

LATE ITEMS

AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting

Thursday 10 April 2025

Roma Administration Centre

NOTICE OF MEETING

Date: 8 April 2025

Mayor:

Councillor W M Taylor

Deputy Mayor:

Councillor C J O'Neil

Councillors:

Councillor J R P Birkett
Councillor M K Brumpton
Councillor A K Davis
Councillor P J Flynn
Councillor J M Hancock
Councillor B R Seawright
Councillor J R Vincent

Chief Executive Officer:

Robert Hayward

Executive Management:

Brett Exelby – Director Corporate Services
Stephen Scott – Director Bendemere
Seamus Batstone – Director Engineering
Lee Jackson – Director Bungil
Jamie Gorry – Director Regional Development, Environment and Planning
Dean Ellwood – Director Roma
Mathew Gane – Director Warroo

Attached is the agenda for the **Ordinary Meeting** to be held at the Roma Administration Centre on **10 April, 2025 at 9:00 AM.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Hayward", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Robert Hayward
Chief Executive Officer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item No	Subject	
<hr/>		
L.	Late Items	
L.1	Surat Water Allocation Update # 3	2
	Prepared by: Director - Warroo	
L.2	Denise Spencer Aquatic Facility Support Strategies for Current Facility Closure.....	10
	Prepared by: Project Officer - Contract Management Office	

OFFICER REPORT

Meeting: Ordinary 10 April 2025

Date: 31 March 2025

Item Number: L.1

File Number: D25/33377

SUBJECT HEADING: Surat Water Allocation Update # 3

Classification: Open Access

Officer's Title: Director - Warroo

Executive Summary:

This provides an update to council on the Surat Water Allocation for 2024/25 financial year as per the meeting resolution No. OM/12.2024/04.

The report also outlines recommendations to change the Surat raw water allocation Winter Schedule for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Officer's Recommendation:

That:

1. Council receive and note the report
2. Council adopt the amended Surat raw water schedule as follows
 - New Winter Watering Schedule (Raw Water) 1 April – 30 August (Effective 10 April 2025);
 - East Surat may water on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday from 6am-10am & 4pm-8pm;
 - West Surat may water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 6am-10am & 4pm-8pm.
3. Council officers provide an update on the Surat Water allocation at the ordinary meeting on 14 May, 2025.

Context (*Why is the matter coming before Council?*):

This report is required to provide Council with a regular update on the Surat Water Schedule and target allocations. The outlines the strategies and resources allocated to meet the annual target of 350 ML for the financial year.

Background:

As per Resolution No. OM/12.2024/04 a report was tabled to council on 12/12/24 to provide an options analysis and recommendations for the Surat Watering Schedule for Summer.

As per Resolution No. OM/05.2024/04 on 7/5/24, a report was tabled to council on 25/9/23 to provide an options analysis and recommendations for the Surat Watering Schedule (overall).

Prior to the change in the summer schedule council officers updated the community including:

- Deployment of an electronic message board in town
- A new static water allocation sign procured and installed
- Issued a Surat water flyer update
- Published water allocation updates via Surat New (electronically).



Photo 1: New Surat Water Allocation Signage installed.

The Surat Water Allocation is 350 Megalitres (ML) and resets each financial year.

The river water extraction licence (51055N) is regulated by the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water Department under the Water Act 2000.

Under Section 29(5) of this Act, exceedance of a water licence (350 ML) would leave Council liable for a penalty of up to five hundred penalty units (\$77,500).

In previous years, the water allocation has been exceeded five times out of the previous seven.

Early indicators reveal 'no watering on Monday's' is having an improved effect on the allocation.

Surat Bore Update

The Surat bore has an 80 ML licence and is currently undergoing capital works with the main dedicated line now constructed and installed, and emergency connections to the reservoir completed by Warroo Water and Sewerage team.

Water testing and analysis of the bore is underway with results to be shared and assessed with the water regulator in the coming weeks.

The Council Infrastructure team is conducting a technical review and developing a business case for integrating bore water into the existing reticulation system.

