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners, along with careful site selection, were identified as critical steps to avoiding or minimising impacts.

Draft findings and recommendations from the GRWA are expected to be released for public consultation later in 2026. This process will include community drop-in sessions across the region and will provide an important opportunity for stakeholders to review the options being considered and contribute feedback. Ultimately, the GRWA will play a key role in shaping future decisions around water infrastructure, investment, and planning across the Gulf, influencing outcomes for agriculture, mining, and town water security for years to come.

Spotlight on LATEST RELEASES FROM MITEZ



31 March 2026

MITEZ calls for urgent investment in dedicated OSOM corridor to unlock North West Queensland growth

[Read the full media release](#)

MITEZ is calling for coordinated government investment in a dedicated Oversize Overmass (OSOM) corridor to support the growing pipeline of projects across the North West. Increasing demand driven by critical minerals, renewable energy developments and CopperString 2032 is placing significant pressure on existing infrastructure. Without action, the corridor faces rising safety risks, project delays and constraints on national supply chains.

23 March 2026

MEDIA RELEASE: MITEZ to Drive New Chapter for the Overlanders Way Tourism Route

[Read the full media release](#)

MITEZ has taken on coordination of the Overlanders Way, marking a renewed focus on tourism, storytelling and regional collaboration across the corridor. The initiative will strengthen digital presence, promote local experiences and support communities and operators from Townsville through to Tennant Creek. The relaunch aligns with MITEZ's broader focus on regional resilience and economic diversification.

13 March 2026

MEDIA RELEASE MITEZ calls for renewed national focus on Mount Isa–Townsville Corridor infrastructure

March 2026

[Read the full media release](#)

MITEZ has raised concern following the removal of key Mount Isa–Townsville corridor projects from Infrastructure Australia's priority list, reinforcing the need for sustained national investment. The organisation continues to advocate for upgrades across rail, freight and energy infrastructure to strengthen supply chains, support the North West Minerals Province and ensure the corridor remains globally competitive.

A unified voice for infrastructure, investment and regional growth

QRC & WIMARQ 2026 Resources Awards for Women

MITEZ CEO Maria James attended the **Queensland Resources Council (QRC)** and **WIMARQ 2026 Resources Awards for Women (RAW)** in Brisbane in March, joining nearly 900 attendees for an inspiring celebration of leadership, inclusion, and progress across Queensland's resources sector.

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the RAW event, held in support of International Women's Day. As part of the milestone, QRC launched both its 2026 GIRLS Mentoring Program and the latest QRC & WIMARQ Women's Mentoring Program, reinforcing its commitment to developing the next generation of women leaders in resources.

The Awards recognised outstanding individuals and initiatives that are driving positive change across the industry. From operational excellence and technical innovation to programs opening new pathways for women, the finalists and winners demonstrated the depth of talent shaping the future of Queensland's resources sector.

See the full list of winners and finalists here: [**Queensland resources leader named women's award winner – Queensland Resources Council**](#)

The event also featured the Balance the Scales forum, where industry leaders Brian Gillespie (CS Energy), Susie Corlett, Brent Stowers (BUMA), Kanac Dyas (PowerSkillsAi), and Nikki Hughes (Stanwell) shared thoughtful insights on leadership, equity, and building workplaces where all employees can thrive.

Their perspectives reinforced the importance of culture, mentoring, and continued investment in diversity initiatives.

In addition to the awards, the following QRC program is now underway:

