

» Human resources

Recruitment and selection

More than 1000 people are employed at Mackay Regional Council. During the last financial year, human resources filled 406 positions and hired 222 new staff members.

Payroll

During 2008/09, human resources' payroll section staff worked hard to combine three separate payroll systems (from the former Mackay City, Mirani Shire and Sarina Shire councils) into one. This was successfully achieved by Mackay Regional Council using the Chris 21 software package. Payroll and human resources staff made regular visits to Mirani, Sarina and the Bedford Road depot to roll out the new software.

Graduate program

Council's graduate program is a series of structured training sessions conducted from January to December 2009. Containing 12 participants across a range of council departments, this program gives current or recent university students an opportunity to learn more about council and develop practical skills that they can apply to their council career.

Trainees and apprentices

Human resources managed and co-ordinated more than 81 trainees and apprentices during 2008/09. This figure is represented in the below table:

Type	Started	Completed	Ongoing
Trainees	19	17*	-
Apprentices	2	2	13
Existing workers	2	21	20

**Please note that this does not necessarily mean that there are two people left to finish their traineeship – some trainees would have commenced in the previous financial year. The same scenario would exist for apprentices and existing workers.*

Council has also registered 28 staff members in the Civil Construction Existing Worker Traineeship program; these trainees will begin work in the 2009/10 financial year.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work – Green Army Initiative

During 2008/09, human resources' learning and development program accepted eight people from Skills Training Management to undertake a 22-week placement working in council's parks and environment program. This community jobs project is part of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work – Green Army Initiative designed to give hands-on work experience to individuals who have recently been made redundant or who are between work contracts. (Placements due to commence in August 2009.)

Council policies

During 2008/09, human resources co-ordinated the following: Learning and Development Activities Policy, reviewed other council policies including the Performance Appraisal Policy, reviewed the Drug and Alcohol Policy, developed a draft Traineeship and Apprenticeship Policy, and developed a draft Self-Education Assistance Policy.

Learning and Development Activities Policy

Council sponsored a number of learning and development opportunities for its workers during this period. A total of 98 council workers attended council-sponsored conferences (one of which included overseas travel) and 4536 staff members took part in council-sponsored training activities. This equates to an average of 378 attendances at training and/or conferences per month and 34 per cent of employees receiving training each month.

Self Education Assistance Policy

Human resources co-ordinated the Self Education Assistance Policy which saw about 50 employees taking advantage of self-education assistance over the year, 12 of which were new applications and approvals.

In-house training

In-house training was co-ordinated by council's learning and development staff on the following topics: drug and alcohol (for 1100 employees), harassment and discrimination, Chemwatch, preparing scopes of work and specifications, building warden training, authorised persons, QR Pink Card, trenching and ground support, confined space and refreshers, traffic control – MUTCD 1 – MUTCD 2, train and facilitate groups (Partial Cert III in TAA), investigations training, ACDC chemical spraying, contract training, chainsaw training, Finance One, Dataworks, Frontier and Chris21.

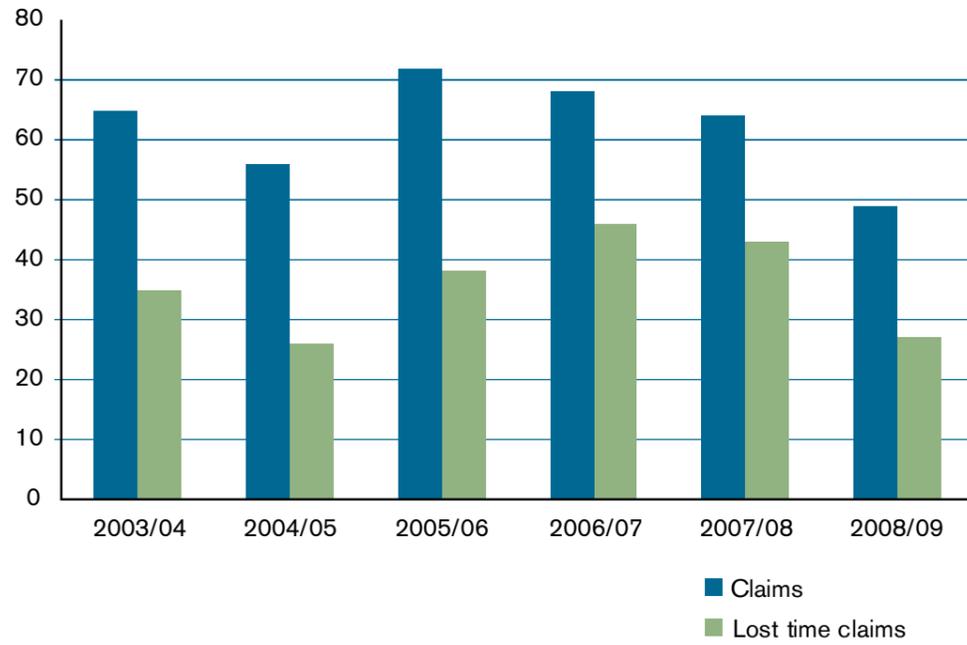


Materials Recovery Facility at Paget

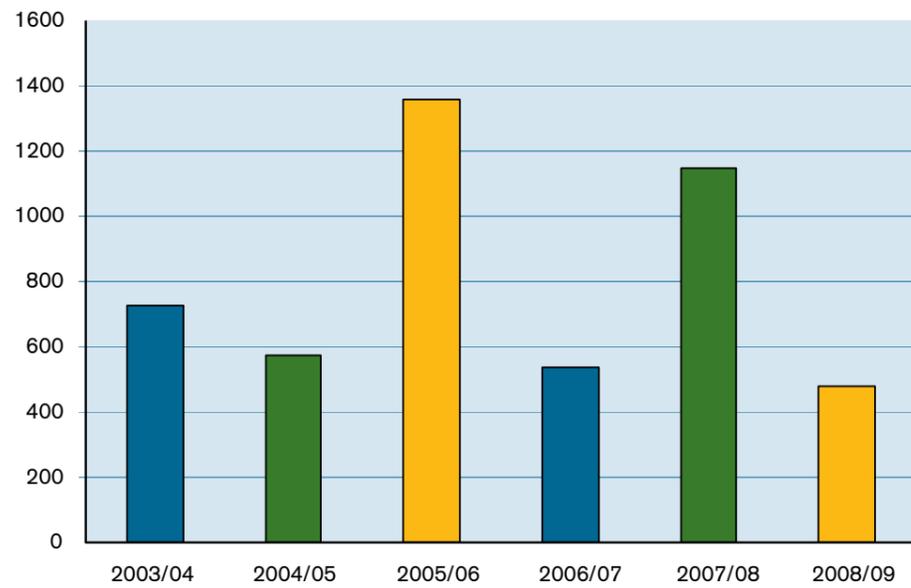
Workplace health and safety

Mackay Regional Council recorded a downward trend in statutory claims, lost time claims and days lost resulting from workplace incidents, as represented in the below tables. Council's Work Safe, Home Safe motto reinforces the aim to drive down injuries in the workplace.

Claims



Days lost due to injury



» Meeting our Corporate Plan objectives

Council's strategic priorities are those major opportunities and challenges that our community believes need to be addressed in the Mackay region. The key strategic priorities and their corresponding corporate objectives identified are listed below.

