

# **Townsville Water Security Taskforce hand final report to Government officials in Brisbane**

CLARE ARMSTRONG, Townsville Bulletin

October 30, 2018 11:38am

Subscriber only

A HIGHLY anticipated final report to outline the future of Townsville's long-term water supply has been handed to government officials today.

## **WATER SECURITY KEY TO ELECTION SUCCESS**

## **PIPES ARRIVE FOR HAUGHTON DUPLICATION PROJECT**

## **TEL BACKING HAUGHTON PIPELINE STAGE 2**

Representatives from the Townsville City Council, State Government and Commonwealth formally received the final Townsville Water Security Taskforce report in Brisbane.

The *Townsville Bulletin* understands the final report, which was completed on September 30, will recommend Stage 2 of the Haughton Pipeline Duplication as the best solution to water security in Townsville.

The report highlights the second stage of the pipeline should be built at the same time as Stage 1 and that doing so would save millions of dollars.



Figure 1 Pipe Systems Pty Ltd general manager Andrew Sarich, MP Scott Stewart, Mayor Jenny Hill, General Manager of Iplex Rocla Australia Nicole Sumich and National Business Manager -Infrastructure Michael Doyle as the pipeline arrives in Townsville.

Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill said the Independent Taskforce's final report demonstrated the benefits of building Stage 1 and 2 together and called on the federal government to contribute "its fair share" of the money.

"Water security is absolutely critical for Townsville's future and that's why Council is totally committed to delivering Stage 1 of the city's new water pipeline by December 2019," Cr Hill said.

"This report clearly states the huge benefits – and savings – to build Stage 1 and Stage 2 together. Doing both stages of the pipeline project together will create significant savings in construction costs and increase the capacity of the pipeline by more than 50 per cent.

"Not only will save huge amounts of money, it will also provide a further boost to our economy and create hundreds more jobs for locals."

It is believed the report was sent to all levels of government earlier this month, but today's Brisbane meeting will publicly formalise the milestone.

The final report is believed to include many of the recommendations outlined in the interim report released in 2017.

Following the interim report, the State Government provided \$215 million for Stage 1 of the project, which included construction of a new 1800mm pipeline from the Haughton irrigation channel to the Ross River Dam.

Stage 2 includes extending that pipeline from Haughton to the Burdekin River at Clare, and building a new pump station to supply the larger pipes.

It is understood if funding is made available immediately to allow concurrent construction of the two stages, the total capital cost of Stage 2 could be cut by as much as 25 per cent.

This would potentially save millions of dollars in taxpayer funding compared to the situation if the pipe is upgraded in two separate stages.

Mayor Jenny Hill, Townsville Enterprise chief executive Patricia O'Callaghan, Herbert Labor MP Cathy O'Toole and her LNP opponent Philip Thompson have all expressed their support for Stage 2 and indicated they would seek federal funding for the project.

Labor has said if elected, it would commit \$100 million to fund the solution recommended by the taskforce.

During a visit to Townsville last month, Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure and Regional Development Minister Michael McCormack was implored to get his Canberra colleagues on side and back Stage 2.

Mr McCormack attended a series of meetings with members of the council, Townsville Enterprise and other stakeholders, including the taskforce, to discuss the region's priorities.



*Figure 2 Mendi Group managing director Jeff Doyle with Mayor Jenny Hill and Deputy Mayor Les Walker marking the start of civil work on the Haughton water pipeline project.*

Acting Mayor Les Walker then gave Mr McCormack a letter asking the Commonwealth to fund Stage 2.

“Put bluntly, Townsville’s economy needs water security to continue to grow, to ensure the city’s industrial base does not decline further and the community’s lifestyle isn’t impeded by lack of access to water,” he said.

The handing over of the final report comes the week after pipes for Stage 1 arrived in Townsville.