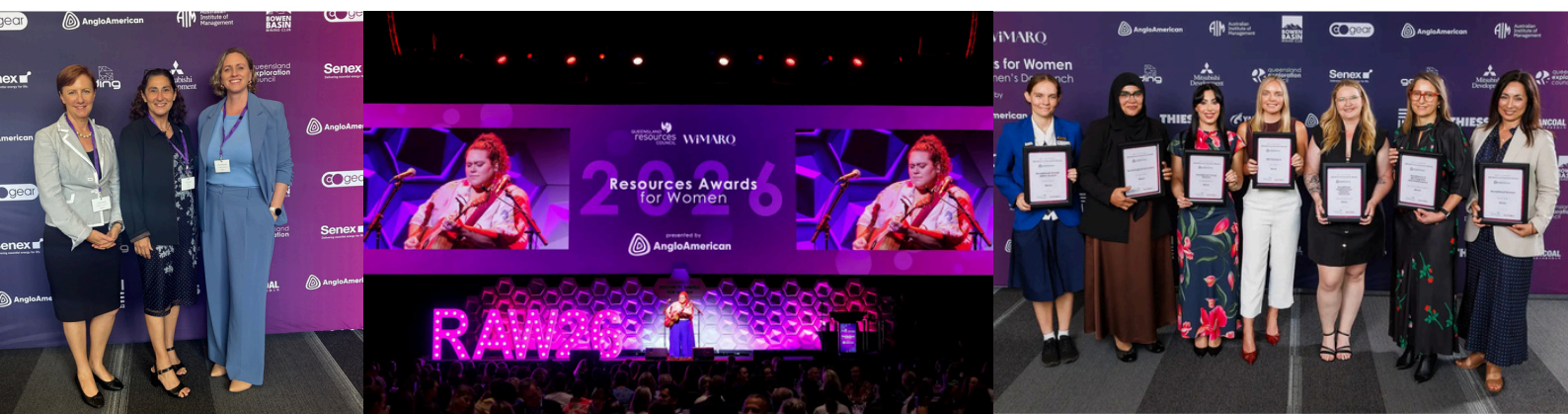
Women's Mentoring Program – Applications Open

This program supports women across the sector by strengthening leadership capability and expanding professional networks.

[**Apply or learn more here.**](#)



PROUDLY RESOURCING
QUEENSLAND



International Women's Day Luncheon Celebrates Leadership, Resilience & Regional Strength

The **International Women's Day Luncheon** held on Saturday 7 March at Rydges Southbank, hosted by **Senator Susan McDonald**, brought together community leaders from across North and North West Queensland for a heartfelt afternoon of inspiration, reflection, and support for communities recently impacted by flooding.

The event raised both awareness and vital funds for flood-affected regions, with guests showing strong generosity through raffles and donations. Many of the region's MPs, Mayors, and Councillors were in attendance, demonstrating united regional support during a challenging recovery period.

A standout moment of the luncheon was the keynote address by **McKinlay Shire Council Mayor Janene Fegan**, who shared her personal journey from arriving in Julia Creek for what was meant to be a three-month nursing role 30 years ago, to now serving as Mayor. Her story highlighted the power of service, community, and long-term commitment to regional Queensland. Mayor Fegan also captivated the room with the story of pioneering female aviator **Peggy Kelman** from Julia Creek, celebrating both local history and her own passion for aviation, illustrating the remarkable map-reading skills and courage of early female trailblazers.



The luncheon also featured a panel of regional Mayors – **Mayor Kate Peddle** of **Flinders Shire Council**, **Mayor Liz Schmidt** of **Charters Towers Regional Council**, **Mayor John Wharton** of **Richmond Shire Council**, and **Mayor Barry Hughes** of **Etheridge Shire Council**, who spoke candidly about community resilience and the realities of ongoing natural disasters. While acknowledging the strength of their communities, they emphasised the need to move beyond temporary fixes, urging governments and stakeholders to support long-term, preventative solutions that enable regions to **“build back better”** rather than facing annual cycles of repair.



The afternoon brought together stories of grit, leadership, and regional pride, reminding everyone present that the spirit of the North West is defined not only by its challenges, but by its people’s unwavering determination to overcome them.

MITEZ raises regional airfare challenges with Productivity Commission

MITEZ has lodged a submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Regional Airfares, highlighting the significant challenges faced across the Mount Isa to Townsville corridor.

The submission outlines how high airfares, limited routes and reduced competition are impacting regional communities, constraining business activity and limiting workforce mobility. It reinforces that for North West Queensland, aviation connectivity is not a luxury – it is essential infrastructure that supports economic development, access to services and industry growth.

MITEZ continues to advocate for improved affordability, reliability and accessibility of regional air services to ensure the corridor remains competitive and connected.

Read the full submission via our website:

[CLICK HERE](#)

Update on CopperString

The March 2026 edition of the **CopperString** Project Update highlights continued progress as the project's transition from Powerlink to the **Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC)** advances. Key developments include leadership changes, milestones in substation approvals, workforce accommodation planning, community engagement, and regional investment initiatives.

A major milestone announced is the **Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID) approval for the Flinders Substation**, granted on 23 December 2025. This substation will play a crucial role in feeding new energy generation across the Flinders Shire into the Eastern Link and connecting to the National Electricity Market.