- 1 Community and Lifestyle**
To build safe, strong and self-reliant communities with access to a diverse range of community services and facilities aimed at providing opportunities for participation in community life.
- 2 Economic Development**
To promote a strong, competitive and diverse economy throughout the region by supporting and investing in sustainable business development and local employment opportunities.
- 3 Environmental Sustainability**
To enhance and protect the environmental assets of the region, ensuring a protected/preserved natural environment for future generations.
- 4 Strategic Planning**
To take an active approach to integrated regional planning to reflect the aspirations and lifestyle of our community.
- 5 Infrastructure Services**
To effectively plan, deliver and maintain physical services and infrastructure networks for our community's current and future needs.
- 6 Commercial Services**
To provide and manage high-quality water and waste programs on a commercial basis that meet social and environmental objectives.
- 7 Organisational Excellence and Governance**
To pursue excellence as an organisation which embraces exceptional customer service, values its staff and promotes ethical standards of practice supported by clear policies and strategies responsive to the needs of the community.



Global Grooves 2008

1 » Community and Lifestyle

Festivals and events

In November 2008 council welcomed a new program – festivals and events – to its fold. This program now manages all festivals and events as well as the Victoria Street Sunday markets.

Global Grooves 2008

Held on Father's Day 2008 at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, Global Grooves offered a full day of activities, entertainment and workshops for the whole family. Attendants were also encouraged to spoil their taste buds by sampling the range of multicultural cuisine on offer at this free council-co-ordinated community event. Global Grooves is a multicultural celebration that caters to all age groups and recognises the rich and diverse cultural contributions of our community.

A number of local and national performers showcased their multicultural talents throughout the day, including Yothu Yindi drummer Ben Hakalitz and seven of his compatriots (who together are known as the Tribe of Jubal) and African dance band Musiki Manjaro, Mexican and Latin American performer Victor Valdes and the authentic Ethiopian Bahil dance group. This event, which attracted about 5000 people, was supported by ABC Tropical North, Hail Creek Mine and Multicultural Arts Queensland.



Christmas 2008 and New Year 2009 celebrations

Carol singing and Christmas tree lighting ceremonies were staged around the region at Mackay, Sarina, Walkerston and Mirani and all events were well supported by the community. About 10,000 revellers enjoyed the traditional New Year celebration held in Mackay which featured two fireworks displays – one held early on in the evening for children to attend and the other at the stroke of midnight.

Australia Day 2009

Mackay Regional Council spread the Aussie spirit region-wide with a progressive Australia Day celebration on Monday, January 26, 2009, at Finch Hatton, Greenmount Homestead, Sarina and Mackay. As a newly formed regional council the aim was to retain the true community feel to Australia Day. Entertainment was provided at every location by musicians from throughout the region and awards for Community Event of the Year, Community Volunteer of the Year, Senior Sports, Junior Sports and Cultural categories were presented at the Finch Hatton, Sarina and Mackay ceremonies.

Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year awards were presented at the Mackay function. Citizen of the Year was Ron Ballard (for his work with Sarina Sub-Branch, Sarina Sub-Branch RSL, Sarina State High School, and the Sarina Congregation of the Sarina Christian Family) and Young Citizen of the Year was Jamie Fordham (for her leadership as a Mirani High School president, representing the Mirani electorate at the YMCA Youth Parliament in Brisbane and raising money for the Kim Walters Choices Program and Relay for Life). Nita Nicholson was honoured at the Mirani celebration with the Lori Burgess Memorial Community Volunteer award for her volunteer work at a variety of community groups including the Mackay Special School and the Valley Retirement Centre.

Easter Carnival

More than 3000 people took part in a morning of festivities at the Easter Carnival in the city centre of Mackay. The Easter Bunny gave away about \$1000 worth of chocolate and prizes and this event was supported by Caneland Central, Zinc radio and local businesses.

May Motor Madness

Car enthusiasts cruised on down to the City Heart in May to check out the line-up of contemporary cars and bikes on show at May Motor Madness. This event attracted a crowd of about 5000 people and the judges awarded five prizes to the finest machines on show.

Mackay-Matsuura sister city relationship

Council has an active relationship with Matsuura, Japan, and in August, 2008, Mackay hosted 15 students and three adults from our sister city for seven days. Home-stays were organised for the group in the Mackay region and the itinerary, which was prepared with assistance from the committee and Matsuura representatives, featured many of our region's sightseeing highlights.

In September/October, 2008, 14 students and two chaperones took part in the scholarship program by visiting Matsuura. Later in November, 16 Matsuura citizens travelled to Mackay to take part in a welcome dinner, tour of local attractions, home-hosted dinners and a formal dinner.

NAIDOC Week

About 250 people celebrated NAIDOC Week in July 2008 with a flag-raising ceremony and morning tea at the Civic Precinct. Aboriginal elder Gary Mooney and Torres Strait elder Percy Charlie were guest flag raisers and the theme was Advance Australia Fair, which reflected the wishes of Indigenous Australians to be given a fair go in Australian society. The ceremony was followed by a display of traditional Indigenous artefacts and an art display at Mackay City Library. Entertainment was provided by the Mamu Aboriginal dancers and the Hankin family Torres Strait Islander dancers.

Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre

The Mackay Entertainment Centre continues to be recognised as one of the leading centres of entertainment in Queensland. A total of 178 performances incorporating drama, dance, comedy, classical music, world music, folk, jazz, blues and children's theatre were held during the year, attracting 79,628 patrons. Sell-out performances included the Queensland Ballet's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream, three Carl Barron shows and two performances by The Wiggles.

The centre's entrepreneurial program, Celebration, featured Australian and international performers and attracted wide interest. The dinner and show cabaret performances included in the program offered patrons the opportunity to experience and enjoy quality entertainment with themed cuisine. Program highlights included American singer/guitarist Kaki King, the Montreal Guitar Trio and Queensland's Melissa Western. The entertainment centre closed briefly in June for refurbishment in preparation for the opening of its sibling facility – the convention centre.





Artspace Mackay

Artspace Mackay's exhibition and education programs for the 2008-09 financial year were created to appeal to the widest possible audience. The most popular event of the year for all ages was Olafur Eliasson's *The Cubic Structural Evolution* on tour in November from Brisbane's Queensland Art Gallery. More than 3000 people visited this installation which involved public participation and many hours were spent creating an imaginative city from 300 kilograms of white Lego building blocks.

The Mackay Regional Council collection was greatly enhanced by donations from artists, Archie Moore, Anneke Silver and G.W.Bot. courtesy of the Federal Government Cultural Gifts Program. Dr John Atherton, of Brisbane, also made a generous donation of four paintings by Clem Forbes, in memory of his late wife Ruth.

Another major gift was the full set of six SMS Portfolios 1968 compiled by American artist William Copley and donated by the Artspace Foundation. This collection of artists' books and multiples includes contribution from 82 artists including Marcel Duchamp, Roy Lichtenstein and Yoko Ono.

Funding for a major touring exhibition *Recycled Library: Altered book* curated by Artspace was announced in June. The Federal Government's Contemporary Touring Initiative, administered by Visions Australia, provided this funding to take the exhibition to 11 galleries in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia through 2009-2011.



Sarina Sugar Shed

The Sarina Sugar Shed is a popular attraction that has caught the eye (and the taste buds) of more than 10,000 people who took part in its tours during the 2008-09 financial year. Council staff and volunteers including Chef John Walker have now produced a range of seven Chefs' Gusto sauces, their very own cookbook (priced at \$10), made their own vinegar and cultivated a fruit tree plantation of lime and mango trees. The Shed has also joined forces with Sarina High School's Agricultural Centre students to plant habanero chillies (known for their fruitiness and colour) to make a new fiery sauce.

