



UPDATE 2002

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORTING

SOCIAL

ECONOMIC

ECOLOGICAL



JOHNSTONE SHIRE COUNCIL

STATE OF THE SHIRE

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General Manager's Comments

Johnstone Shire Council is proud to display our continued commitment to environmental reporting, with this year's release of the State of the Shire Updates. Environmental reporting has the goal of providing an accessible source of information about issues affecting the Community, Natural Environment, and Economic Development within our Shire's boundaries.

The update reports also provide a summary of progress towards the goals set out by Council in the 2000 State of the Shire Benchmark. The achievement of these plans can be followed through each successive update. Of note for 2002 was the development of tourism, with the expansion of the Great Green

Way and other projects to attract visitors to the Shire. Additionally we saw the diversification of agriculture, with the tropical fruits providing a valuable addition to income from cane.

This year's goal has been to set and to expand the update's environmental indicators. Indicators will enable comparisons between successive updates, and act to provide an early warning system if there are marked changes to the state of the Shire.

We would like to thank all the members of the community who have supported this year's update with their continued involvement. I am sure that the State of the Shire will continue to ensure communication and progress towards our common goals.



Mr Peter Roberts
General Manager
Johnstone Shire
Council

A Word from 2002's Citizen of the Year - Bill Smith

Diversification of our economy will help bring money and employment to our Shire. While Agriculture and Fishing have been traditional mainstays, it is time to expand with industries such as Tourism to make the Shire more attractive and to bring people in. Tourism has the advantage of being an environmentally friendly option, and

despite my experience working in the Cane industry, I do not believe that further agricultural expansion will help towards the Shire's future.

I encourage the Council to continue with its environmental reporting - it is great for the public to see how much is being done, and to know that efforts are being made to look after the environment.



Mr Bill Smith

Introduction from the Coordinator

Welcome to the 2002 Update to the State of the Johnstone Shire. This booklet describes how the environments of society, industry and the natural changed since our last update for 2001.

Additionally the booklet describes how the community has advanced towards its goals. This is represented in a report card format, which gives marks to five different areas of criteria. The criteria are the following.

- Action on Council recommendations
- Filling deficiencies in data
- The State of the Shire
- Goal achievement
- Community awareness

You will notice that the report card is rated from A to F, the explanation for these ratings is described here.



Brian Sundermeijer
Environmental
Project Officer
Johnstone Shire
Council

- A**—(Excellent) A High level of progress or achievement
- B**—(Good) Progress and achievement
- C**—(Normal) No real changes beyond what was already in place. Normal effort.
- D**—(Poor) Slackening of established practices. No effort.
- F**—(Fail) Worsening of the State of the Shire.

BIODIVERSITY – FLORA AND FAUNA

Introduction

Johnstone Shire includes outstanding and significant areas of Biodiversity. The World Heritage Area comprises 47% of the land in the Shire, but it does not contain all of the Biodiversity of significance. Efforts by the Johnstone Shire Council, State organisations, and community groups continue to make positive efforts towards the preservation and restoration of fauna and flora.

News

Johnstone Shire Council has continued work on the Shire's Biodiversity Strategy. The strategy will integrate efforts towards conservation and is due for completion in 2003.

The Johnstone Shire Community Revegetation Unit continued to gain volunteers. Since the year 2000 the group has grown greatly, and now has 85 members on the books. Sourcing funding remains an annual struggle for the Revegetation Unit, as they would prefer to be able to work more projects and have better assurance of project continuity.

The Vegetation Initiative, run from the Community Revegetation nursery, provides landholders with trees and technical support. 6000 trees were supplied in 2002.

A major management changeover occurred for State forests in 2002. State forests are now managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). They will therefore be reclassified to 'Protected Area' under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. In general, the land use (including harvest) of State forests will continue as before, but there may be some reassessment and renegotiation to preserve significant habitat and vegetation areas.

The Cassowary rehabilitation and relocation program near Garner's beach was implemented last year through the QPWS. The program fosters young cassowaries separated from their parents, prior to release back into the wild. The program

also researches cassowary handling and rearing procedures, in case of any future need for a captive breeding program.

The QPWS volunteers are a group organised last year that work with the ranger at Mission Beach to track and monitor cassowaries, as well as care for injured cassowaries. The QPWS continue to engage in community meetings to raise public awareness about interaction with cassowaries.

The QPWS worked on the Cassowary Critical Habitat Map, which is due to be completed in 2003. The map will provide information that will greatly facilitate planning to manage human activity near cassowary habitat.

The introduction of changed speed limits in the Mission Beach area has had an apparent success towards the reduction of cassowary road deaths. No adult cassowaries were recorded killed by cars in 2002 after the speed limit introductions.

Estuarine Crocodile populations in the Shire remain very low. A revision of crocodile management is currently in progress. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently conducts public education to manage inappropriate human behaviour in crocodile areas. Recently, redesigned crocodile warning signs, and signs with interpretive information have been erected in the Shire.



Cassowary Chick at the QPWS Rehabilitation and Relocation Program.

Indicators

The Johnstone Shire Council in conjunction with landholders established 3 new areas of conservation covenant on freehold land. This brings the total of properties with covenant to 52, and a total area of 1403.94 hectares. This represents about 10% of the remnant vegetation on private land.

An additional land for wildlife agreement on 47 hectares took the total of properties to 7, with an area altogether of 142.93 hectares.

The Community revegetation group revegetated 9.4 hectares in 2002. A further 30.4 hectares of remnant vegetation was rehabilitated. Work occurred along the North and South Johnstone rivers, Liverpool creek, and wetlands on Clancy Estate. Other activity involved the control of Hymenachne and Pond Apple in the Liverpool catchment.

Other revegetation, under the Wet Tropics tree-planting scheme, involved a further planting of 12.7 hectares along Liverpool Creek. Together these efforts have provided an unbroken linkage between Cowley Beach and the Basilisk Range. The Centre for Tropical Rehabilitation nursery revegetated another 2 hectares on property near El Arish, under a contract for Powerlink.

