

## The Queensland Water Industry Roadmap and Purpose of Strategy Day, 8 September

### Background

The concept of an industry “Roadmap” was first introduced in late 2018 after the last annual forum held at the Gold Coast. A former Productivity Commissioner challenged our then Technical Reference Group to develop a platform to help drive an industry agenda, acknowledging the demise of any state strategy. The model evolved quickly based on a number of key priorities originally developed for a research and development agenda, and the Roadmap itself is structured into three key parts:

1. Do now – the *qldwater* work plan
2. Do with further investment – collaborative opportunities
3. Do with appropriate change – policy recommendations to enable both the work plan and collaborative opportunities

Most of 2019 was then spent ground-truthing the ideas with members state-wide and while we don’t have a glossy publication to support it, we do have a strong strategic framework which is reviewed by our current Strategic Priorities Group regularly, and a broadly agreed approach.

The “Roadmap Priorities” are core to the larger document which includes a series of more detailed descriptions, actions and status. For example, “Strategic Sector-Wide Investment” includes sub-priorities of:

- Improved transparency (of cost/ price arrangements and other funding sources and drivers);
- Articulating minimum service standards to enable better planning;
- Improving regional-scale capital planning;
- Improving benchmarking and collaboration; and
- A clear and distinct focus on smarter solutions to support small communities.

and actions including educating elected representatives, government, promotion of the uptake of costing/pricing models, more benchmarking trials and the development of alternatives to current inefficient, ad hoc grant funding.

### 8 September Purpose and Process

For past annual forums, we have focussed on workshopping a number of individual priorities – taking advantage of a diverse audience of service providers from across the state and stakeholders from the private sector and government. The “provocation” model has proven to be engaging and a great way of stimulating ideas – in the past we would nominate a topic leader to present a contentious position and get forum participants to have frank and fearless conversations to help refine the Roadmap.

For 2022, we are presented with an opportunity to look at the approach more holistically with one of the documents which originally inspired the Roadmap Priorities being refreshed. [CSIRO’s Our Future World – Global Megatrends impacting the way we live over coming decades](#) was released in July.

During the course of the day you will be presented with a series of speakers and panellists chosen to present ideas from the big picture to the operational. Speakers will include a representative from Taumata Arowai – the new NZ drinking water regulator charged with implementing a major reform agenda in NZ and the Director General of The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water Dr Graham Fraine.

The challenge for the day is to rejig the Roadmap – do the Megatrends or speakers suggest escalating priorities? Have the emerging emerged and should they be elevated? Without wishing to prejudice the discussion, topics like supply chain challenges and managing people in the “new normal” are not well reflected in the current list.

At the end of the day we are aiming to hold a mock “Executive Leadership Team” meeting with some senior industry leaders discussing how they would present the information from the day to a Board or Council – aside from your valuable contribution to our advocacy agenda, you will get to hear diverse views on approaches to the challenges outlined during the day and hopefully some take-home ideas for similar conversations in your own business.

**“Working towards Safe, Secure and Sustainable Water and Sewerage Services for all Queensland Communities”**

### Current (September 2022) Priorities:



#### 1. Emerging - Urgent Priorities

- Negotiation/ competition with other services
- Immediate safety and policy issues (contaminants is a big one)
- COVID response and recovery



#### 2. Strategic Sector-Wide Investment

- Smoothing the infrastructure cliff
- Strategic state-wide capital investment
- Whole-of-life cycle Totex



#### 3. Regional innovation and Regionalisation

- Queensland water regional alliances
- Coping with water reform (or lack there-of)
- **qldwater** – safe, secure and sustainable services for all



#### 4. Harmonising Water Regulation

- Integrated regulation across the water cycle
- Economic regulation: certainty and sustainability
- Linking environmental economic and community outcomes



#### 5. Resource Recovery and Renewables

- Recovery of nutrients and energy
- Renewable energy at small scales
- Reducing input factors for environmental outcomes



#### 6. Catchment Resilience in a Changing Environment

- Heathy catchment, healthy water
- Fit-for-purpose treatment solutions
- Utility sustainability at landscape scales



#### 7. Understanding and Exceeding Customer Expectations

- Understanding demand
- Future pricing for affordability
- Demographic change: great expectations



#### 8. Industry Skilling and Capability

- Career pathways and recognition
- Tomorrow's jobs today
- Skills development across all roles



#### 9. Next Gen Water and Data Transformation

- Efficiency from data and analytics
- Smart networks for connected cities
- Technologies for change



#### 10. Small, Remote and Nimble!

- Small town, big future
- Technologies for weathering change
- Size thresholds and affordable technology