Total sales income for the Sarina Sugar Shed increased by almost 30 per cent for 2008/09; this was mainly due to the introduction of the Chefs' Gusto sauces. Alcohol sales also increased by 23 per cent, following the introduction of 50ml gift-sized bottles. Sales income from entry tickets increased by four per cent (possibly due to the economic climate) and expenditure on the facility was down 10 per cent from the previous financial year.

Mackay Regional Council's library services

Mackay Regional Council boasts six libraries (including the mobile library). In the 2008-09 financial year, more than 91,000 items were loaned out using the libraries' self-checkout system. Total loans for this period were 820,156 and 24,653 items were added to the collections. Storytime sessions were a big hit region wide with 12,531 parents and children attending the sessions held at Gordon White, Mackay City, Mirani, Sarina and Walkerston libraries and the first year of Baby Bounce finished on a high with 961 parents and children attending these classes at Mackay City and Gordon White libraries.





New sports and recreation officer

In February 2009, council appointed a sports and recreation officer to assist local sporting and recreational clubs with development opportunities. This officer is also a board member on the North Queensland Sports Foundation committee, established to provide sporting opportunities and bursaries for players.

Swim centres

There are four public swim centres located in the Mackay region – Pioneer, Memorial, Mirani and Sarina. Both the Memorial and Pioneer swim centres received significant upgrades throughout the year, including additional seating and tables, information boards were installed, and the Memorial's amenities were upgraded. Pioneer Swim Centre's Learn to Swim program doubled in size with the addition of Adults Learn To Swim and Orcas Squad Training sessions. This program has consequently expanded to include the Memorial Swim Centre.

Lantern-making workshops and night parade

This project was made possible courtesy of a \$6758 grant from the Regional Arts Development Fund. The lantern parade served as the official opening event of the region's River Rock to Mountain Top Community Festival in May, 2009. Local visual artists Wanda Bennett, Tracey Johnston and Rosemary Payne worked with schools and community members to produce more than 200 lanterns for the parade.



Lantern parade at the River Rock to Mountain Top Community Festival



2 Economic Development

City centre revitalisation

Through the urban renewal and economic development program, council developed revitalisation plans for the Mackay city centre and other urban centres across the region. As part of this strategy, waste and recycling bins, seating and landscaping were installed in the City Heart during the year. In February 2009, about 200 people provided council with overwhelmingly positive feedback at a City Centre Stakeholder Forum.

Following this forum, the CBD Economic Development Advisory Committee was formed, made up of prominent local business people and civic and State Government representatives. The committee aims to enrich city life through festivals, events and other activities, master planning key areas (such as the waterfront), fostering new businesses and developments and regenerate the main retail area. The goal is to form working groups for other urban centres across the region.

City Safe Mackay committee

The City Safe Mackay committee was formed in April 2009 with shared responsibilities between council, Queensland Police and other agencies.

The committee aims to implement strategies that will maximise opportunities for people to access the many attractions available within the City Heart in a safe and enjoyable way.

Sarina Public Transport Scheme

In March 2009, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation approved the Rural Access Initiative's funding application for the Sarina Public Transport Scheme. The grant money made available enabled council to establish a twice-weekly daytime bus service to Sarina communities on a two-year trial period from June 2009.



Plantation Palms - artist's impression

Response to Economic Downturn – Seven Point Action Plan

In response to the global financial crisis, council's economic development team took a proactive approach to reducing the impacts locally by devising a seven-point plan to tackle the region's most pressing issues. The plan addressed topics such as sound financial management, investment in infrastructure, support of housing needs, maximisation of employment opportunities, support for industry, improved service delivery and inter-government advocacy. Council will use the guidelines set out in this plan to balance short and medium term budgets to meet community service delivery expectations.

Active Mackay CBD

An Active Mackay CBD funding application was approved through the Department of Local Government Sports and Recreation to install signage that provides directions and walking distance to various landmarks including the Bluewater Quay and facilities in the CBD. This is an ongoing project between council, Queensland Health and Queensland Police.

Development Applications

Mackay Regional Council proudly approved a number of large-scale Development Applications during the year including:

- > a large mixed-use development comprising a commercial premises, motel, multiple-dwelling units and shops located in seven buildings (two-to-eight storeys high), at the corner of East Gordon, Tennyson and Park streets, Mackay
- > reconfiguration of a lot to create 314 Urban Residential lots and a park at Plantation Palms Estate, Eimeo Road, Rural View
- > 69-unit motel development at Belangson Way, Shoal Point
- > Material Change of Use for an integrated tourist facility comprising two cable water-ski parks, motel, villas and apartments, backpacker resort, restaurants, shops, medical centre, gym, child care centre and urban development on land on Beaconsfield Road, Andergrove
- > stage eight of the Nabilla Estate at 139 Kennys Road, Marian, to create an additional 22 Urban Residential lots
- > an eight-storey commercial building at 33 River Street, Mackay.



33 River Street - artist's impression

Development Applications under assessment at June 30, 2009, include:

- > a 25,074 square-metre expansion to Caneland Central, Mackay
- > a Mixed Use development comprising 191 multiple-dwelling units, catering shop, health-care centre, commercial premises (2550 square metres), a 148-room motel and an indoor entertainment/conference centre
- > a 15,374 square-metre expansion to Mt Pleasant Shopping Centre in two stages on Bucasia Road
- > four separate applications for expansion of Rural View with a total new gross floor area (GFA) of 51,044 square metres
- > a homemaker centre located on the corner of Bucasia and Holts roads, Richmond, comprising more than 38,000 square metres of GFA including a 10,000 square-metre Harvey Norman store.

Of particular interest were the proposals to expand Caneland Central, Mt Pleasant, Rural View and creation of the homemaker centre which proposed to add another 129,492 square metres of retail floor space to the region. The investment in land development continued to remain strong with 2040 new lots approved and 885 lots created during the year.

The assessment time for deciding these applications was reduced via improving the efficiency of council's internal assessment processes.

A joint professional development program was also established with the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) and Urban Development Industry Association (UDIA) which delivered training.



Pioneer Valley

3 » Environmental Sustainability

Local Government Week and World Environment Day

Andergrove State Primary School was alive with the collective sounds of "Oohh" and "Aahh" as Melbourne aquatic scientist Sheree Marris took hundreds of spellbound children on an underwater educational adventure on Friday, June 5, 2009. Ms Marris's visit and a morning of environmental and educational games and activities was part of the school's reward for taking out first prize in the Go Green Primary School Challenge, co-ordinated by council to celebrate World Environment Day and Local Government Week (June 1-7). The activities morning included recycling and water conservation games, an obstacle course, competitions, giveaways, a tree planting ceremony and SEA FM broadcasted live from the school grounds. Class 3A was awarded \$500 vouchers from Harvey Norman Computers and council staff, children and teachers also dressed in green and made a gold coin donation to raise money for the Mackay Conservation Group. Council staff also manned an information stand at Caneland Central during the week and fielded more than 400 council enquiries.

Sarina Sugar Shed

Sarina Sugar Shed is not just a popular tourist attraction that serves up sweet delights – it's also an environmentally friendly, energy saving entity. Sustainability practices currently in place at the Sugar Shed include:

- > all liquid waste (dunder) from the distilling process is used to fertilise the Sugar Shed's gardens
- > solid waste (bagasse) cane fibre is fed to local livestock as a food supplement
- > filter mud (the waste product from the clarifying process) is used as a soil conditioner on the cane crop display and gardens, and water condensed from processed cane juice is used to water the lawns
- > molasses remaining after the sugar syrup centrifugal process is used to make alcohol.