General information on land clearing is contained in the Land Management section.

Remnant vegetation in the Johnstone Shire had the following status when last assessed by the Queensland Herbarium in 1999.

Vegetation Mgt Act Status	Total Johnstone Shire	Area outside WHA and Protected Area Estate
Endangered	6433 Ha	2772 Ha
Of Concern	17036 Ha	3214 Ha
Total remnant vegetation outside WHA and Protected Area Estate within the Johnstone Shire—19242 Ha		

(Based on 1999 Qld Herbarium certified regional ecosystems mapping)

No changes in the area size of any parks, protected areas or reserves occurred in 2002.

The Johnstone Shire contains 31 regional ecosys-

tems as classified by the EPA, Queensland Herbarium (last updated 2002). Since the last report in 2000 most ecosystems remain at the same classification. However, the EPA considers the status of “*Mesophyll vine forest with pink bloodwood (Corymbia intermedia) emergents, on wet to very wet well drained piedmont fans*” worsened to a level of ‘Of concern.’

At present in the Shire, Regional Ecosystems have the following status:

No concern at present	Of concern	Endangered
14	5	12

A total of 782 cassowary sightings were recorded in the Mission Beach area: 193 positively identified adult males, 188 adults of unidentified sex, 137 sub adults and 264 chicks.

(Sightings do not provide a reliable indicator as yet, since they will vary according to the level of community interest. However, the EPA Threatened Species Unit is planning to trial a monitoring program that samples cassowary DNA from droppings. This could provide information on individual birds, populations, and habitat use.)

4 known cassowary deaths were recorded in the Mission Beach area. This comprised one adult and three sub adults. The adult bird and one sub adult were killed within the boundaries of the Johnstone Shire.

16 crocodile sightings were reported, 6 of these crocodiles required relocation.

No changes occurred to the conservation status of any species known to be present in the Shire. Data on Fauna needs to be gathered.



The Community Revegetation Group

Report card for Biodiversity

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 14 of 19 recommendations actioned to date	B	-Biodiversity Strategy -Interpretation ranger for Shire -Cassowaries and Crocs	-In progress and due 2003. -Position not created by EPA but mitigated by regional work conducted. -Many plans and approaches are underway.
Filling deficiencies in data	C	-Regional mapping of conservation values -Fauna monitoring -Vegetation monitoring	-Part of Biodiversity Strategy development. -No detailed information available. -Information was gathered in 2002.
State of the Shire	B-	-Vegetation, flora and fauna	-No major changes reported. -Revegetation has continued.
Goal Achievement	B-	-All	-Progress by organisations through planning and action.
Community Awareness	B	-Public education -Events	-Cassowaries and Crocodiles have been promoted by various organisations. -Community organisations.

OVERALL GRADE B-

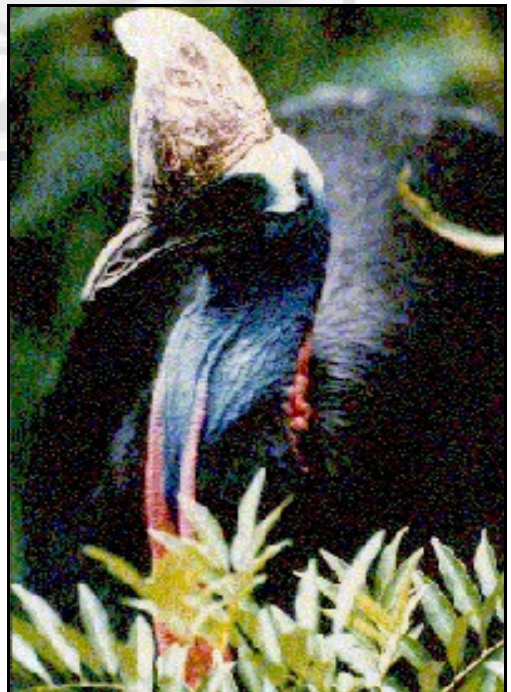
Conclusion

2002 was a year of progress rather than of achievement. Most organisations were at work developing and updating strategies to manage biodiversity. At the same time, no major evidence of losses to biodiversity was reported. However, a great deal more information is required on the status of fauna in the Shire.

Continuing positive contributions by community groups displays the commitment and care amongst the public for the environment.

Future Direction

Some of the deficiencies in data may be addressed by projects such as the advances in Cassowary monitoring and vegetation mapping. The completion of the Shire Biodiversity Strategy will integrate and advance direction towards the goal of ecological sustainability.



WATER AND ATMOSPHERIC MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Water issues in the Shire affect recreation and livelihoods, through the degradation of aquatic ecosystems and the abundance of marine species. Air quality similarly impacts on the community, through health, and quality of life effects.

News

Major news for 2002 was the completion of the Stormwater Management Plan by Council. The aim of the plan is to minimise the effect of human activity on waterways by promoting responsible behaviour and by controlling impacts.

Work continued in 2002 on the State's 'Reef Water Quality Protection Plan' to protect the Great Barrier Reef from land based sources of pollution. A draft open to community consultation will be available in May.

The Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan was drafted through 2002.

The Port of Mourilyan has incorporated an Environmental Management Plan as part of its operations. The Plan ensures best practice by the operation in the environmentally sensitive area, and includes monitoring of:

- water and sediments
- seagrass
- fisheries and riparian habitat areas
- acid sulphate soil areas
- introduced marine pests
- bed levelling (dredging)

Results of seagrass monitoring have shown a marked improvement in cover during 2001. This is postulated as due to a lack of seasonal flooding, and indicates that sea grass is capable of rapid recovery.

The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) has been involved in water quality research, involving sediment, water chemistry and the exotoxicological effects of agricultural chemicals on Barramundi as an indicator species.

Current plans are to continue this work over following years to enable ecological comparisons of river habitat over time.

