

# Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Monday 11 March 2024  
**Time:** 9:00am – 2:00pm  
**Chair:** Claire Streten, Australian Institute of Marine Science  
**Location:** Australian Institute of Marine Science  
23 Ellengowan Drive, Brinkin  
**Secretariat:** Carmony Leso, A/Manager Corporate Governance, DEPWS

**Attendees:** Alaric Fisher  
Ben Smith  
Emma Smith  
Ian Niblock  
Jared Sellwood – *Teams (Proxy)*  
Josh Corbett – *Teams*  
Karen Gibb  
Kirsty Howey  
Nicole Anderson – *Proxy*  
Peta Haughey – *Teams*  
Flora and Fauna Division  
Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation  
City of Darwin (COD)  
Darwin Port  
Power and Water Corporation  
INPEX  
Charles Darwin University (CDU)  
Environment Centre NT (ECNT)  
Paspaley  
Santos

**Guests:** Joanne Randall  
Jonathon Burcher  
Keller Kopf – *Teams*  
Lenin Vilamar – *Teams*  
Louis  
Simon Costanzo  
DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel  
DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel  
DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel  
DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel  
KBR  
KBR

**Apologies** David Ciaravolo  
Jane Munday  
Jim Smith  
Sam Buchanan  
Wayne Sharp  
The Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT)  
DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel  
Sea Darwin  
Paspaley  
Power and Water Corporation

No.	Item	Action (e.g. Noting / Discussion / Decision)
	<b>Meeting opened</b>	The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 9:00am.
1	<b>Welcome attendance and apologies</b>	Chairperson, Claire Streten, opened the meeting, welcomed members and gave an acknowledgment to country. Apologies were noted from David Ciaravolo, Jim Smith, Sam Buchanan, and Wayne Sharp. It was requested to have an AFANT Proxy for future meetings.
2	<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	No conflicts were declared.

3	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	The minutes of the previous meeting on 26 October 2023 were circulated to the Committee members prior to the meeting for comments / edits.	
<b>Actions arising from the previous meetings</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action Officer</b>	<b>Status / Update</b>
1	Organise an out of session workshop with DHAC and Alaric Fisher to discuss the Waste Discharge Strategy.	Alaric Fisher	<b>Pending</b> Alaric will present to DHAC later in the year.
2	Organise a presentation with Shane Delhelm and Lisa Bradley to discuss the Dredge Management Strategy.	Parul Chandel	<b>Pending</b>
3	Arrange another meeting with the DHAC members around the Mangrove Conservation Plan	Parul Chandel	<b>In progress</b> Parul to arrange for Bridie to attend the next meeting to present the Final Plan to DHAC.
4	Contact the NTEPA about meeting with a subset of DHAC to discuss the Middle Arm Sustainable Precinct Development.	Claire Streten	<b>Complete</b>
5	Confirm Power and Water representative on the DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel.	Jared Sellwood	<b>Complete</b>
6	Look at the Strategy and see how they think it would relate back to any work they are undertaking in their organisations but also how it links with the report card.	All members	<b>In progress</b>
7	Alaric to check with Karen Avery and get back to the members with an update for the emission data.	Alaric Fisher	<b>In progress</b>
8	Contact members in early February 2024 to arrange a workshop on the DHAC strategy	Parul Chandel	<b>In progress</b>
9	Invite DIPL to provide an update on the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct out of session as early as possible.	Claire Streten and Parul Chandel	<b>Complete</b> An out of session meeting has been arranged for 26 March 2024.
4	<b>Correspondence</b>		
4.1	<b>Correspondence In:</b>		
4.1.3	EOI from Ruth Pattermore to join DHAC	The membership and future operations of the Committee were discussed at the meeting. Claire noted that there has not been a formal process established for submitting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from potential new Committee members. However, Ruth was previously instructed to write directly to the Minister with her EOI. Carmony added that the terms for all current Committee members are set to expire this year. She advised that an email should be sent out to determine which existing members wish to continue serving, pending the Minister's decision on whether the Committee	