Community consultation was a key feature of this project which was made possible with support and assistance from Reef Catchments, Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group, Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and local community groups.

Land for Wildlife

With funding from the Natural Environment Levy, council provided support and recognition to private landholders involved in nature conservation. Land for Wildlife is a volunteer program that encourages and assists landholders to provide habitat for wildlife on their properties. An ecological specialist visited each property that was nominated and provided a management plan detailing the specific land management issues affecting the property. Regular newsletters, advice and opportunities to meet other like-minded landholders were also provided as part of the program.

Volunteer program

The volunteer program provides opportunities for public involvement in the sustainable management of public land. During 2008/09, council's natural environment team worked closely with a wide range of community groups, schools and businesses to achieve this goal. Volunteers propagated indigenous plants at the Mackay Natural Environment Centre Nursery, and regular working bees were held with groups such as the Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve and the Friends of Annie Wood Park.

School groups took part in planting, monitoring and weeding of public land with support from council. Several corporations have also worked in partnership with council to develop volunteer programs to enable staff to assist with sustainable land management activities.

Mackay coastal project

Council staff and Reef Catchments came together to produce the Coastal Management Guidelines, a document that sets the strategic direction for the sustainable management of the region's coastal areas. The guidelines address dune and vegetation structure, re-vegetation, beach access, weed control, erosion, wildlife habitat protection and signage. The project also involved the development of individual management plans for 16 beaches in the region.



Eungella National Park



Mackay Harbour Beach

Bringing Back the Beach Scrub project

As part of this project, council worked with Reef Catchments and the local community to improve the condition of beach scrub at Shoal Point, Blacks Beach and Slade Point Reserve. As weeds threaten the survival of beach scrub vegetation, weed control work was undertaken at all three sites and signage detailing the importance of beach scrub was erected. One kilometre of fencing was also installed at Shoal Point and 1500 indigenous seedlings were planted to provide habitat for wildlife. These efforts have also resulted in reduced tree removal and rubbish dumping as the site becomes increasingly valued by the community. This project was developed through the Back on Track species prioritisation framework with funding from the Australian Government.

Pest management

Pest management officers successfully co-ordinated and carried out their responsibilities relating to declared plants and animals. About 90 properties within the region conducted 1080 baiting programs from January through to July 2009 with a success rate of 55 per cent for baits taken. Shed meetings and resource sharing days have occurred throughout the region to identify and locate giant rats tail grass and lantana. These sessions have created great partnerships between council and landholders, business and the Department of Primary Industries.

Disease control

Council continued its year-round vector management program. While we can never be successful in completely eradicating vectors, huge inroads continue to be made in keeping numbers under control. Aerial larviciding activities continued to grow and provided positive results by allowing greater access to large mosquito breeding sites. Council's extensive pre-treatment program monitored the effects of tidal flushing which resulted in increased longevity of the larvicidal briquettes.

Council also joined forces with Queensland Health to survey and monitor dengue mosquitoes (aedes aegypti) both region wide and throughout North Queensland. About 1000 cases of dengue were recorded in North Queensland, while only three were reported in Mackay. A new mosquito management fact sheet was also produced to provide further information to the community on how they can protect themselves and their loved ones from dengue; visit council's website (www.mackay.qld.gov.au) to view this document.

Health education

Council's environmental health officers conducted education sessions on food hygiene, mosquitoes and dengue fever, nuisances and local laws, and responsible pet ownership with community groups, schools and businesses throughout the region. Basic food hygiene education sessions were conducted prior to all of council's major festivals and events to increase community awareness.

Two responsible pet ownership open days, which included half-price micro-chipping, were conducted in partnership with the RSPCA education mobile unit and Andergrove Veterinary Clinic. This initiative resulted in more than 60 pets being micro-chipped.

Environmental governance

Council's responsibilities under the new Environmental Protection Act have now increased to include residential and commercial nuisance and registering businesses and industries that conduct environmentally relevant activities such as motor vehicle workshops, concrete batching plants, engineering works etc. Council has registered more than 550 relevant operators and in 2008/2009 issued 10 environmentally relevant activity Development Approvals. To assist the public and businesses in understanding and complying with the new Environmental Protection Act, council has developed guidelines and an information package, both of which can be found on Mackay Regional Council's website (visit www.mackay.qld.gov.au).



Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

In late 2008 Mackay Regional Council appointed a visitor services officer to the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. The successful Planted education program on offer at the gardens was revisited with children from 25 schools around the region taking part. Program topics ranged from wildlife and rainforests to composting and climate change. The Gardens Friends Association volunteers spent a staggering 1500 hours providing assistance with planting bees, research and data entry, events and guided walks at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.

Biological controls (weevils)

The lagoons at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens experienced a massive increase in exotic water weeds including water lettuce (pistia stratiots), water hyacinth (eichhornia crassipes) and salvinia (salvinia molesta). To complement and reduce the dependence on chemical and mechanical weed control, biological controls in the form of weevils were released into the lagoons in March 2009. This is an ongoing trial that will be measured for effect – with early results in the reduction of water lettuce apparent.



4 » Strategic Planning

Planning scheme amendments

The region's planning schemes are designed to accommodate business and industry growth, maintain the distinctive character of our region's rural and urban areas, protect good-quality agricultural land and conserve environmentally sensitive areas. Our region's fast-paced growth rate obviously puts pressure on our infrastructure and environment, which makes council's planning schemes such vital documents.

Council adopted a range of amendments to the Mackay City Planning Scheme. These amendments were grouped into three areas (Amendments 1, 2 & 3 of 2007), each relating to a range of elements of the Mackay City Planning Scheme. Certain sections of the proposed Amendments 3 of 2007 were held in abeyance. Council proposed amendments to the Mirani Shire Plan (Amendments 1 of 2007).

Developer contributions for trunk infrastructure

Council prepares plans for trunk infrastructure to ensure that future developments can be serviced with infrastructure such as water and sewerage mains, roads, storm water drains and parks. Once the plans are prepared, contribution rates are determined to share the cost between council and developers of providing infrastructure. The contribution rates are contained in council's Planning Scheme Contributions Policies which are prepared in accordance with the Integrated Planning Act (IPA).

The contribution rates for council's contributions policies listed below were updated:

Mackay City Planning Scheme

- > Policy 16.01 – Transport Network Contributions Policy
- > Policy 16.03 – Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure Contributions Policy
- > Policy 16.04 – Stormwater Trunk Infrastructure Contributions Policy

Mirani Shire Plan

- > Policy 1 – Developer Contributions for Water Supply and Sewerage Headworks

Sarina Shire Planning Scheme

- > Policy 10 – Water Supply and Sewerage Headworks – Works External and Works Internal

These amendments allow council to achieve a reasonable and equitable distribution of the costs of works between council and property developers of land within the Mackay Regional Council area.

Heritage Advisory Committee and awards

The Heritage Advisory Committee continued to raise awareness about the region's rich heritage through various activities including the biennial Heritage Awards. The first Heritage Awards for the Mackay region was held in May 2009. These awards recognise residential and commercial buildings that reinforce and protect built character and heritage values throughout the Mackay region.