Invitation to Tender

The newsletter confirms that Powerlink is preparing to issue an Invitation to Tender (ITT) in early March 2026 for the bulk earthworks and civil works package associated with the Flinders Substation. This follows market engagement activities that began in late 2025. The works will include the establishment of a temporary concrete batching plant and supporting water infrastructure.

This ITT represents a significant contracting opportunity for suppliers across the CopperString corridor, particularly those who have been participating in the Supplier Capability Development Program.

Additional Updates Include:

- Leadership transition: Former Project Director Tom Dockray farewells the project; Vikram Dhiman takes over stewardship.
- Workforce accommodation facilities: Expression of Interest (EOI) process completed for Eastern Link workforce accommodation sites, with several candidate locations identified.
- Community investment: Announcement of the \$50 million CopperString Community Benefits Fund, supporting infrastructure, housing, water and sewerage planning across seven LGAs from Townsville to Mount Isa.
- Local engagement: More than 6,000 visitors have attended the CopperString Experience Centre since its opening in 2024, with strong community participation in events and school programs.
- Supplier development: Four Supplier Capability Development Program workshops delivered across Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Julia Creek, Richmond and Hughenden, with 159 suppliers participating and reporting high satisfaction.
- Community grants: Numerous community organisations across the corridor received small grants in round three of the program.

Celebrating 55 Years of Queensland Country Bank

For 55 years, **MITEZ Member Queensland Country Bank** has proudly stood beside the people of Queensland, growing from a small Mount Isa credit union into a statewide member-owned bank built on people, purpose, and progress. Their regional roots have shaped who they are today: a bank committed to community connection, genuine care, and supporting the financial wellbeing of everyday Queenslanders.

Community has always been central to QCB's identity. Since 2005, they have invested more than **\$3 million** into local projects and grassroots initiatives that strengthen regional Queensland. From their volunteering program to iconic partnerships including the Mount Isa Rodeo, Queensland Country Bank Stadium, and the Brisbane Heat, they are proud to give back to the communities that have helped shape them.

In the past 5 years, they have achieved significant milestones: expanding support for small and medium businesses, refreshing the brand, joining the UN Global Compact, opening a Maroochydore branch, purchasing a Brisbane CBD office, surpassing \$4 billion in assets, and extending naming rights for Queensland Country Bank Stadium through to 2029. Each step reflects the commitment to growth and Member experience.

From first-home dreams to retirement confidence, QCB Members continue to share stories of trust, personalised care, and long-standing relationships built over decades. Banking is more than products. It's about people and the lives they have shaped.

QCB are looking to the future with optimism – investing in new technology, expanding services, and remaining focused on delivering exceptional Member experiences, guided by the same values defined from the beginning.

Here's to 55 years of Queensland Country Bank, and to the many years of partnership, purpose, and progress still ahead.



GRU Engagement Day Brings Together Industry, Government and Research Partners

EGRU welcomed colleagues from across the resources sector to this year's **Economic Geology Research Centre (EGRU) Engagement Day**, held in March 2026 at the **Engineering Innovation Place, James Cook University**. The annual event is designed to strengthen collaboration between industry, government, and research partners while showcasing current projects and new initiatives underway within the Economic Geology Research Unit.

The session opened with a welcome and EGRU update from the Head of the Economic Geology Research Centre, outlining current activities, strategic directions, and strengthening relationships with industry partners. EGRU Services are available in the areas of mapping, imaging, dating and remote sensing capabilities.

A strong focus this year was the spotlight on education and workforce development in North Queensland, with a presentation by QMEA on Developing the Pipeline, highlighting the role of an emerging initiative designed to build the future critical minerals workforce across Townsville and the North West via STEM in schools.

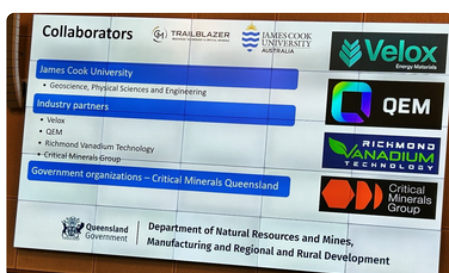
Attendees were also introduced to academic and research staff, whose expertise spans mineral systems, geochemistry, structural geology and exploration innovation, further enhancing EGRU's research capacity.

