

Media Release **No. 575**

For release 15 July 2014

TORRES STRAIT COMMUNITIES TO RECEIVE VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) and Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) have announced the delivery of a number of essential health infrastructure needs in outer island communities.

TSRA Chairman, Joseph Elu said the TSRA and TSIRC are working together on a range of infrastructure projects to eight Torres Strait communities, following the execution of a co-funding agreement worth \$1.5 million between the two organisations.

“Hammond Island will receive a shade sail for their basketball court and solar lights will be installed on the wharf. On Warraber there will be a fit out of the welding workshop and on Mer an airport waiting area including amenities will be constructed,” Mr Elu said.

“Badu, Ugar and Saibai will each benefit from an upgrade or renovation of their community hall, Poruma will receive a basketball court refurbishment and Boigu will receive airport fencing.”

TSIRC Mayor Fred Gela said the projects were identified from Council’s Community Plans that have been developed in consultation with communities.

“Each project identified aligns to the Regional Development Plan and the COAG Building Blocks and was shortlisted by Councillors in November 2013 according to priority of need,” Mr Gela said.

A \$1.8 million funding agreement signed earlier this year between the TSRA and TSIRC would ensure that the 15 island communities under TSIRC jurisdiction would continue to receive vital water and waste water infrastructure support.

“This funding will be critical to ensuring the ongoing maintenance of water and waste water infrastructure, including the employment of a dedicated water services officer in each community,” Mr Gela said.

“The funding has also contributed the implementation of a regional water testing facility on Thursday Island, ensuring accurate water testing is taking place.”

Previously outer island water testing samples were sent to Cairns, which was both expensive and unsustainable.

Mr Elu said these commitments demonstrate the regional benefits associated with the TSRA and TSIRC Memorandum of Understanding, which has supported the different levels of government to work together for the wellbeing of communities in the region.

“The TSRA looks forward to a continued partnership with the TSIRC to ensure important health and wellbeing infrastructure is delivered to communities in the Torres Strait,” said Mr Elu.

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