Development assessment – engineering program

During the year, 129 Operational Works applications were received, totalling \$76 million. The pace of development work slowed during the year primarily due to extended and above-average rainfall, however, major projects included:

- > 39-lot industrial subdivision in Boundary Road
- > four industrial subdivisions on Farrellys Road with a total of 48 lots
- > 30-lot village residential subdivision at Seaforth
- > 96-lot residential subdivision in Rural View
- > 41-lot residential subdivision in Ooralea
- > 52-lot residential subdivision in Marian
- > new private primary school and 20-lot residential subdivision in North Mackay.

The most significant project under construction this year was the Jilalan rail yard expansion, which involved the reconstruction of sections of four council roads – Armstrong Beach Road (600 metres of sealed road including two roundabouts and two rail overpass bridges), Gurnett Road (800 metres of sealed road), Smyth Road (1300 metres of unsealed road and 650 metres of sealed road including a 40-metre-long rail underpass), and Oonooie Road (1050 metres of sealed road including two rail overpass bridges).

Other projects completed in 2008/09 were:

- > 36-lot industrial subdivision on Farrellys Road
- > 99-lot residential subdivision in Rural View
- > 60-lot residential subdivision in Rural View
- > 28-lot residential subdivision in Marian.



Bluewater Quay

5 » Infrastructure Services

Bluewater Quay

Construction on Mackay Regional Council's signature Q150 project, the Bluewater Quay, was nearing completion as at June 30, 2009. Located along the Pioneer River waterfront, east of the Forgan Bridge, the 250-metre quay will extend along River Street from Sydney Street to Carlyle Street. Jointly funded by council and the State Government, this \$12 million project will include covered areas for markets and other activities, fencing, landscaping, concrete paving, toilet facilities, seating and lawn areas, barbecue facilities, a children's play area with a special soft-fall surface and an eye-catching water feature.



Victor Creek pontoon

Bridge Replacement Program

Substantial works totalling \$2.187 million in 2008/09 were carried out around the region to replace bridges, improve alignments and upgrade bridge approaches. A key project in this program was the construction of a new bridge on Pleystowe Connection Road over Nebia Creek, Balnagowan. A temporary bypass road and bridge were constructed to divert traffic while the old single-lane timber bridge was removed and replaced with a new concrete bridge. During this project the alignment of a 450-metre section of the road, including the bridge approaches, was improved and overlaid with asphalt surfacing. Other bridge replacements during the year include the Pinnacle-Septimus Bridge, a bridge along Toons Road (Mount Charlton) and a causeway was constructed on Cathu O'Connell River Road.

Boat ramps

Council along with the State Government (who provided funding) completed projects at three boat ramp facilities around the region in 2008/09. The Victor Creek boat ramp at Seaforth was upgraded and a floating pontoon installed. Other works under this program included widening the Bucasia Esplanade boat ramp and constructing carparking facilities at the venue, and building a new boat ramp at Apsley Way, Andergrove.

LATM traffic and road safety

Just under \$1 million was allocated to improving and upgrading the region's traffic facilities, as part of the Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) safety program. Key projects addressed under this program included traffic calming at Kenzey Street, intersection upgrades at Bold and Pugsley streets, and Goldsmith and Shakespeare streets, and the construction of a roundabout at Alfred and Macalister streets.

Pavement improvements

Council has carried out substantial roadworks region wide to the tune of \$2.818 million. These works include road alignment improvements, drainage infrastructure installation and improvements and pavement reconstruction and resurfacing. Some of the major works conducted this year are part of the Slurry and Reseal Program (08/09) which saw sections of roads resealed to protect their longevity.

Road upgrades took place at the following locations:

Mackay

- > Alfred Street – between Wellington and Macalister streets
- > Bridge Road – between Binnington Esplanade and Kilgour Street
- > Malcomson Street – between Glenpark Street and the Gooseponds bridge

Pioneer Valley

- > Dalrymple Road
- > Pakula Gap Road
- > Freeguards Road
- > Eungella town streets

Sarina

- > Armstrong Beach Road (1.4km)
- > Petersen Street - between Place Avenue and Brooks Road



Road Shoulder Treatment Program

To continue to improve conditions on the region's older residential streets, council allocated \$1.462 million towards the continuation of its successful Road Shoulder Treatment Program.

Some of the streets addressed include: Field Street (between Smith and George streets), Wellington Street (between Norris and Shakespeare streets), High Street (from Burgess Street to the cul-de-sac/western end), and Pound Street (from Creek Street to the western end of Walkerston).

Trunk and master drainage

Significant works totalling \$7.939 million have been carried out under this program throughout the year across more than 30 projects.

- Some key projects:
 - > large concrete culverts were installed at Farrellys Road as part of an upgrade of the road from Connors Road to the Bruce Highway (in conjunction with Main Roads)
 - > trunk drainage was installed along River Street between Wood and Sydney streets. This project was part of a staged series of works along River Street to improve the drainage systems both in the street and the surrounding city area. New storm water infrastructure was installed and council worked with Ergon Energy to provide new underground high and low voltage conduits; this was deemed the most cost effective and less disruptive option.

Special construction projects

A new environmentally friendly sewerage treatment plant and effluent disposal area was installed at Seaforth to service the camping ground. The new plant replaced the existing septic tanks and absorption trenches to service the ongoing demands of three amenity blocks (equivalent to about 85 people a day including showers). The system can treat 17,000 litres of raw effluent a day to the highest level required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Other construction projects of note include: Theo Hansen Park, Slade Point and Mirani skate bowl.

Community housing

Tenancy of council's 70 community housing units was maintained at 97%. Some units received new flooring, paintwork and electrical appliances where required.



6 >> Commercial Services

Clean up Australia Day

In March 2009 about 450 volunteers took part in council's Clean Up Australia Day event held across 27 different locations. Almost 20 skips of rubbish were collected with a total weight of 5.8 tonnes. Local businesses donated a wide variety of prizes to reward the volunteers for their tremendous efforts.

Sarina recycling bins rolled out

Sarina residents received improved waste services with the distribution of yellow-lidded bins throughout the area in late April. This initiative has brought Sarina and its surrounding area in line with the waste and recycling services currently provided throughout the region.

Bin Inspection Program

While community support for recycling increased over the year, contamination remained a significant issue for council. A total of 5755 bins from different areas of Mackay were randomly selected for inspection over a six-week period. The overall contamination rate recorded was 15.5%. Residents with contaminated bins were re-educated on what can and cannot be placed in their yellow-lidded bins.

> For more Commercial Services information, refer to the Mackay Water Services Annual Performance Report from page 93.



7 » Organisations Excellence and Governance

Community Attitude Survey

When it came to customer satisfaction, Mackay Regional Council staff found they had good reason to hold their heads high. According to the 2009 Community Attitude Survey conducted by IRIS Research, a whopping 80 per cent of residents were reportedly happy with the way council staff managed their enquiries. This random, region-wide survey engaged more than 800 residents via a phone poll in June, making it one of the largest independent surveys to be conducted by a Queensland council.

Nearly three quarters (71.6 per cent) of residents also indicated they were satisfied with the performance of council over the past 12 months. Survey results also revealed 77 per cent of residents felt "a strong sense of belonging to the community". Topping the "highly satisfied" list of council services were general waste collection, library operations and the provision of sewerage and septic services.

On the flip side, residents demonstrated low levels of satisfaction with the maintenance of sealed and unsealed roads. In response to this, council's 2009/10 budget allocated \$94 million for road construction and maintenance, a significant increase on the previous year. Residents also praised council's emergency management (responses to floods and cyclones) by ranking this area the most important out of 34 categories of council services and facilities.