The program also featured concise updates on EGRU's latest research, covering advances in vanadium extraction, rare earth element (REE) fingerprinting and processing, sustainable REE extraction, and new analytical approaches using trace elements and isotopes. Presenters outlined work on magmatic and hydrothermal enrichment processes, the application of high-resolution seismic and tremor data for exploration, and emerging sedimentary basin and Proterozoic architecture studies that are improving understanding of critical mineral systems.

The continued partnership between industry, government, and academia remains essential to advancing exploration research and supporting the critical minerals sector in northern Australia. Thanks to MITEZ members QEM, Richmond Vanadium Technology and Critical Minerals Group for the ongoing Industry collaboration.

For more information on EGRU and upcoming events head to

[CLICK HERE](#)



Type	Name	Description	Main REE Content
Alkaline igneous	Peak Range (PR)	33-23 Ma argonite (apatite) enriched in REE, Zr, Hf, Nb, Ta (Chandler and Spandler, 2008)	Dalryle (K ₂ O ₂), secondary REE, cerium, La
Phosphate ore	Phosphate Hill (PH) / Apatite (AP)	Carbonate phosphate-rich sediments (mainly dolomite, sand)	carbonate-Phosphate, phosphogypsum, mining by-products
Uranium settings	Milly Kuthies (MK)	tailings from two phases of historical U mining	Alkaline, (F apatite, garnet), sulphate phase



North West Priorities Highlighted in New Regional Infrastructure & Energy Report

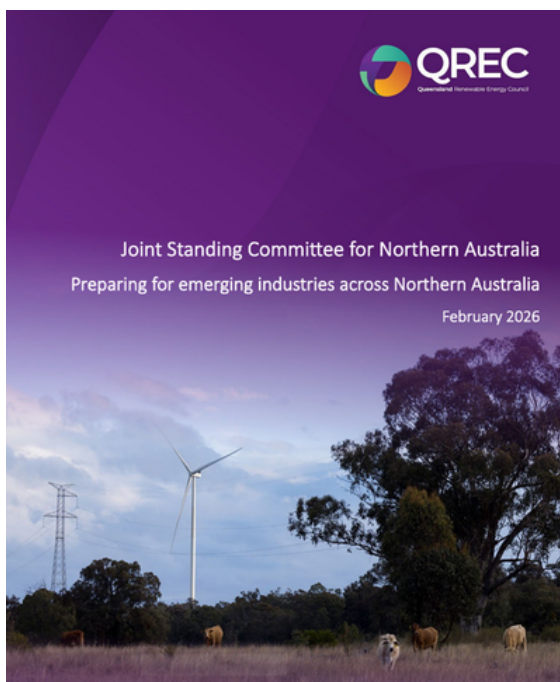
A new submission by the **Queensland Renewable Energy Council (QREC)** to the Joint Standing Committee for Northern Australia reinforces what the region already knows: North West Queensland is central to Australia's economic future, but energy reliability and enabling infrastructure must catch up to industry demand.

Reliable, affordable power remains the biggest barrier to growth in the Mount Isa–Townsville corridor. Energy intensive operations across the North West Minerals Province depend on continuous, high-capacity supply, and uncertainty continues to impact investment decisions. The report identifies CopperString 2032 as the key project that will unlock renewable energy, lower long term costs, and enable downstream processing in Mount Isa, Cloncurry and surrounding districts. The submission highlights that roads and bridges linking the North West to Townsville port were never designed for today's loads or project activity. Vulnerable bridges, flood prone corridors and outdated oversize / overmass (OSOM) routes are constraining delivery of renewable energy, mining and industrial projects and require necessary and coordinated upgrades.

Emerging industries across the North, from critical minerals to renewable energy and advanced manufacturing, require a larger, more specialised workforce than current regional labour markets can supply. The report calls for a coordinated Northern Australia workforce strategy to address skills gaps and support long term regional population stability.

MITEZ supports the submission by QREC, especially in relation to the Mount Isa to Townsville region across these areas:

- Energy reliability underpins all future industrial investment.
- Road and bridge upgrades are essential to unlock project delivery and freight efficiency.
- Workforce planning and attraction will determine how much of the opportunity stays local.



For more information and to download the full submission click here – [Nation-building action needed to power Northern Australia growth: QREC – QREC](#)



CopperString Project with the eastern link from Townsville to Hughenden due for completion in 2032.