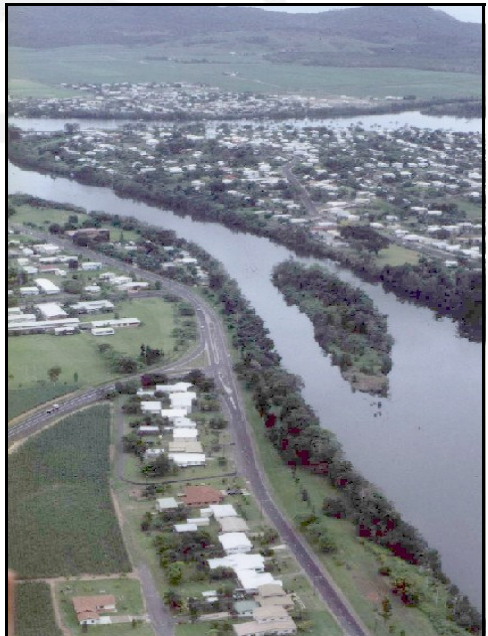
With the recent dry years there has been increased pressure to utilise surface and ground water sources for irrigation.

A fair and equitable system for the Permitting of water extraction has not yet been developed.

Wetlands in the Shire remain in a poor condition, due to water issues and the invasion of weeds.

Indicators

The Queensland Fisheries Service's Long-term monitoring program (results released 2002) described the Johnstone River's habitat as poor in 2001, with a mean disturbance rating of 2.9, due to a lack of riparian vegetation. Water quality however, was excellent with a mean visibility of 81 cm. Species diversity was high with 37 types of fish observed in 2001. A problem for the river was the observance of the introduced pest fish Tilapia.



River Avenue

5 facilities in the Johnstone Shire reported emissions to the National Pollution Inventory for 2001-2002. (4 facilities reported in 2000-2001.) The businesses were - Consolidated Meat Group, South Johnstone Mill, Mourilyan Mill, Reliance Petroleum, C & A Pizzolato. Council has plans also to begin reporting. The following levels of substances (in Kg's) were registered:

Substance	2000-2001	2001-2002
Arsenic and compounds	5.3	1.7
Benzene	110	22
Beryllium and compounds	-	0.0020
Cadmium and compounds	0.46	0.14
Carbon monoxide	1,200,000	1,200,000
Chromium (III) compounds	-	0.033
Chromium (VI) compounds	0.98	0.31
Copper and compounds	-	0.027
Cumene	3.1	15
Ethylbenzene	6.2	-
Fluoride compounds	1.8	0.57
n-Hexane	130	24
Hydrochloric acid	-	93
Lead and compounds	36	11
Mercury and compounds	0.030	0.0060
Oxides of nitrogen	320,000	320,000
Particulate matter	160,000	240,000
Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons	440	450
Sulphur dioxide	150,000	140,000
Toluene	100	93
Total volatile organic compounds	7,900	5200
Xylenes	35	30

Adapted from the NPI website (www.npi.gov.au)

Water Usage for 2002 (Mega Litres) through town supply -

North	South	Total
2807.44	739.23	3546.67



Nandroya Falls

Complaints received by Council regarding Pollution in 2002 -

Air	3
Odour	14
Noise	17
Water	4
Waste	2
Rubbish	14
Oil spills	1
Other	10

One environmental incident affected the Shire's waterways in 2002. The South Johnstone Mill experienced a waste water pipeline rupture, leading to wastewater entering Stewart's Creek and causing fishkill. The effect of the incident was short lived in duration, and was dealt with by the EPA.

AIMS conducts regular monitoring of coral coverage on the Reef outside Innisfail. The current state of the Reef is degraded (0-10% coral coverage) but recovering from Crown of Thorns Starfish. CoTS were no longer active within the area in 2002.

2002 was a year of low rainfall. This is reflected in the stream discharge volumes the Department of Natural Resources and Mines collect from our major watercourses.

Site	MegaLitres in 2002	Average (over last ~30 years)
North Johnstone River (at Tung Oil)	608600 ML	1687300 ML
South Johnstone River (at Central Mill)	319500 ML	709600 ML
Liverpool Creek	66900 ML	147000 ML
Fisher Creek	13200 ML	36900 ML

Report Card for Water and Atmosphere

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 4 of 7 recommendations actioned to date	C+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priority Recommendation - Monitoring - Water Quality - Water extraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nutrient and sediment assessment program not active under DNRM. - Stormwater management plan completed. - Stormwater management plan completed. - No effort towards water extraction management.
Filling deficiencies in data	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now occurring under the Stormwater management plan. Further catchment assessment required.
State of the Shire	C-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No changes have occurred. The dry weather affected water levels and maybe, in consequence, the concentration of some pollutants.
Goal Achievement	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring - Water quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stormwater management plan completed and monitoring underway. - Future progress planned.
Community Awareness	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stormwater management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned for 2003.

OVERALL GRADE B-

Conclusion

2002 saw the completion of the Council's Stormwater Management Plan. This progressive policy will advance water management through the gathering of data, and by involving the community and industry in better practices; thus ensuring the improvement of water quality. At present Atmospheric management is not a major concern for the Shire, but data continues to be gathered through the National Pollution Inventory.

Future Direction

Further efforts towards monitoring of waterways in the Shire will help to determine the effects of land based practices, and help to protect aquatic industries and recreation.



Liverpool Creek

LAND MANAGEMENT

Introduction

The economy of the Johnstone Shire relies mainly upon primary and agricultural production. The State of the Shire therefore relies heavily upon Land Management. Efforts continued in 2002 to minimise impacts, through the promotion of responsible and improved land-use practice.

News

The South Johnstone River Management Plan by the JRCMA progressed. The plan aims to integrate land practices with water quality issues.

Promotion of Agroforestry within the Shire was investigated in 2002. Although at present in its infancy, the incorporation of this type of alternate production holds great economic and environmental potential for the Shire.