This process involves further capital investment for the refurbishment of the water clarifier, optimization of dosing systems, and upgrades to chlorination infrastructure to ensure efficient and compliant water treatment. These projects will be reflected in the upcoming capital works program for 2025/26.



Photo 1: Surat Bore connection (Riser) @ Surat Reservoir.



Photo 2: Surat Bore (Airport reserve area).

Current Status

The Surat Water Allocation as at the end of March 2025 is 296.5 ML (approximately 85% of total allocation).

53.5 ML of allocation remains for final three months of the financial year.

Consumption on average will need to be below 17.83 ML per month to achieve the target.

Historical Status

In the previous financial year 2023/24 (April to June) period water usage was 55.9 ML or 18.63 ML on average. The allocation was exceeded in this financial year.

In the previous financial year 2022/23 (April to June) period water usage was 71.21 ML or 23.73 ML on average. The allocation was not exceeded in this financial year.

Water usage generally trends down into the winter months under 20 ML per month depending on rainfall.

Weather Statistics

Prior to the 23rd of March 2025, Surat had a protracted dry period of only 61mm for 11 weeks.

Post 23rd of March, 2025 Surat received 130mm of rain.

Public Notice



New Surat Watering Schedule for Summer

At its meeting of 12 December 2024 Council amended the Surat raw water schedule with the new schedule. This will come into effect on Monday, 13 January 2025.

New Summer Watering Schedule (Raw Water)

1 September – 31 March (Effective 13 January 2025)

East Surat may water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from 5am-9am & 4pm-8pm.

West Surat may water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 5am-9am & 4pm-8pm.

Council will continue to monitor the water usage and review the amended Surat water schedule prior to 31 March 2025.

Resolution No. OM/12.2024/04

Why are we doing this?

Under Section 29(5) of the Water Act 2000, Council is liable for a penalty up to five hundred penalty units (\$77,500) if the River Water Extraction License is exceeded (350ML).

Under this change Council anticipates a potential saving of up to 25 Megaliters per financial year in hopes to keep the water usage under the annual allocation of 350ML.

The Surat water allocation has been exceeded five times out of the previous seven years.

Resolution Number: 13.1

For more information:

Contact Customer Service on (07) 4626 6100 or 1300 007 662.

Image 1: Surat Watering Schedule (Summer) 2024/25

Options Analysis:

Option 1 – No Change

Option 2 – Continue no watering restriction on Mondays (Winter Only) with reduced watering times from 8 hours to 6 hours.

Option 3 – Continue no watering restriction on Mondays (Winter Only) with reduced watering times from 8 hours to 4 hours.

Option 4 – Continue no watering restriction on Mondays (Winter Only) with reduced watering times from 8 hours to 2 hours.

Option 5 – Continue no watering restriction on Mondays (Summer and Winter)

Option 6 - Continue no watering restriction on Mondays (Winter only)

Note: If allocation is on to track to be exceeded on 14 May, 2025 meeting, officers will recommend further restrictions as per the options analysis from 2 – 4.

Recommendation:

That:

1. Council receive and note the report
2. Council adopt the amended Surat raw water schedule as follows
 - New Winter Watering Schedule (Raw Water) 1 April – 30 August (Effective 10 April 2025);
 - East Surat may water on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday from 6am-10am & 4pm-8pm;
 - West Surat may water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 6am-10am & 4pm-8pm.
3. Council officers provide an update on the Surat Water allocation at the ordinary meeting on 14 May, 2025

Risks:

Risk	Description of likelihood & consequences
Schedule	No change to schedule may result in exceeding the water allocation in this financial year if water usage is above 17 ML per month.
Maintenance	It is recommended that during high rainfall periods that raw water pumps are turned off to conduct routine and planned maintenance and to further reduce consumption.
Bore Licence	Bore application (licence) is based on climate change, drought conditions and providing an alternative water source for Surat.
Environment	As per our Environmental Management Policy
Fines	Water Allocation Usage The amount of water taken under a water allocation in a water year (July 1 to June 30) must not exceed the nominal allocation (350ML). Fines apply.
Compliance	Is it recommended moving forward that council develops a comprehensive strategy water restriction schedule similar to the options analysis