North West Outlook: Key Insights from Construction Skills Queensland's (CSQ) with Horizon 2032 (2026 Edition)

Queensland has entered a long-term construction super-cycle, with activity expected to stay elevated through to 2031–32. The challenge is not the volume of work but finding the workforce to deliver it.

This means there are both opportunities and challenges for the MITEZ region:

Opportunities

- Major growth in energy, mining and heavy industry. The core sectors of the North West will drive much of Queensland's engineering pipeline.
- Long-term investment in transmission, storage and industrial capacity positions the North West to benefit from sustained construction demand.

Challenges

- Queensland faces an average shortfall of 19,100 construction workers, peaking at 35,000 by 2027–28. Regions with smaller labour pools such as those in the MITEZ region will feel this more.
- Critical shortages persist across key trades: electricians, carpenters, concreters, plant operators, welders and civil professionals.
- Competition from major SEQ projects including but not limited to the 2032 Games infrastructure will intensify labour pressures.

What's Needed

The CSQ report states that there is no single solution. Queensland will need stronger apprenticeship pipelines, better retention, increased participation from women and Indigenous workers, and targeted migration to fill gaps.

For the North West, coordinated regional strategies around skills, housing, attraction and project scheduling will be essential to secure the workforce needed to capture the opportunities ahead.

Download the Full Report,

Key Findings, 2032 Games documents here:





Launch into Work: Supporting Recruitment Across Townsville and North Queensland

The **Launch into Work program** continues to deliver strong results for employers across Townsville and North Queensland, helping businesses recruit differently and build a more resilient, skilled and diverse workforce.

Designed for employers with upcoming entry-level vacancies, Launch into Work provides fully supported, tailored pre-employment projects including screening, training, mentoring and workplace preparation. The program is flexible, employer-led, and has shown strong outcomes, with 81% of participants moving into employment upon completion.

Local projects across civil construction and disability support have demonstrated the program's impact, offering life-skills development, accredited training, practical workplace exposure and up to six months of post-placement mentoring. Employers involved report increased workforce diversity, improved job readiness among candidates, and strong retention outcomes.

For organisations interested in exploring how Launch into Work can support upcoming recruitment needs, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations can provide additional information sessions or meet directly with businesses and industry representatives to discuss program design in more detail.

Learn more about the program at: [Launch into Work – Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government.](#)

For enquiries or to book a session:
launchintowork@dewr.gov.au

Great to see **Trade and Investment Queensland** on the ground in North Queensland, bringing global connections into the region.

MITEZ CEO Maria James and the team joined the **North Queensland Economic Futures Breakfast**, presenting to commissioners and stakeholders on the scale of opportunity across the MITEZ Corridor – from critical minerals and energy to infrastructure and export pathways through Port of Townsville Limited.

The message is clear, the **MITEZ corridor** is investment-ready, and with the right enablers in place, positioned to play a key role in Australia’s future growth.



Careers in Gear – Explore roles that keep the country moving

Careers in Gear connects North Queensland students with real career pathways in the transport industry, helping them understand how transport works and the wide range of jobs it offers. The program also teaches practical values like reliability, communication and work readiness.

Purpose

- Introduce high school students to careers in transport.
- Highlight pathways from manufacturing to road construction and vehicle maintenance.

How Businesses Can Contribute

- Host work experience students.
- Provide a truck for school visits.
- Sponsor the program (fully funded by local transport businesses).
- Donate merchandise or share entry-level job opportunities.

What the Program Offers Schools

- 1-hour presentation: Introduction to industry careers.
- 2-hour workshop: Interactive, hands-on career exploration.
- Full-day industry tour: Behind-the-scenes look at real workplaces.

Why It Exists

With most transport workers now over 55, the industry must actively build the next generation of workers. Careers in Gear helps businesses engage early and inspire future talent.

For more information contact **Tayla Connolly**: sheisreal@outlook.com / 0438 819 341



Build Skills for a Growing Sector with selectability Training

selectability offers a suite of nationally recognised training programs designed to build capability across the community services, disability, and mental health sectors.

Through its registered training organisation, selectability Training (RTO 0281), learners can access flexible, industry-aligned qualifications that support career entry, upskilling, or progression into specialised roles.

Training opportunities include:

- Mental Health First Aid, recognised nationally and supported by Suicide Prevention Australia.
- Pathways into roles such as Lifestyle Support Worker, Mental Health Worker, and Disability Support roles, with practical learning directly connected to industry needs.
- Comprehensive programs in community services, disability support, and mental health, delivered by trainers with real-world sector experience.