2002 saw the successful continuation of the Council's weed control program. 20-30% of identified weed species have been controlled since the program's recent inception. The weed *Hymenachne* is the primary target at present.

Sustainable production methods are an important step towards successful land management. The aim is to minimise the effect on the environment. Producers have had access to best practice information on a variety of issues. Included were:

- The COMPASS self assessment course for cane farming
- Minimum tillage trials and sustainable water usage for cane farming
- Environmental Management Systems for fruit and vegetable growers
- Integrated Pest management for fruit and vegetable growers
- Water use efficiency for fruit and vegetable growers

2002 saw a continuing expansion of Fruit production, in many cases replacing traditional cane harvesting. The industry includes bananas, papaya, and tropical fruits such as rambutan, ly-

chees and mangosteen. 2002 was a highly successful year for the tropical fruits, due mainly to the dry weather.

Issues facing the Tropical fruit industry were as follows:

Banana – Quarantines due to Bunchy top, Black sigatoka, and Moko disease

Papaya – Insect pests and root rot phytophthora

Tropical Fruits – Pest management

Indicators

There has been no significant change in the area utilised for primary production within the Shire since 2001.

Cane Production—

Approximately 900 cane suppliers operate in the Shire

35,500 hectares were harvested in 2002, of 47,500 hectares gross Cane Production Area.

Area	Mourilyan	South Johnstone	Babinda
Tonnes of Cane	1,012,485	1,215,334	943,399
CCS	13.17	13.37	12.47
Average tonnes/ha	84.3	84.8	94.7
Value	\$30,000,000	\$36,000,000	\$27,000,000

Green trash blanketing is practised on the following land areas as: Mourilyan (98%), South Johnstone (84%), Babinda (92%).

Fruit Production—

Approximately 400 growers operate within the Shire.

An increase of approximately 1000 hectares of banana crops was planted in 2002.

	Bananas	Papaya	Tropical Fruits
Area (ha)	5500	200	200
Growers	250	100	50
Value	\$130,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$3,000,000

Land Use change - Information on land use change is released biannually by the DNRM. The information from 1999-2001 will serve as a comparison for future State of the Shire Updates.

Rate of Woody Vegetation Change in Johnstone Shire (ha per year) – Data for the Interval 1999-2001

Area (ha)	New woody regrowth	CLEARING							% Wooded vegetation cover	% Of total clearing in QLD
		Pasture	Crops	Forest	Mining	Infra-structure	Settle-ment	Total Cleared		
163,400	0	15	8	0	0	2	0	25	62.41	0.0043

Adapted from: Department of Natural Resources and Mines (2003) Land Cover Change in Queensland, A State-wide Landcover and Trees Study Report (SLATS), Jan 2003.

It is worth bearing in mind that the Johnstone Shire comprises 47% World Heritage Area. This accounts for the high percentage of wooded vegetation cover. Other parts of the Shire not protected also include important vegetation and habitat types.

A total of 36 complaints were received by Council in 2002 regarding noxious weeds. 6 complaints were received regarding various beach issues including safety and inappropriate usage.

addition of stormwater monitoring by Council will help greatly in detecting adverse impacts from land practices.

Conclusion

Steps have been taken by most organisations towards enhancing land management practices, and reducing the impacts of land use on aquatic environments. Data to describe the state of landholder practices would assist with Shire planning. The

Future Direction

As more agricultural industries incorporate best practice principles into production the state of the shire and surrounding ecosystems will improve. The philosophy of this goal is that, although land use may operate amidst highly fluctuating natural processes, it is our duty to minimise those impacts that arise from our technological practices.

Report Card for Land Management

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 18 of 20 recommendations actioned to date	A	- Best practice and sustainable land practices - Waterways and riparian areas - Pest species	- Outside organisations were active towards promoting these goals. - The quality of Integrated catchment management has improved. - Weed control.
Filling deficiencies in data	B-	-Waterways and riparian areas - Land practices	-Stormwater monitoring began for sediments, nutrients, pesticides and herbicides. -No plans to gather other data types.
State of the Shire	C+	- Land practices - Waterways - Pest species	-Traditional land practices are the norm. -Waterways still under pressure. - Weed control is achieving success.
Goal Achievement	C+	- All	- A shift to proactive land management through landholder involvement is progressing. Changes have been slow due to politics and tradition.
Community Awareness	B-	- All	Landholders have been the target audience for education. Involvement is still low.

OVERALL GRADE B

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Johnstone Shire Council has a commitment to improving Waste Management practices in the Shire. The year 2002 saw the continued success of waste separation practices previously introduced, as well as the implementation of new strategies and future plans.

News

All waste management programs initiated in previous years by the Council have continued to operate successfully; they include public education, DrumMuster, composting, commercial waste reduction plan, bin surveys, waste stream analysis, Clean Up Australia Day, green waste subsidy, vermiculture, and the pre-cyclone cleanup.

The Council's waste subcontractor introduced a recycling component into waste processing in July 2002, recycling over 4500 tonnes of materials including metals, plastics, and papers. Public recycling bins are located at the transfer stations.

Additional efforts through the support of Planet Ark campaigns have continued to promote a philosophy of recycling amongst the Shire community, including reuse of printer cartridges, mobile phones, as well as Christmas cards and paper.

Green waste at the Stoters Hill Transfer Station is utilised by the public as readily as it is accumulated. Marketed commercial applications for the green waste remain a possibility.

An initiative to encourage industries to reduce waste is under development, through the Commercial Waste Reduction Plan.

An investigative monitoring program to better analyse community waste separation was implemented, and results are becoming available in 2003.



Dry waste, Wet waste and Compost bins at home.

Indicators

A further 600 compost bins were supplied by the council, raising the number at the end of 2002 to 2350, whilst the number of worm farms issued stands at 60.