		will be renewed going forward. Considering the uncertainty around the Committee's future composition and mandate, it was recommended specifically referencing the membership discussion in the meeting Communique to the Minister. This will help ensure the Minister is fully informed on the need for clarity regarding membership renewal procedures and the Committee's continued role. Overall, it is evident there are open questions surrounding Committee membership that require resolution through direct communication and guidance from the Minister as the governing authority.
4.1.4	EOI from Dean Santi from Department of Defence to join DHAC	Claire advised that Dean didn't want to join the Committee, but rather attend as a proxy.
5	<b>Darwin Harbour Report Card Results</b>	<p>Simon Costanzo and Louis from KBR, along with the DHIRC Scientific Expert Panel attended the meeting to discuss the Darwin Harbour Report Card.</p> <p><b>Report Card Results</b></p> <p>Simon presented to the Committee the Report Card Results for Darwin Harbour based on the data available for each indicator.</p> <p><b><u>Water</u></b></p> <p><b><i>Water Quality Data</i></b></p> <p>Simon shared the Report Card Results for Darwin Harbour and discussed the available data for each indicator. Specifically, the Water Quality Data was brought up, and Kirsty expressed concerns about its source. A report from DEPWS showed an increase in heavy metals over the years, which raised some red flags. It was suggested to fund someone to examine Long Bums for their metals content and to include metals data in the report card. It was also noted that water may not be the best indicator for heavy metals, so it's crucial to explore other options.</p> <p><b><i>Sediment Quality</i></b></p> <p>It was agreed to remove the score for Myrmidon and Buffalo Creek as they have limited samples.</p> <p><b><u>Biodiversity</u></b></p> <p><b><i>Shorebirds</i></b></p> <p>Simon suggested that in order to determine actual change, the Shorebird surveys should take place at the same time, in the same location, and with the same frequency each year. Keller mentioned that there are statistical models that can help with this. Claire added that the Rangers' capacity and funding availability also play a role in this matter. However, it was also noted that grading biodiversity based solely on the Shorebird data could be misleading.</p> <p><b><i>Barramundi</i></b></p> <p>The data for the Top End Barra Series was roughly analysed, but no official score is available. Keller suggested that the inconclusive data should not be</p>

used in the Report Card as it doesn't fit with the rest of the data. Simon shared that he spoke with AFANT to record the data of all the fish ever caught in the future. Claire asked what the catch data actually indicates and suggested that more research would be necessary to interpret the data.

*Action: Simon will draft a memo about this for the SEP and DHACs consideration.*

### **Ecosystems and Landscapes**

#### ***Mangrove Health***

The data is currently being analysed, as there were some inconsistencies in the data collection. Simon plans to send out the data in a week. During the discussion, Alaric mentioned that the data is based on satellite imagery interpretation, and some of the results may not be realistic. It was suggested that an operator check the data since the algorithm isn't perfect.

### **Indigenous Values**

#### ***Food Security, Future Generations, Spiritual and Sacred Sites***

This time, the survey was conducted via email and received 30 responses. However, more input was needed. Feedback came from a range of language groups and locations, but some found the survey process too long. Members suggested that perhaps a drop-in day at the Ranger station would be a good way to improve the survey. The last question aimed at Rangers was vital to know where to focus efforts. There was a decrease in scores for indigenous states, future generations, and resources, but overall, the score remained within the C realm. To ensure the welfare of the community, progress has to be made in these areas. Before the Report Card is implemented, it was decided to arrange a special meeting with the CEO and the Minister to discuss the areas that need improvement.

### **Lifestyle and Wellbeing**

#### ***Fisher Satisfaction***

DHAC reached an agreement not to include the indicator score since its NT-wide data was outdated, and not specific to Darwin Harbour. The plan is to work with the NT Barra Series and explore other avenues to collect more reliable and up-to-date data in the future. During the discussion, Karen suggested involving Fisheries more in the data collection process. Louis mentioned that AFANT was looking into conducting a Fisher Satisfaction survey.

#### ***Park Visitation***

The data collected was only for Casuarina Coastal Reserve as it is the only one that matters for Darwin Harbour. Its visitation score was over 100% of the previous five years, indicating a strong local lifestyle. It received an A+ score and was doing exceptionally well even during the pandemic. Feedback and comments were taken into account, resulting in more representative analysis.

***Air Quality***

It was recommended to split the rating for wet and dry seasons and not average it. Additionally, the AirRater and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) data should be used, and a report on how they differ should be drafted. Kirsty suggested including data on emissions other than smoke that affect air quality. It was also suggested to include Benzene data in the next Report Card.

**Environmental Management*****Management Deliverables***

It was determined that the data is Territory Wide and cannot be narrowed down to Darwin Harbour. Alaric suggested that it should be excluded since it's not relevant to Darwin Harbour. However, Claire mentioned that it could be useful when Casuarina Coastal Reserve is transferred to a Park. The Committee ultimately agreed to remove the data from the Report Card and indicate the indicator as greyed out.