Selectability's training model combines flexible delivery with strong industry partnerships, ensuring graduates are job-ready in one of Australia's fastest-growing sectors. With locations and opportunities across regional Queensland including Mount Isa, Richmond, Charters Towers and Townsville, it's a valuable pathway for those seeking meaningful careers that make a difference.

Learn more or enrol at: [selectability Training](#).

Benefits of the ATDW

The **Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)** is Australia's central digital platform that makes tourism businesses more visible and easier for travellers to find. It lets operators create one listing that automatically appears across major tourism websites like australia.com and state tourism sites, giving businesses exposure with minimal effort. ATDW listings also drive direct leads to operator websites without commissions, improve SEO by appearing on high ranking tourism sites, and save time by managing all updates in one place. ATDW generates traffic and consistent customer enquiries for tourism operators nationwide.

For regions along the Overlanders Way, ATDW offers a powerful way to showcase local attractions, events, accommodation, and unique outback experiences to travellers planning their journeys online. Because ATDW distributes content across national and state tourism platforms, listings from Overlanders Way operators gain exposure to millions of potential visitors seeking authentic regional adventures. By strengthening visibility and making it easier for travellers to discover stops along the route, ATDW can help drive greater visitor dispersal, longer stays, and increased spending across the entire corridor. Get started here - [ATDW](#)

Seeking STEM Industry Partners for 2026 Regional Programs

Sarah Chapman is currently preparing for upcoming STEM Changemakers programs in Hughenden and Julia Creek this June and July and is reaching out to identify STEM-focused organisations that may be interested in participating in or sponsoring these regional initiatives.

The STEM Changemakers Program is designed to empower girls in regional and rural Queensland by increasing STEM awareness, building confidence, and showcasing real-world STEM career pathways. The Program Overview and Video Story links below provide a snapshot of the impact and opportunities the program brings to local communities.

[Overview & STEM Changemakers](#)

These 2026 programs offer a valuable platform to highlight the diverse STEM industries shaping our state, and they would love to feature organisations that can share their expertise, challenges, and real-world STEM problems with participating students. If you know of any individuals, companies, or community groups that may be interested in being involved, or if you can facilitate an introduction, your support will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for helping strengthen STEM opportunities across regional Queensland.



HUGHENDEN – 28 June – 30 June 2026

JULIA CREEK – 2 July – 4 July 2026

Contact Sarah Chapman

STEMChangemakers@outlook.com or view the

website for more information

stemchangemakers.au

Eva Copper Project recognised as 'Large Resource Project'

The Eva Copper Mine Project has been formally listed as a 'large resource project' under the Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017 – a significant milestone for the North West Minerals Province.

The designation reinforces a strong focus on local jobs, local procurement and long-term community benefits for Cloncurry, Mount Isa and the broader region. Harmony Gold has welcomed the announcement, highlighting its commitment to delivering lasting regional outcomes through employment, business opportunities and community investment.

This recognition further strengthens the role of the MITEZ Corridor in supporting critical minerals development and driving economic growth across regional Queensland.



Spotlight on Our North West Ambassador:

Kylie Rixon Leading the Charge for the



The Overlanders Way is gaining national attention and at the heart of that momentum is our North West Overlanders Way Ambassador, Kylie Rixon, Owner/Operator of Sunset Tourist Park in Mount Isa.

Through MITEZ's partnership with Drive Queensland, Kylie is proudly representing the Overlanders Way corridor at the Let's Go Caravan & Outdoor Expo series. Kylie is one of the many faces, voices, and storytellers of the North West, championing everything that makes our region remarkable.

As an operator connected to the traveller experience, Kylie brings an authentic, on-the-ground perspective to the national stage. She speaks not only from local knowledge, but from lived experience.



From Townsville to Camooweal, the Overlanders Way delivers authentic, bucket-list Outback experiences across the MITEZ corridor.

Here's just a taste of what travellers can experience:

Take a guided tour at the Droving Heritage Centre – **Camooweal**

Delve underground on a mine tour – **MountIsa**

Catch the world-famous Mount Isa Rodeo – **MountIsa**

Explore the ghost town of Mary Kathleen – **Cloncurry**

Visit John Flynn Place Museum & Fred McKay Art Gallery – **Cloncurry**

Indulge in artesian baths – **JuliaCreek**

Walk with dinosaurs – **Richmond**

Discover Australia's 'mini Grand Canyon' at Porcupine Gorge – **Hughenden**

See the mosaics at Goldtower – **ChartersTowers**

Take a day trip to Magnetic Island – **Townsville**

Kylie's storytelling brings these experiences to life, inspiring travellers to look beyond the coastline and explore the heart of Queensland.