Customer Service Reference Group

A Customer Service Reference Group was established (made up of staff and management) to place strategic focus on the council's customer service delivery. A new system using council's people, property and rates system, Pathway, was implemented to track customer phone calls and improve customer response rates. Council's Queensland Government Agency Program (QGAP) office at Mirani proved popular with customers. The QGAP Office provides customers in the Pioneer Valley with access to a wide range of State Government services

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube launched

Early 2009 Mackay Regional Council launched its new communication tool aimed at social networkers. Council's new Facebook page went live in April 2009. The page features the latest council news and links to videos from council's YouTube channel - Council TV. The page allows subscribers, or "fans", to receive updates in real time no matter what time they log on to view other status updates.

Facebook was launched in 2004 and currently has more than 175 million active users worldwide. Council also started sending out tweets to followers using the popular online blogging website Twitter. Twitter is a micro-blogging site which allows users to post up to 140 characters of text and provides a stripped-down version of other social networking sites and is sometimes described as the "SMS of the internet". To access these facilities, click on the icons at the bottom of council's homepage.

In addition, council's website remains a pivotal communication tool for the organisation. The total number of pages viewed throughout the year were 2,832,052 which equates to an average of 236,004 per month.



MiSite

Council's new intranet – MiSite (short for Mackay intranet site) – went live in April, 2009. MiSite is designed to strengthen the organisational culture of the newly amalgamated council. Based on Microsoft SharePoint technologies, the site enables users to find any information within three clicks from the front page. Special features included a discussion forum, buy and sell section, business improvement suggestion box and staff recognition blog.

As at June 30, the site had received more than 130,000 hits, equating to an average of 2000 hits a day.

Guardian

In February 2008 Mackay faced a flood that was in excess of a one in 500 year event. Nearly 4000 homes and businesses were inundated with water and council's priority was to implement a computerised disaster management system. Spurred by this disaster, council has implemented the Guardian system. Developed by a Whitsunday company called QIT Plus, the system links both paper and electronic mechanisms and integrates with council's existing property and GIS databases. Guardian will help to co-ordinate the efforts of emergency personnel, enabling a quicker and more effective emergency response. The system was installed in June 2009 in time for the 2009/10 cyclone season.

Property services program established

Council's property services section was established in its own right in November 2008 to provide professional property management, enhance contract efficiency, increase cost savings and improve customer service and increase council's capacity to conduct scheduled maintenance of its buildings, undertake land dealings and co-ordinate contracts. One of the major projects undertaken by this program was the refurbishment of council's administration buildings.



Asset management

In January 2009 Mackay Regional Council's first asset management team was formed, in response to State Government renewed asset management reporting requirements for regional councils, with the goal of improving the processing of asset information and designing and implementing an asset management plan that will cover all areas of council. This team of eight completed the most comprehensive revaluation of Mackay Regional Council's assets, collectively valuing all council-owned assets at approximately three billion dollars.

Contracts

In August, 2008, council formed a contract section comprised of four staff members, tasked with the role of providing tender management and contract administration functions for all of council, as well as providing contract management advice to staff as required.

Local law operations

Council continued to work with the community, businesses and the Urban Renewal and Economic Development Program to target regulated and off-street parking issues within the city centre. Careful monitoring of this area has served to increase vehicle turnover in the City Heart.

Responsible pet ownership

As part of the Petpep program to encourage responsible pet ownership, council officers visited about 20 schools around the region to facilitate education and awareness on this topic. Council also continued to advertise Pound Pets on its website (www.mackay.qld.gov.au) to match lost animals with their original owners or to find new owners for them.

Health governance

A consistent and coordinated approach to health surveillance and enforcement activities were completed by council's environmental health team. Council has more than 896 licences for food, accommodation, caravan parks, flammable liquids, swimming pools, skin penetration businesses and vendors. This coordinated approach has seen premises inspected for the first time in years increasing the knowledge of licensees and achieving higher compliance in all areas.



» Departmental snapshot

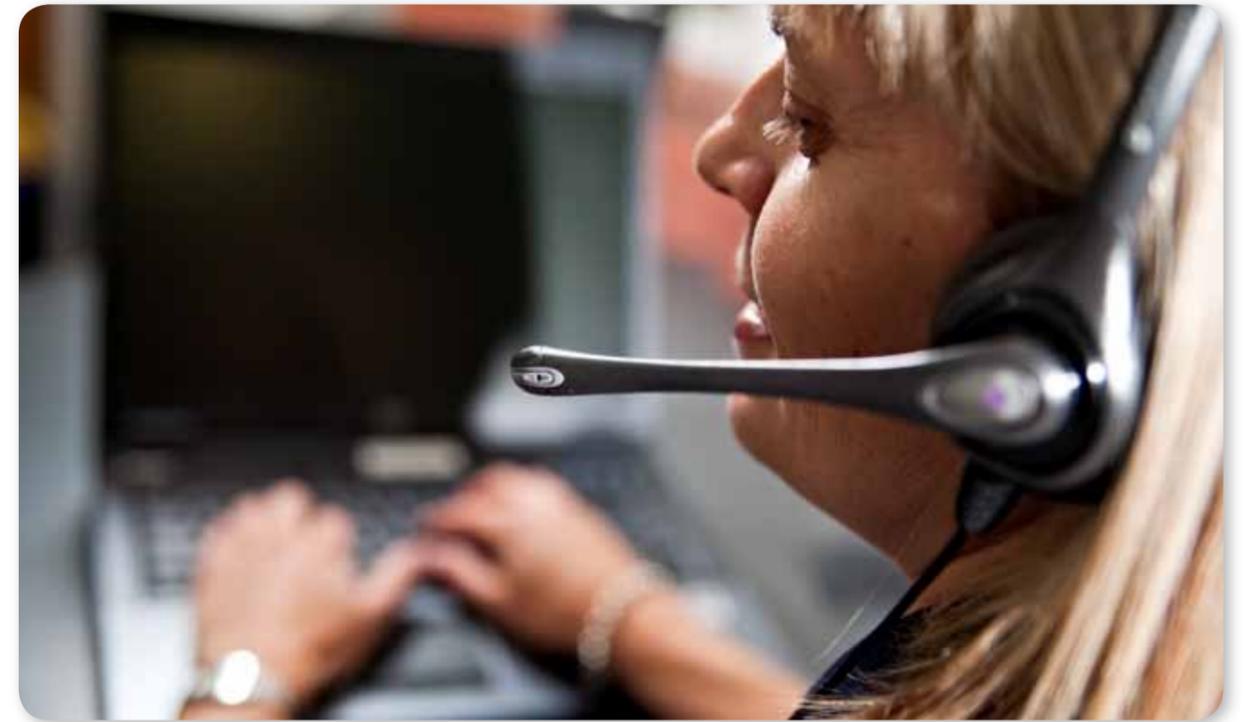
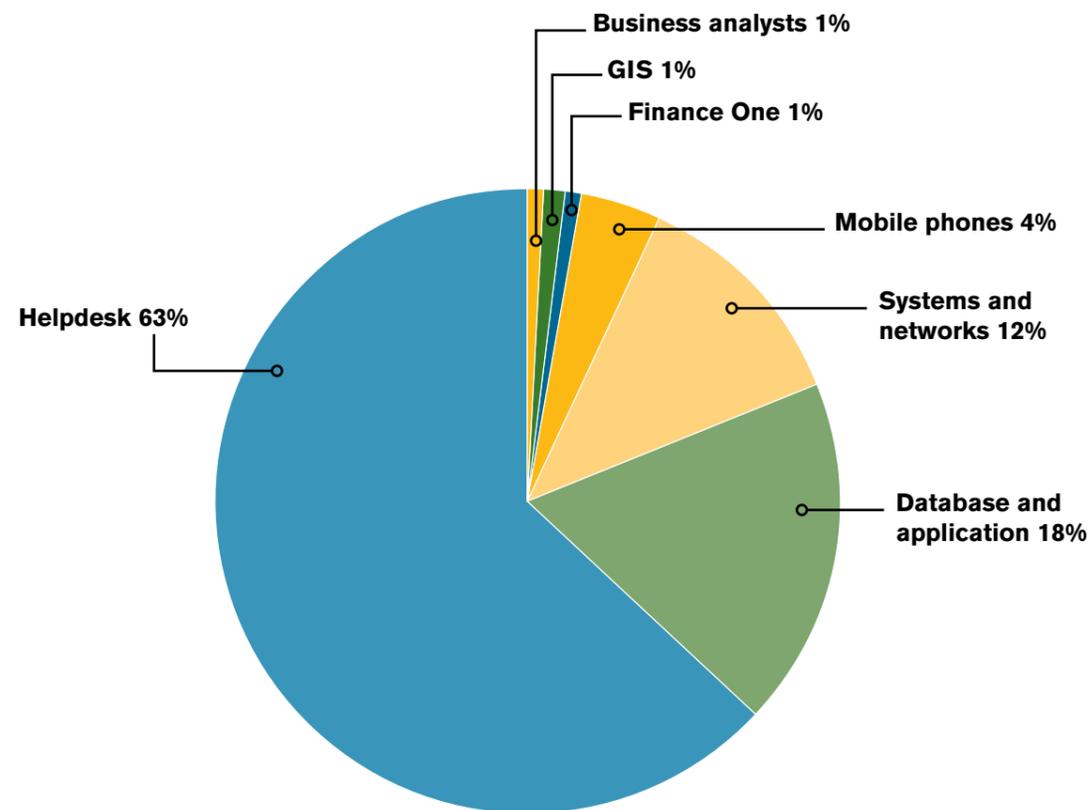
1 » Corporate Services