***Litter***

A new metric now tracks kilograms of litter per kilometre per person during annual clean-up efforts. This standardized measure provides a better way to track litter in the harbour. The proposed scale ranges from 0 kg/km/person (best score) to 10 kg/km/person (worst score). While there are some reservations about the scale, the Committee will use it for now and revisit it later. Overall, this new indicator will help assess the effectiveness of litter campaigns and motivate additional efforts to keep Darwin Harbour clean. As for the graph, it was suggested to make some adjustments to better reflect the data.

**Climate Change Resilience*****Planning Preparedness***

Climate change resilience is measured through three key indicators: planning preparedness, urban tree cover and solar uptake. However, while studying the planning preparedness indicator, it was discovered that a World Bank document only rated projects and not cities on their climate resilience. This document asked four main questions to assess resilience of projects being considered for World Bank funding. To adapt this to cities, a 0-100 percent scoring system was created across the four categories. Only one document, the NT Climate Change Response, addressed the first three questions and partially addressed the fourth, earning a score of 62.5 for Darwin's planning preparedness on climate resilience. There is lack of actual progress and comprehensive planning in Darwin for climate change. Therefore, there is still significant work that needs to be done in this space for Darwin. Questions need to be revised and the documents analysed sufficiently to address the city's resilience. Kirsty advised that there are other documents available with other organisations around climate change. Kirsty noted that a

		<p>number of the actions in these documents haven't been progressed or implemented.</p> <p><b>Urban tree cover</b></p> <p>Increasing tree coverage in urban areas is critical to combat rising temperatures caused by climate change. Darwin has only 15% tree coverage, which is inadequate. Studies have shown that increasing tree coverage by 40% can reduce temperatures by 3-4 degrees Celsius. Action is required to address the significant lack of trees on government lands compared to other areas. Developing partnerships across government sectors is crucial in implementing Darwin's urban greening plans and creating a cooler, greener future.</p> <p><b>Solar Uptake</b></p> <p>It was crucial to track progress towards the Northern Territory government's goal of generating 50% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030. The recent data on the proportion of Darwin Harbour area dwellings with rooftop solar panels shows a commendable increase. However, this doesn't reflect the achievement of the target, and monitoring progress on implementing the NT's renewable energy policies is essential. Encourage the adoption of renewable energy sources to achieve our sustainability goals.</p> <p><b><u>Economic Vitality</u></b></p> <p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p>Tourism and fishing tour numbers are key indicators of economic vitality. Monitor visitor numbers and expenditure to set growth targets, and use a "flight path" to track progress. Additional metrics like harbor cruise numbers can provide a more comprehensive view of the tourism industry. Simon advised that a number of companies were reluctant to hand over their data. Kirsty offered to discuss it with some of the companies.</p> <p><b>Shipping Activity</b></p> <p>The old metric for measuring shipping activity based on time value replaced with a more comprehensive metric that takes into account the total internal volume of a ship, known as gross tonnage. After analysing gross tonnage data from the past 8 years and applying a percentile-based conversion, a score of 62% and a grade of B-. These results indicate solid ongoing shipping activity that supports economic vitality in Darwin and the region.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> DHAC members to send their recommendations to Simon and Louis for consideration and including in the report card.</p>
6	Report Card, Timeline and Communication Plan	<p><b>Report Card Launch</b></p> <p>Simon proposed launching the Report Card in May pending the finalisation of the Report Card data.</p> <p>Simon discussed the following with DHAC:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication channels</li> <li>• DHAC logo</li> <li>• Media connections</li> <li>• Media release</li> <li>• Spokespeople</li> <li>• Partner representatives</li> <li>• Launch venue</li> <li>• Printouts</li> <li>• Updating website</li> </ul>
7	<b>Financial Report and Report Card</b>	NTG and Santos have contributed financially to the Report Card in the past. It would be beneficial for other organisations to also contribute to the Report Card.
8	<b>DHAC Membership</b>	Ian reported that he will be retiring in April and will be stepping down from DHAC. A replacement from the Port will be sought by the Committee. Claire advised that she will be stepping down as DHAC Chairperson and Karen will recommend Keller to replace her on the Committee once her membership expires.
9	<b>Communique items</b>	The following items will be included in the Communique to the Minister: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHAC membership (21 May expiry 2024)</li> <li>• DHIRC – DHAC would like the Minister and CEO to see the Report Card before it is released.</li> <li>• Delivery of the DHAC Strategy</li> </ul>
10	<b>Next meeting</b>	The next meeting will be held in April.
11	<b>Meeting closed</b>	The meeting concluded at 2:25pm

## Actions arising from the meeting

No.	Action	Action officer
1	Simon will draft a memo about this for the SEP and DHACs consideration.	Simon Costanzo
2	DHAC members to send their recommendations to Simon and Louis for consideration and including in the report card.	All Members