Reference: [McCullough Robertson - Understanding Water Regulation](#)

Policy and Legislative Compliance:

- Environment Protection Act (Qld) 1994
- Local Government Act 2009
- Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act (Qld) 2008 (Section 41 Restricting Water Supply)
- Water Act (Qld) 2000 – section 29 (5) – Penalties
- Water Act (Qld) 2000 – section 114
- Water Plan (Great Artesian Basin and Other Regional Aquifers) 2017
- MRC Water Schedule Policy
- MRC Environment Management Policy
- Surat Water Strategy 2019
- MRC Corporate Plan 2023 -2025
- MRC Local Plan Surat, Wycombe, Teelba Theme 3.1
- MRC Operational Plan 2024/25
- MRC Capital Works Plan 2024/25
- MRC Capital Works Plan 2025/26

Budget / Funding (*Current and future*):

N/A

Timelines / Deadlines:

As outlined in the report recommendations.

Consultation (Internal / External):

- Director of Infrastructure
- Manager Water Sewerage Gas
- Overseer (Warroo)
- Water Treatment Officer (Warroo)
- External Engineering Advice
- Portfolio Chair (Water)

Strategic Asset Management Implications:

(If applicable, outline changes to whole of life costs and / or level of service)

Operational Plan 2024/25

- Asset Management Plan reviewed
- Improved budgeting accuracy from 2025/26 onwards, with long term business unit forecast updated to reflect Asset Management Plan prior to 2025/26 budget deliberations.

Acronyms:

Acronym	Description
ML	Megalitres

Addition to Operational or Corporate Plan:

Plan Description	Yes / No
Operational	Yes
Corporate	Yes

Link to Corporate Plan:

Corporate Plan 2023-2028

Strategic Priority 1: Getting the basics right

1.1 Supply water to our towns

Supporting Documentation:

Nil

Report authorised by:

Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER REPORT

Meeting: Ordinary 10 April 2025

Date: 21 March 2025

Item Number: L.2

File Number: D25/30255

SUBJECT HEADING: Denise Spencer Aquatic Facility | Support Strategies for Current Facility Closure

Classification: Open Access

Officer's Title: Project Officer - Contract Management Office

Executive Summary:

The Denise Spencer Memorial Pool is scheduled to close for approximately 18 months to allow for major reconstruction works that will deliver a modernised, fit-for-purpose aquatic facility for the region.

While the long-term benefits are significant, the temporary closure will impact residents who rely on the facility for physical activity, swimming education, rehabilitation, and social connection.

This report outlines a suite of potential support strategies to help mitigate the short-term impacts on residents of all ages.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council endorse the proposed mitigation strategies to support the Maranoa community during the temporary closure of the Roma Pool, as outlined below:

- 1. Water Safety Education:** Partnering with Royal Life Saving Society to provide home-based water familiarisation guidance for families with young children.
 - 2. Community Transport:** Offering a "Pool Bus" service during the summer season and school holidays to neighbouring town pool facilities, subject to community demand and uptake.
 - 3. Fitness Alternatives:** Enhancing previously ad hoc offerings such as chair yoga, gentle movement classes, and home-based swim instruction by increasing their structure, frequency, and promotion throughout the closure period. These activities, while focused on Roma, may also be delivered in other parts of the Maranoa to support region-wide well-being.
 - 4. Temporary Wellness Infrastructure:** Investigating and hiring cold plunge pools and mobile saunas to support mental health, rehabilitation, and disability needs.
 - 5. Social & Recreational Events:** Coordinating regional water play days, spa access opportunities, and structured school holiday programs to encourage social engagement.
-

6. **Regulatory Support:** Prioritising approvals for private and home-based pools and swim schools to maintain service continuity.
 7. **Regional Pool Upgrade:** Assessing Council's existing regional pool facilities and investigating the feasibility of heating one location to support structured aquatic activities.
-

Context (*Why is the matter coming before Council?*):

This matter is presented to Council to consider and endorse a range of community-focused initiatives developed in response to the upcoming 18-month closure of the Denise Spencer Memorial Pool. The proposed strategies aim to minimise disruption by providing alternative programs and services during the closure period. Council's endorsement is sought to enable timely planning and delivery of these measures.