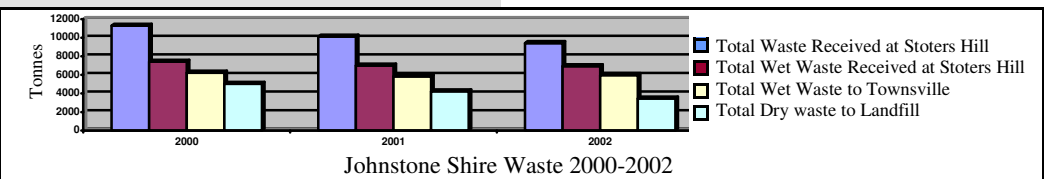
Approximately 5000 chemical containers were collected as part of the DrumMuster program in 2002, compared to 3500 in 2001.

Since the introduction of waste separation practices, levels of waste received at the transfer stations continued to fall in 2002, with a large reduction in the dry waste going to landfill. Levels of wet waste, which are transported to Townsville, remained similar to previous years.

Community education towards responsible waste disposal continued, with 11 schools visited, and the provision of information calendars, as well as promotions and displays.

Bin contamination rates increased slightly from previous years, with close to 20% showing contamination – so community involvement with the waste separation program may be lower.

The State government's Chemcollect program



removed 5929 kilos of chemicals from the Shire including fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides.

The 2002 Pre-Cyclone Season Cleanup was more than twice as successful as the previous year, with 70 tonnes of material removed. Twice the time was invested in the effort.

860 registered volunteers, including 440 school children from five local schools were involved in Clean Up Australia Day.

Conclusion

The Shire's Waste Management Program has continued to demonstrate the best practice achievements from previous years. 2002 saw the

addition of improvements in waste separation and monitoring. Additionally, waste separation procedures have led to a recycling process at the Waste Transfer Stations. The composting and vermiculture projects implemented by the Council have also continued to encourage a positive philosophy towards waste reduction and the concept of recycling in community consciousness.

Future Direction

Waste Management within the Shire has continued to improve and can be expected to progress further towards the target of wet waste reduction to 5100 tonnes per annum. Future years will see the implementation of further Waste Management strategies which are currently under development.

Report Card—Solid Waste Management

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 9 of 9 completed	A+	- Waste reduction - Community involvement - Monitoring	All recommendations have been investigated and acted upon, or are currently still in place. Further progress towards additional goals took place in 2002, such as recycling and clinical waste management.
Filling deficiencies in data	B+	- Monitoring	Waste stream analysis was improved in 2002 with more detailed breakdown of waste components. Bin surveys continued with the addition of improved investigative surveys.
State of the Shire	B	- Waste reduction - Community involvement	Wet waste volumes remain consistently lower due to the composting initiative. Waste volumes in total have been reduced. The incorporation of some recycling processes has been a positive addition towards future development. The DrumMuster program's success continued.
Goal Achievement	B	- Waste reduction	Dry waste volumes continued to fall, in line with goals set out at the beginning of the waste management program. Wet waste is currently only better than halfway towards the target of 5100 tonnes per annum by 2004. 2350 compost bins have been issued, only slightly short of the 3000 expected by 2004.
Community Awareness	C+	- Community involvement	Community awareness has remained the same as the previous year. Council continues to provide interpretive material to the public.

OVERALL GRADE B

THE SHIRE COMMUNITY

Introduction

Johnstone Shire comprises a diverse multicultural community. The Council is committed to providing and ensuring a support network for community issues, and to enhancing the environment for recreation.

News

Major news for 2002 was the completion of the Community Needs Analysis by the Community Support Centre.

The Analysis details the levels of community services available in the Johnstone Shire. The analysis identifies the requirements for additional activity and services to promote a healthier community. At present most community services are over-stretched. This includes problems with the following:

- A lack of community awareness of the services
- Disability service provision
- A lack of counsellors available
- Funding and programs for the aged
- A need for increased indigenous focus
- A lack of crisis accommodation and emergency relief
- More medium and long term housing needed
- A lack of day care and parenting support
- Legal advice
- Support, facilities and unstructured activities for youth
- Training programs

A Legislative reclassification, which broadened the definition of Domestic Violence, has led to an increased need for support service provision. Domestic violence has also increased during recent economic hardship.

A Community Relations Plan is currently underway. Council members now attend multicultural training sessions to ensure that Council services are rendered appropriately in the multicultural context of the community.

Funds were granted in response to an application

to improve low cost housing for aged pensioners. Two existing units will now be upgraded. In total there are 31 low cost housing spaces for the aged, but this does not meet the demand.

A youth forum was held in 2002 to provide feedback to the State government's 'Smart State' initiative to provide alternatives in education.

State Schools in the Johnstone Shire have formed a Curriculum Alliance to cooperatively plan curricular programs for year 6 and 7 students to assist with student transition into year 8.

The Innisfail Inclusive Education Centre (formerly the Innisfail Special School) now provides an additional program, which is a special education development unit (SEDU) program for younger students with disabilities.

The Innisfail Learning Development Centre, based at the Innisfail Inclusive Education Centre, continues to assist schools in the development of individual school based literacy programs that target the needs of all students.

The Daradgee Environmental Education Centre continued to offer alternate education to increase young people's awareness, and also appreciation of the environment. 1384 students visited the Education Queensland facility on day or overnight trips.

Innisfail TAFE is now offering a Conservation and Land Management Training Package as part of the horticulture course. The course will raise the level of qualification achievable for horticulture, which in the past has been relegated to Townsville and Mareeba TAFEs where courses particularly dealing with rainforest planting have not been provided.

The facility established at the TAFE works in conjunction with QWPS and aims to become a regional centre for rainforest work and research. A focus on bush tucker plants has also been included, as part of future development for this up and coming industry.

TAFE also works with the vocational partnerships program for students in high school to undertake alternative education through training.

The provision of medical services in the Shire has improved in some areas, including visits by extra surgeons. The provision of Mental Health Services has increased with extra staff employed to help adults, youth and children. A mental health promotion project is currently running to enhance community connectedness.