Corporate communications

Council's electronic communication tools	Total pages/videos viewed	Average per month
Website	2,832,052	236,004
Facebook (March - June 2009)	1767	441
Twitter (June 2009 only)	312	312
YouTube (November 2008 - June 2009)	2254	281

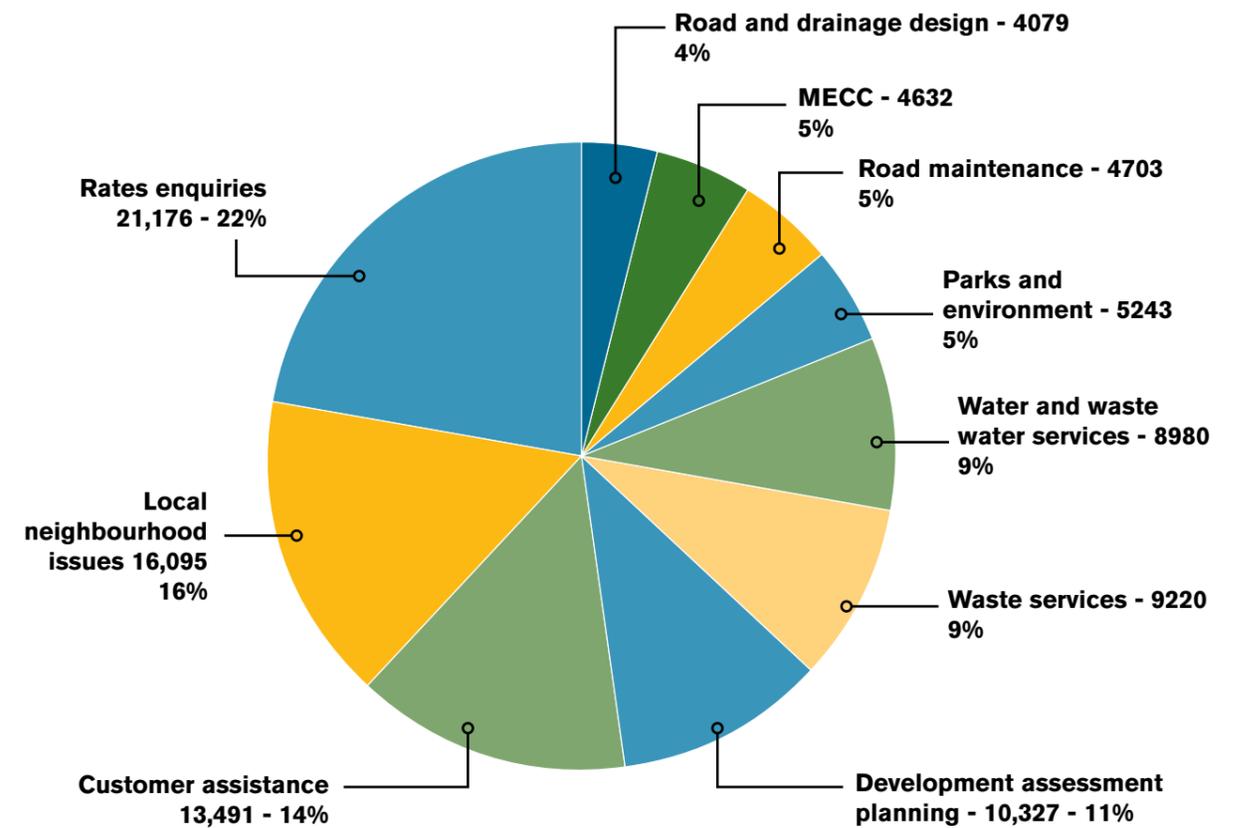
Information technology

Lodged support requests for 2008/2009



Customer service

Top 10 calls by attribute 2008/2009





2 » Community Services

Artspace Mackay

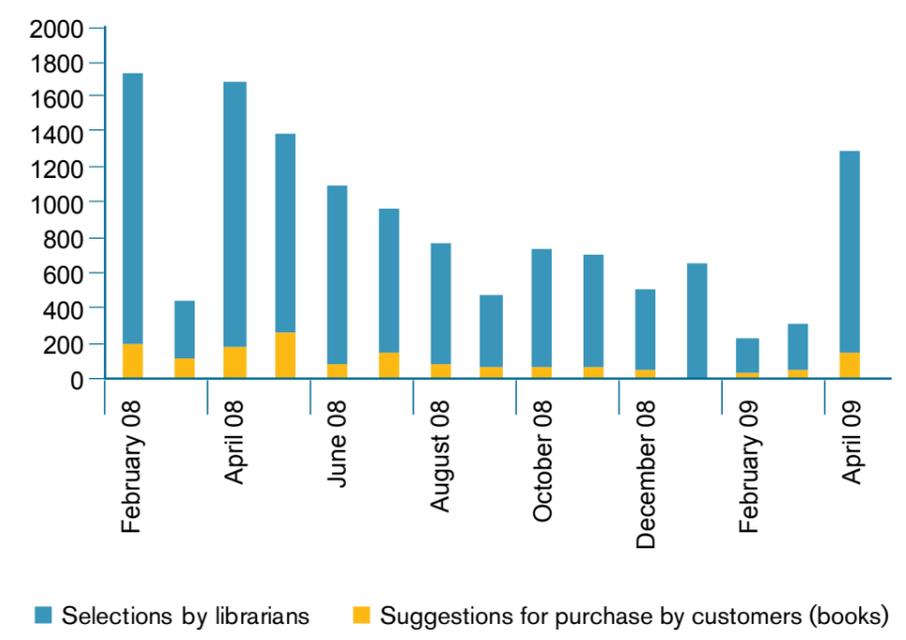
Artspace Mackay performance indicators	Statistics
Visitors	43,389
Guided tour visitors	3831
Exhibitions and displays	32
Artists in residence	1

Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre

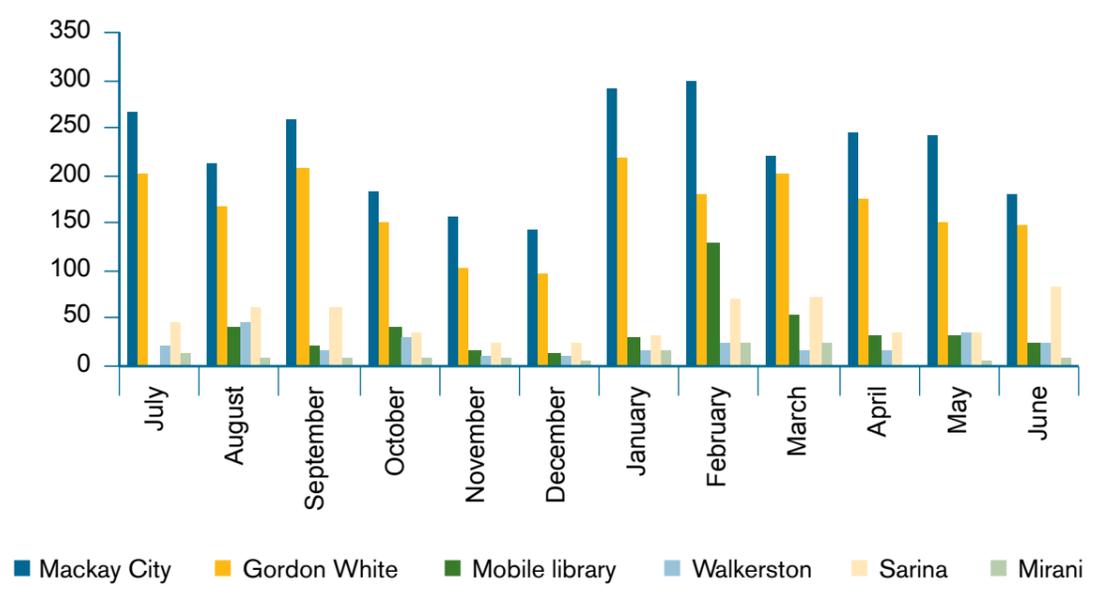
MECC performance indicators	Statistics
Performances	178
Patrons	79,628
Tickets sold (to 52 off-site events)	8688
Functions held	98

Mackay Regional Council library services

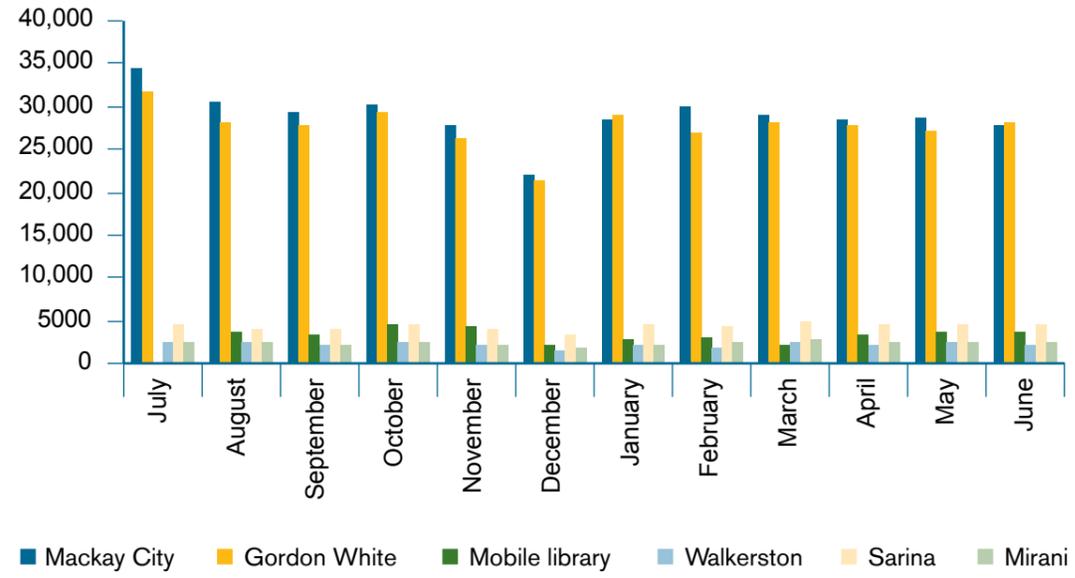
New items added to the library collection



Members by branch

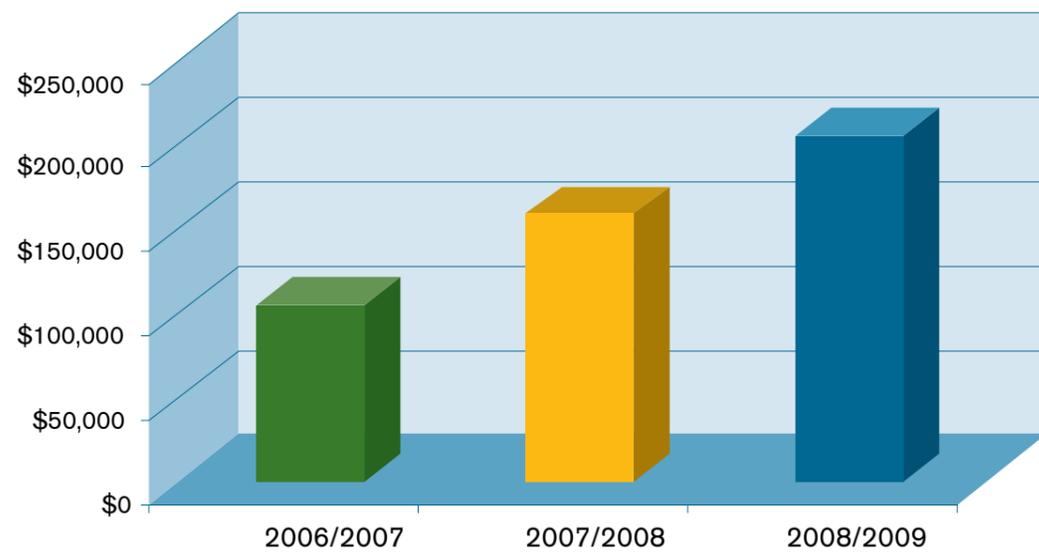


Loans per month by branch



Sarina Sugar Shed

Total income sales



Bluewater Lagoon

Aquatic facilities

Mackay Region Swim Centres	Visitors 03/04	Visitors 04/05	Visitors 05/06	Visitors 06/07	Visitors 07/08	Visitors 08/09
Memorial Swim Centre	123,533	139,764	163,958	123,140	159,078	118,169
Pioneer Swim Centre	106,689	122,933	141,356	126,931	129,610	111,055
Sarina Swim Centre	-	-	-	-	-	9339
Mirani Swim Centre	-	-	-	-	-	8818
Bluewater Lagoon	-	-	-	-	-	371,807