Background (*Including any previous Council decisions*):

The Roma Denise Spencer Memorial Pool will be closed for an estimated 18-month period to allow for comprehensive reconstruction works that will deliver a modernised, fit-for-purpose aquatic facility for the region. This project represents a significant investment in community infrastructure, with funding contributions from all levels of government and industry partners.

Council previously resolved to proceed with the redevelopment following strong community support for the full project vision, including acceptance of the temporary closure as a necessary step toward achieving long-term benefits.

Recognising the vital role the pool plays in supporting community health, safety, fitness, rehabilitation, and social connection, Council officers have developed a suite of targeted initiatives to help minimise disruption throughout the closure period. These proposed strategies aim to maintain community engagement and ensure continuity of access to swimming education, water safety programs, and wellness activities for residents of all ages.

Options Considered:

Option 1: No mitigation strategies (Not recommended)

This option would involve taking no action during the pool closure. This approach may negative impacts on the community, particularly on water safety for young children, physical fitness for all ages, and the social and mental well-being of seniors and people with disabilities.

The absence of structured alternatives could result in skill loss, reduced health outcomes, and increased risk of social isolation.

Option 2: Limited access support only (Not recommended)

This option would involve minimal interventions such as advertising nearby pool alternatives without direct Council facilitation.

While a further step than taking no action, this approach may not be equitable or effective in addressing the needs of families, schools, or residents without private transport options.

Option 3: Full implementation of comprehensive mitigation strategies (Recommended)

This option involves delivering a practical support package designed to maintain community engagement with aquatic and well-being activities.

In developing this support package, Council officers undertook a targeted review of pool user demographics, typical usage patterns, seasonal program needs, and community feedback received through previous consultations.

Consideration was given to how different age groups and user types—such as infants, school-aged children, fitness swimmers, older adults, people with disabilities, and those requiring rehabilitation—use the facility and benefit from its programs.

Proposed strategies include:

Infants and Toddlers (0–4 years)

- Partner with Royal Life Saving Society to promote home-based water familiarisation programs for parents and carers.
- Promote bath-time play techniques as a foundation for early water confidence, using social media and printed flyers distributed through child health networks.
- Encourage and prioritise approvals for home-based swim schools within the region, helping ensure continuity in early childhood aquatic exposure.

Primary School Children (5–12 years)

- Coordinate bus trips during school holidays to pools in nearby towns, allowing continued recreational and instructional swimming opportunities.
- Host seasonal water play days within the Roma region (weather and facilities permitting) to provide local alternatives.
- Support access to offsite squad training and stroke development activities in coordination with regional aquatic centres.

Teenagers and Adults

- Provide scheduled transport to alternative aquatic facilities to support squad, fitness, and lap swimming.
- Promote a range of Roma-based alternative exercise offerings (e.g., group fitness, gym programs, walking groups) as substitutes for aquatic activity.
- Investigate options for temporary wellness-focused initiatives, such as mobile saunas or cold plunge pools, to support mental health and recovery routines.

Seniors and Vulnerable Groups

- Offer subsidised access to the Mitchell Great Artesian Spa as an alternative for hydrotherapy and low-impact activity.
 - Coordinate regular bus transport to regional pools, working with groups such as U3A and aged care providers.
 - Promote social activities that encourage continued engagement and reduce isolation (e.g., morning teas, community walks, craft groups).
 - Promote alternative low-impact exercises, such as chair yoga and local fitness classes, suitable for older adults and those with mobility limitations.
-

Heated Regional Pool Access

- Assess the feasibility of heating existing regional 25-metre pools to support structured Learn to Swim programs, rehabilitation needs, and squad training.
- Evaluate potential locations based on infrastructure condition, water quality, distance from Roma, and operational capacity.
- Prioritise facilities that can accommodate both recreational swimmers and structured aquatic programs to maximise community benefit.

