

Southern Darling Downs Community Consultative Committee Chair's summary

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The ninth meeting of the Southern Darling Downs Community Consultative Committee (the Committee) was held online and in person on 26 October 2020 at Goondiwindi.

The meeting was chaired by Graham Clapham and seven of the 12 Committee members attended. Representatives from federal, state and local government agencies, three elected representatives and five community members observed the meeting.

The Committee welcomed new member Rick McDougall who represents Inglewood Community Advisory Network and Macintyre Brook Irrigators Association. New and returning members declared their conflicts of interest and identified information they would like from Committee meetings.

The Chair of the Independent International Panel of Experts for Flood Studies in Queensland, Mark Babister provided an update. Mr Babister noted there have been five people appointed to the panel, all highly experienced international experts in their field.

He noted their role is to look at Inland Rail's flood modelling for the four Queensland sections and provide advice on how the models compare against national standards and industry best practice. The panel will produce a detailed report to the Australian and Queensland governments that will be made public and will assist the Office of the Coordinator-General in its assessment of the project. Mr Babister said engagement with the Australian Rail Track Corporation's (ARTC) hydrology team was ongoing and anticipated the panel's draft reports for the Border to Gowrie and Calvert to Kagaru sections would be available in coming months, with reports for other sections to follow.

Drue Edwards, from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications provided the Committee with an update on the Border to Gowrie route review. Mr Edwards informed the Committee that the independent consultant (GTA Consultants) had completed its analyses of the data compiled by ARTC in regard to the Inland Rail service offering attributes of the alternative route via Cecil Plains and the Reference Design route.

Mr Edwards confirmed that the independent consultant's report had been provided to the Australian Government for its consideration and that the timing of the release of the report was a matter for the government.

ARTC presented an overview of the proposed construction methodology outlined in the project's draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This included staged construction images and video footage from the Parkes to Narromine project. A general update on the Border to Gowrie and North Star to NSW/QLD Border projects was also provided. The Border to Gowrie update included the status of the EIS, upcoming field investigations and community consultation. The North Star to NSW/QLD Border update included an overview of the EIS public exhibition and the next steps for the project. A copy of the presentation is available by request. Please contact ARTC via the details below.

The date of the next meeting is yet to be determined and will be held in Millmerran.

**Mr Graham Clapham – Chair,
Southern Darling Downs Community
Consultative Committee**

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