Say hello to **Kylie** and the **Drive Queensland team** at a future Camping Show:

[2026 Caravan Camping Show: Find the Best Events Here! | Lets Go Caravan and Camping](#)

Celebrate Our Volunteers – Nominations Now Open

The **Volunteering North Queensland (VNQ) Volunteer of the Year Awards**, which recognise the outstanding contributions of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations across our region, are now open for nominations.

Last years recipients of the Community Volunteering Program Impact Award was Meals on Wheels Mount Isa, highlighting the powerful impact of local volunteering.

Nominations for the 2026 Volunteer of the Year Awards are now open and close at midnight on **Sunday, 19 April 2026**.

Nominations are accepted for volunteers and organisations contributing to communities across Townsville, Hinchinbrook, Burdekin, Palm Island, Mount Isa, and all regions in between.

Award categories include:

- Volunteer of the Year
- Youth Volunteer of the Year
- Lifetime Contribution to Volunteering
- Excellence in Volunteer Management
- Community Volunteering Program Impact
- Corporate Volunteering Award
- Sports Volunteer Award
- Neighbour of the Year [vnq.org.au]

We encourage community members, organisations, and volunteers to submit a nomination and help recognise the incredible people strengthening our communities.



2026 VNQ Annual Volunteer Awards Nominations are now open!
Register Now:

National
Volunteer
Week
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER

18-24 MAY 2026



EGRU invites you to join them in Charters Towers for this year's collaborative workshop on [Mineral Systems of Eastern Queensland](#).

The workshop consists of 1.5 days of presentations followed by an optional field trip on 16 April. The program of presentations highlights exploration results, new concepts and insights, and new project development, with talks by geoscientists who are actively involved in exploration and research in the region. There'll be core, hand specimen and poster displays at the venue, and an opportunity to visit the Terra Search core yard to pore over intervals of massive sulphide from Highway Reward Cu-Au and breccias from Mount Leyshon.

The one-day field trip, generously hosted by **Sunshine Metals**, will include a visit to critical outcrops at the Liontown Project south of Charters Towers, and core from recent drilling at the Francis Creek project illustrating epithermal vein textures and mineralisation.

There's more information and a link to registration on the EGRU website [here](#).



SAVE THE DATE – CONNECT NORTH WEST 2026

A major new business and industry event is coming to Mount Isa.

Mount Isa City Council is proud to introduce Connect North West, a one-day Business & Industry Expo designed to bring together mining, major industry, small and medium businesses, suppliers, service providers and community organisations from across Northwest Queensland.

This event will create a platform for businesses of all sizes to showcase their capabilities, discover new opportunities, connect with industry leaders, and build partnerships that support growth across the region.

Whether you supply the mining sector, support local businesses, provide essential services or are looking to expand your network, Connect North West is designed to benefit every business operating in the North West.

Date: 7 May 2026 – Location: Mount Isa

Exhibitor opportunities and registrations will be released soon.

For enquiries about being involved:

connectnw@mountisa.qld.gov.au

Brian Atherinos – 07 4747 3214



What's on along the MITEZ CORRIDOR

SAVE THE DATE

don't miss it!

First Nations Artists, Arts and Craft Stalls

BLAK ART MARKETS

Sunday 12th April 9am -1pm
Gregory Street Amphitheatre
The Strand

Live Music
Kids Corner
Weaving Workshop*
*fees apply

Weaving Workshop
Book now

For more information
blakartmarkets@bigeyetheatre.com

JULIA GREEK

DIRT AND DUST FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

29-30 MAY 2026

Queensland

Liberty Rural 2026
Maxi Races

15th Anniversary
11th of April

GATES OPEN AT MIDDAY
\$5 Per Person
(includes a refreshment only)

5 RACE PROGRAM
FASHION ON THE FIELD
THE MAXI MILE
FOOT RACES
SUPER AUCTION
TIG OF WAR
KIDS ENTERTAINMENT
RECOVERY BREAKFAST

Liberty rural
RICHMOND & CLONCURRY

Become a Stallholder!