The Shire still lacks an ear, nose and throat specialist, as well as an orthopaedic specialist. The services of the local paediatric specialist ended.

A proposed health and community care transport system did not eventuate. Persons requiring this support presently rely on the goodwill of friends and family for transport. Funding was applied for to create a service for people requiring medical care, or for involvement in activities.

The respite bus has too few seats for the people requiring transport.

TransNorth provided an additional public bus service route in 2002 - to Cowley Beach.

Indicators

Statistics for the Community, Johnstone Shire – from the ABS census 2001.

The Population of Johnstone Shire, as of June 2001, was 19,511 people.

Median age – 36.8 (Qld average 35.0)

Multiculturalism (people with background from one or more geographical areas):

Oceania	8072
NW European	10266
S and E European	3567
N Africa and Middle East	10
Sub-Saharan Africa	27
SE Asia	590
NE Asia	275
S and Central Asia	217
Americas	70
Indigenous Heritage	1644
Born Overseas	2505

Religious Belief:

Buddhism	194
Christianity	14592
Hinduism	13
Islam	21
Judaism	8
Other	329
No religion	2533
Not stated	1543



Highest Level of Schooling completed:

Year 10 or below	Year 11 to 12	Never Attended
8234	5024	220

Attending school in 2001 — 3617 students.

Attending 2002 —

State Schools

Primary – 1844 students

Secondary – 747

Private Schools

Primary – 557 students

Secondary – 537

Tertiary education

678 students were enrolled at the Innisfail TAFE.

The TAFE institute offers courses in areas including: English, Vocational Access, Workplace Practice, Visual Arts, Business, Community Services, Justice, Indigenous Legal Studies, Information Technology, Clothing Production, Extractive Industries, Horticulture, Aquaculture, Hospitality and Tourism.

Against the Person	242
Property	735
Public Order	321
Breach DV Order	52
Drugs	307
Drink Driving	242
Motor Vehicle	47

Offences reported 2002
From Police divisions
within the Johnstone
Shire

Unemployment in the Shire, at November 2002, was 4% claiming Newstart or Youth allowance at the Innisfail Centrelink.

Report Card for the Shire Community

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 11 of 14 recommendations actioned to date	B-	- Community Services - Education - Health	-More staff, programs and funding are required. -Some programs are underway. -Mental Health service has increased. -In general, only some progress has occurred
Filling deficiencies in data	A+	- All	-The Community Needs Analysis provides a detailed analysis of service provision and further requirements. -2001 census data is now available.
State of the Shire	D+	- Community - Community Services - Health - Recreation	- Social hardship has worsened due to economic difficulty for the Shire. - Service provision has only increased slightly. - More specialist care access is still required. - More unstructured recreational facilities are required by Youth .
Goal Achievement	B-	- All	- Low levels of goal achievement occurred in 2002. Most effort was expended in coping with current community needs.
Community Awareness	C+	-Community services - Community - Health	- General awareness of the community services available is low in the Shire. - Some optimism for the future. - Mental health being actively promoted.

OVERALL GRADE B-

Conclusion

Due to increased hardship because of difficult economic times, the care services in place require additional help. In general, there is a large need for more programs and workers to service community.

Future Direction

With the Community Needs Analysis as a basis it should be possible to plan future directions for the provision of Community Services.



Alan Maruff House,
Staff, and the
Respite Bus

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The Shire is heavily dependent upon agricultural/primary production for its economic prosperity. Efforts to diversify income sources are underway to improve the Shire's economic resilience, and to provide greater opportunity and employment.

News

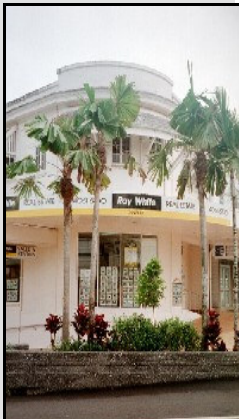
Progress was ongoing for an 'Economic Strategic Plan for Johnstone Shire' by the Council. The plan will be finished in 2003.

The implementation of the Great Green Way Regional Tourism Strategy proceeded in 2002. The Strategy aims to integrate tourism by developing a regional approach between the Johnstone, Cardwell and Hinchinbrook Shires. Funding was achieved in 2002 under the Regional Assistance Program, State Development, Tourism Queensland and from contributions by each of the Shires. The project aims to identify areas of tourism potential and to market tourism for the region. Completion of the strategy is expected in late August 2003.

Tourism in the region continued to grow, with a 6% increase in International visitors and a 2.4% increase in Domestic visitation. Additional volunteers at the Information centres are helping to guide tourists to opportunities around the Shire.

Promotion of Innisfail as the Art Deco Town has continued, with the aim of attracting tourism. A grant was organised for colour bands to be created from the town's buildings. These colours will help assist development and Council's town planning decisions to retain the Art Deco feel of the town.

Tropical Art Deco



The development of Innisfail's Town Walk occurred and opened in March.

River Cruises are now running along the river and will provide another attraction for tourism.

The Mamu Canopy Walk Innisfail has progressed along all developmental lines, and is now awaiting State Government approval. Economic viability studies show that upon completion the Mamu Canopy Walkway will bring high rewards to the Shire through the attraction of tourism spending.

The development of the Mamu Bush tucker Garden at Warrina Lakes has provided an attraction for tourism and community education., as well as providing an alternate source of income to the indigenous community. The Council has been responsible for encouraging and helping to facilitate the program.

A wider business plan is under development by the Mamu people to market bush tucker crops. The FNQ consultation committee is also running similar marketing cooperatively with the Mamu.

Work continued on the development of a frogarium as a tourist attraction for Warrina lakes.

Another alternate industry being developed was the marketing of specialist local sewing and design.

Agricultural production continued to diversify, with the tropical fruit industry having an excellent year. There is some concern that indefinite growth in this sector may flood the domestic market.