This holistic strategy is designed to ensure continuity in swimming skill development, water safety, recreation, rehabilitation, and community connectedness throughout the closure period.

This program should ensure the following activities are undertaken:

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Track participation in swim education, community transport, and wellness events
- Collect user feedback via surveys and online channels
- Report quarterly to Council on program reach and impact

Equity & Inclusion Considerations:

Programs will prioritise affordability, accessibility, and inclusion, with targeted engagement for:

- Seniors and people with disabilities
- Families with low income or no access to private transport
- CALD and Indigenous community members

Communications Plan:

- Community updates via social media, schools, community centres, and newsletters
- Promotion of all programs, transport timetables, and event schedules
- Dedicated information page on Council's website

Recommendation:

That Council endorse the proposed mitigation strategies to support the Maranoa community during the temporary closure of the Roma Pool, including:

- **Water Safety Education:** Partnering with Royal Life Saving Society to provide home-based water familiarisation guidance for families with young children.

- **Community Transport:** Offering a “Pool Bus” service during the summer season and school holidays to neighbouring town pool facilities, subject to community demand and uptake.
- **Fitness Alternatives:** Enhancing previously ad hoc offerings such as chair yoga, gentle movement classes, and home-based swim instruction by increasing their structure, frequency, and promotion throughout the closure period. These activities, while focused on Roma, may also be delivered in other parts of the Maranoa to support region-wide well-being.
- **Temporary Wellness Infrastructure:** Investigating and hiring cold plunge pools and mobile saunas to support mental health, rehabilitation, and disability needs.
- **Social & Recreational Events:** Coordinating regional water play days, spa access opportunities, and structured school holiday programs to encourage social engagement.
- **Regulatory Support:** Prioritising approvals for private and home-based pools and swim schools to maintain service continuity.
- **Regional Pool Upgrade:** Assessing Council’s existing regional pool facilities and investigating the feasibility of heating one location to support structured aquatic activities.

Risks:

Risk	Description of likelihood & consequences
Community disengagement	Without intervention, a high risk of reduced water safety skills, fitness, and social isolation
Equity of access	Potential exclusion of those without transport or financial means
Reputational	Perceived lack of support may reflect poorly on Council

Policy and Legislative Compliance:

All proposed strategies will align with Council policy, health regulations, and regional development goals.

Budget / Funding (*Current and future*):

Budget amounts, as required, will be included for consideration within the 2025/26 Financial Budget process.

Council officers will pursue external grant opportunities through health, sport, and recreation funding bodies and seek cost-sharing arrangements with partner organisations, as applicable.

Timelines / Deadlines:

- Strategy rollout to commence from Term 2, 2025, with winter / land based activities
- Access to regional facilities, and water based play opportunities from summer Term 4, 2025
- Pool expected to reopen late-2026

Consultation (*Internal / External*):

Internal: Community Development, Engineering Services, Corporate Communications

External: Roma Pool Community Action Group, Roma Swim Club, U3A, disability service providers, local transport operators

Strategic Asset Management Implications:

(If applicable, outline changes to whole of life costs and / or level of service)

While not directly affecting asset lifecycle, this initiative ensures service continuity and community benefit during a key asset's temporary unavailability.

Acronyms:

Acronym	Description
---	---

Addition to Operational or Corporate Plan:

Plan Description	Yes / No
Operational	No
Corporate	No

Link to Corporate Plan:

Corporate Plan 2023-2028

Corporate Plan Pillar 2: Environment

2.6 Water management and Conservation

Supporting Documentation:

Nil.

Report authorised by:

Deputy Director / Strategic Road Management