VEXPO

22 & 23 May 2026

7 MAY 2026

CALLING ALL EXHIBITORS

CONNECT NORTH WEST

Curry Merry Muster Festival
2026 STREET PARADE THEME

7-9 JULY 2026

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Time to get your best creation skills on Cloncurry!

ARE YOU STUDYING ?

COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE MOUNT ISA IS A FREE, SAFE, SECURE STUDY FACILITY FOR ANYONE STUDYING WITH ANY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN AUSTRALIA.

- Quiet place to study
- Free high speed internet
- Student access 6am to Midnight
- Free printing
- Dual screen computers
- Refreshments
- Local student community
- Face-to-face local support

REGISTER ONLINE

www.cucmountisa.edu.au

PLAN THE PERFECT OUTBACK SOUNDS WEEKEND IN MOUNT ISA

ENTER TODAY!

BUCHANAN PARK, MOUNT ISA SAT 09 MAY

OUTBACK SOUNDS

KAYLEE BELL (NZ)
THE WOLFE BROTHERS
ZAC & GEORGE + TAYLOR MOSS
WILLIAM BARTON + HOMEGROWN TRIO
2026 TOYOTA STAR MAKER

LOCAL ARTISTS → LIVE DRAWING → CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

QMF:



ROCKHANA

GEM, MINERAL AND MINING FIELD DAY

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY 4TH JULY 2026

THE CLONCURRY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MARKETS
SUNDAY 5TH JULY 2026

Country Universities Centre
Bringing degrees closer to regional, rural and remote Australia.

16 Miles Street
Ph: 0427 549 938

Cuppa with the Councillors

8:30 am

18 February
25 March
29 April
27 May
24 June
22 July
26 August
23 September
25 November
16 December

HIGHBURN FESTIVAL OF OUTBACK SKIES

ART COMPETITION

All mediums welcome!
Draw inspiration from the outback skies.

WINNER - \$1000
PEOPLES CHOICE \$500

Entries open up until the 29 April 2026.

ENTRY FORM AND FULL T&CS CAN BE FOUND AT
FESTIVALOFOUTBACKSKIES.COM.AU

HIGHBURN FESTIVAL OF OUTBACK SKIES

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE SHIRE OF FLINDERS

BOOK TICKETS NOW

DAY 1 FRIDAY MAY 1ST 6:00PM

OPENING NIGHT BULLS & BRONCS

Calling All Volunteers!

Help bring the Festival of Outback Skies 2026 to life

We have a range of volunteering opportunities available over the weekend to match your needs and availability.

Register your interest online or reach out to the team to chat more about opportunities.

We have a range of volunteer perks including goodie bags and event and drink tickets.

OUTBACK SKIES

Contact: Jennifer on 4741 2933 or email tdo@flinders.qld.gov.au

North QLD, we're here for you!

Helping workers & employers
navigate QLeave with confidence.

QLeave is the portable long service leave scheme for eligible workers in Queensland's **building and construction**, **community services**, and **contract cleaning** industries. We ensure workers can accrue long service leave entitlements, even when they move between employers within their industry.

For **employers**, QLeave manages levy collection and member registration to support a sustainable, industry-funded scheme. For **workers**, we safeguard entitlements and provide payment when long service leave is taken.

To learn more about how QLeave supports your industry, visit www.qleave.qld.gov.au or contact our Strategic Engagement Team.



Louise Myers

Senior Strategic Engagement Officer

Phone: 0447 419 440

Email: louise.myers@qleave.qld.gov.au



Save The Date



2026 Event Calendar

Key dates for MITEZ engagement



General Meeting Forum 2

Thursday 16 July

MITEZ's major event of the year, *The Long Lunch* will be held in Julia Creek with a Paddock to Plate theme, highlighting North West flood recovery and supporting local graziers while showcasing the strength & resilience of the region's agricultural sector.



Roadshow 1

Wednesday 13 & Thursday 14 May
LGA, regional members & other businesses
Location: Charters Towers & Hughenden



Roadshow 2

Tuesday 13 & Wednesday 14 October
LGA, regional members & other businesses
Location: Mount Isa



Annual General Meeting & General Meeting Forum 3

Thursday 5 November
Review achievements and future plans
Location: Townsville



Partner with MITEZ —
sponsorship opportunities
available across the NW corridor

Our Members