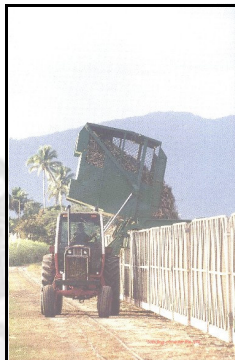
The region's Sugar Industry continued to face challenges in 2002 with the downturn of sugar prices. No dramatic improvement is expected in the near future. Due to greater investment outlays, big corporatised farms are presently suffering more than many smaller scale farms.

The industry is presently undergoing a major restructuring affecting all stakeholders. Another shake up in 2002 was the closure and subsequent purchase of South Johnstone Mill by Bundaberg

Sugar. Agropolitics in relation to this have consumed both time and energy.

On the positive side, 2002 was a record year for sugar cane yield, due to clement dry conditions. Cane beetle populations were low, leading to minimal grub damage, and research has been conducted to expand knowledge of pest control and cane varieties.

Projects are also underway to diversify sources of income from cane. A current example is a proposal to incorporate fibreboard production from bagasse and farm forestry into Mill production. Both farmers and the Mill stand to benefit.



Cane and Banana Farming

The cattle industry had a slow year due to the dry conditions. Many farmers were and will continue to hold stock back for breeding, in order to rebuild their herds.

The Fishing industry has faced additional challenges with increasing restriction on harvesting from areas defined by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

However, this has in turn increased the demand for aquaculture. The DPI and EPA has conducted research work into making the industry more sustainable.

No additional trade opportunities have yet been found for Mourilyan Harbour.

2002 saw the opening of The Warehouse in Innisfail, and new buildings for Taylor West Holden and John Cole Toyota.

Indicators

Mourilyan Harbour exported—
533,130 tonnes of sugar (up 19.4% on the previous year)
77,376 tonnes of molasses (up 4.4%)
2,248 head of cattle (down 60%)



Mourilyan Harbour

Industry Values 2002—

Sugar - \$70 million (up)
Tropical Fruit - \$140 million (up)
Tourism - \$50 million (up)
Fishing - \$32 million (up)

Tourists at the Information Centres	2001	2002
Innisfail	10 476	12 066
Mission Beach	26 276	26 332

Spending by the Council towards economic development was geared principally towards the development of tourism. Significant spending in 2002 was mainly through the hiring of consultants, and through grants or contributions.

—\$49,500 was spent on annual funding for the Cassowary Coast development Bureau.

—\$3,500 was contributed to the Coconuts outrigger canoe club.

—\$2,900 was contributed to the Johnstone Shire Cultural Association.

—\$21,500 was spent on the development of a tourism strategy by consultancy.

—\$7,500 was used to subsidise the annual regional economic development strategy.

—The Council received \$63,000 in grants through the Regional Solutions Program, and the Great Green Way Tourism Strategy.

The budget projected for economic development by the Council was \$195,600, but the lack of an economic development officer for most of 2002, the driver for development programs, meant that only \$113,000 was spent.

Report Card for Economic Development

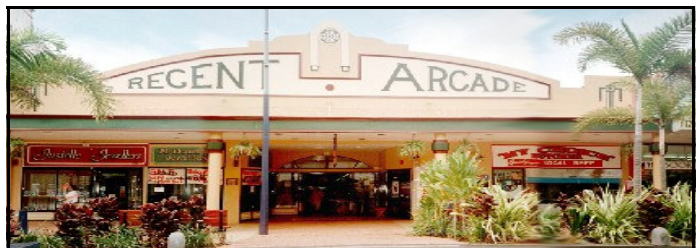
Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on recommendations 17 of 22 recommendations actioned to date	B	-Tourism -Retail -Primary Production	-Tourism has been promoted with development of further opportunities. -Plans are underway to increase retail opportunity in Innisfail. -Diverse industries are growing.
Filling deficiencies in data	B-	- Tourism	- A survey of accommodation around the Shire occurred.
State of the Shire	B	-Tourism -Retail -Primary Production	-Tourism grew. -A few new retail outlets emerged. -Cane continued to suffer but other agricultures grew.
Goal Achievement	B	-Council - Diversification	- Council's Economic Strategic Plan progressed towards completion. - Tourism development continued.
Community Awareness	B	- All	- No website. - Active promotion by the Chamber of Commerce and other societies.

Overall Grade B

Conclusion

The Shire has continued to experience difficult economic times in many of the traditional sectors. Downturns and fluctuation in the sugar industry continue to hurt the Shire's financial state. Economic development has attempted to counter these trends by expanding the number of income sources. Some progress has been made, but most are still in their early stages. Most of these projects have a reliance on continued support and a critical mass being attained—to attract infrastructure and a sustainable customer base.

Tropical Art Deco



Future Direction

The completion of the Economic Development Strategy by Council in 2003 will integrate efforts towards strengthening the financial state of the Shire. Continued diversification of economy will help to protect the Shire from financial downturns in particular sectors. The Shire must rethink its strengths, and focus collaboratively to reinforce the new avenues of economic development undertaken.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Johnstone Shire Council is committed to the provision of infrastructure and service to meet the needs of the community. Additionally, the Council is dedicated to maintaining the surrounds and liveability of the Shire.

News

The road-resealing program was put on hold for the year, due to financial hardship.

Cooperation between Johnstone and Cardwell Shires occurred to set up JACSJFAC. This cooperative committee is working to set up a Sport and operational plan for mission beach, a community pool at Mission beach, as well as walkway/bike paths and a sewage plant.

Work is continuing on upgrading the Innisfail Sewage Treatment Plant. Monitoring studies were planned for 2003.

The provision of Sewage at Mission Beach was announced, with funding applied for and planning underway.

Council Spending

From: Financial Statements - For the Year Ended 30 June 2002

Functions	Revenue		Total revenue	Total expenses	Net result	Assets
	Grants	Other				
General Management	204,369	362,770	567,139	854,728	(287,589)	1,110,714
Corporate Services	1,950,823	8,885,898	10,836,721	1,111,103	9,725,618	25,517,141
Community Services	1,533,992	239,041	1,773,721	2,192,237	(419,204)	4,470,024
Environment Services	107,789	209,536	317,325	1,216,065	(898,740)	54,841
Waste Management	4,386	2,305,138	2,309,524	2,532,904	(223,380)	2,203,623
Technical Services	1,904,372	757,852	2,662,224	7,995,778	(5,333,554)	76,258,655
Water	217,840	2,562,691	2,780,531	3,215,228	(434,697)	44,626,693
Sewerage	-	1,955,810	1,955,810	2,209,105	(253,295)	19,217,779
Total	5,923,571	17,278,736	23,202,307	21,327,148	1,875,159	173,513,470

Further analysis of these figures is available in the JSC 2001/2002 annual report.

The Bikeway Walkway Project was launched, with the formation of the bicycle advisory committee. This is part of the Sport and Recreational facility Plan 2002. Plans to link East and West Silkwood, South Mission Beach and Bingil Bay are now being worked upon. Additional bike and walkway recreational opportunities are being planned for Innisfail.

Shadecloth was installed over outdoor activity areas.

Council Employment—189 Employees

- Water and Sewage (18)
- General Mgt (3)
- Corporate (23)
- Community (21)
- Environmental (28)
- Technical services (96)

Council's landfill and transfer operations recorded the following exceedences of licences limits: Stoters Hill (10), Bells Creek (3), and Goondi (10).

In some cases the year's dry weather contributed to the stagnation of water passing through the influence of the sites. Metals deposited in the old landfills continued to release iron and zinc.

Further landfill remediation is planned.

Conclusion

Council Activities have continued to move forward. Plans for sewage and water treatment progressed. Non-compliance at the transfer stations and landfill sites worsened, which is partly due to the dry weather. Further efforts towards remediation of the land fill sites is in progress.



Council Depot

Future Direction

Monitoring will continue at the landfill sites until State funding approval allows remediation to occur. Studies being conducted into tertiary treatment for the sewage plant will determine whether environmental benefits can be achieved, by reducing the impact on adjacent waterways.



Criteria	Grade	Recommendation Group	Explanation
Action on Recommendations 12 of 12 Completed	A+	-Development -Integrated Environmental Mgt System -Maintenance	- All recommendations acted upon.
State of the Shire	B+	-Development - IEMS -Maintenance	-Progress continued towards improving facilities around the Shire. -Some noncompliance occurred but may have been due to dry weather and concentration due to low water levels. -Road resealing program put on hold in 2002.
Goal Achievement	B-	-All	- Although work occurred towards all recommendations, some were not passed through to implementation.
Community Awareness	B	- Reporting	- State of the Shire Reporting continues as a source for community information. The Council advertises important announcements in the Innisfail Advocate.

OVERALL GRADE

B+

Summary of Progress

State of the Shire reporting has demonstrated Council's determination and commitment to improved performance with this year's release of the annual update. We are pleased also to thank the members of the community who have continued to display their dedication and involvement this year, at meetings to discuss the update and in all the forms of help and support they provided.

The Update continues to describe the progress of the goals of the Benchmark Report, and to keep readers informed about those issues affecting the Shire. The State of the Shire in 2002 can be summarised as follows:

	2001	2002
Biodiversity	B+	B-
Flora and fauna remained at the same levels in the Shire. Advances were principally in planning. Some data was gathered, but a paucity in the knowledge of fauna remained.		
Land Management	C+	B
More information needs to be gathered on land use practices. Weed control, sustainable production, and progress toward integrated catchment management will help to improve the State of the Shire.		
Water and Atmospheric Management	B	B-
The completion of stormwater management planning will help to improve the quality of waterways.		
Solid Waste Management	B+	B
The management of waste continued to progress. Recycling was also a move forward.		
The Shire Community	B-	B-
A need for greater provision of community services exists. These were identified in the Community Needs analysis which will greatly assist future planning.		
Economic Development	B-	B
Diversification occurred to alleviate the present economic difficulties being experienced. Agriculture experienced a favourable year, but for cane the economic climate has not improved.		
Council Activities	B	B+
Council implemented planning and progress on a number of major projects. The provision of infrastructure and services continues to improve.		

In conclusion, the Shire saw gradual progress towards improvement of conditions for the community, natural environment and economy. Overall, the State of the Shire has not grown worse despite the pressures associated with the economy. Plans are underway towards the further improvement of all these aspects of our environment, in the year 2003.

Acknowledgements

Johnstone Shire Council acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of the following organisations and their staff who have made this publication possible.

Government

- Department of Natural Resources and Mines
- Department of Primary industries (incorporating Queensland Fisheries Service)
- Environmental Protection Agency (incorporating Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service)
- Queensland Police Service
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Families, Youth and Community Care
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Queensland Health
- Education Queensland
- Australian Institute of Marine Science

Business/Industry

- Innisfail Chamber of Commerce
- Ports Corporation of Queensland
- Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations
- Cassowary Coast development Bureau
- Johnstone College of TAFE
- Community Support Centre
- North Queensland Afforestation Inc.
- CANEGROWERS
- Bundaberg Sugar
- TransNorth
- Warrina Lakes
- Innisfail Historical Society
- The Art Deco Society

Community Groups

- Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4)
- Community Revegetation Volunteer Group
- Johnstone River Catchment Management Association
- Johnstone Ecological Society
- PCYC
- Johnstone Cultural Association

Council Departments and Staff from:

- Environmental services
- Community services
- Corporate services
- Technical services
- Councillors

Thank you also to all those individuals who gave their time and effort to make the State of the Shire Update possible.

Finally, our thanks to Tennille Catchpole for developing Johnstone's ongoing process of State of the Shire reporting.

INNISFAIL — THE ART DECO TOWN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ART DECO SOCIETY



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