

QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Industrial Relations Act 2016 – s 193 – certification of an agreement

Southern Downs Regional Council

AND

The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland

**Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy, Industrial Union of Employees,
Queensland**

Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Union of Employees (Queensland Branch)

(Matter No. CB/2026/19)

**SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL CERTIFIED AGREEMENT 2025 –
OPERATIONAL EMPLOYEES**

Certificate of Approval

On 31 March 2026, the Commission certified the attached written agreement in accordance with section 193 of the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*:

Name of Agreement: **SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL CERTIFIED AGREEMENT 2025 – OPERATIONAL EMPLOYEES**

Parties to the Agreement:

- Southern Downs Regional Council
- The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland
- Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy, Industrial Union of Employees, Queensland
- Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Union of Employees (Queensland Branch)

Operative Date: 31 March 2026

Nominal Expiry Date: 1 July 2028

Previous Agreement: *Southern Downs Regional Council Certified Agreement 2025 – Operational Employees*

Termination Date of Previous Agreement: 31 March 2026

By the Commission

C. M. Hartigan
Deputy President
31 March 2026

QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Industrial Relations Act 2016 – s. 193 – certification of an agreement

Southern Downs Regional Council

ABN 59 786 792 651

AND

The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland

ABN 54 942 536 069

The Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy, Industrial Union of Employees, Queensland

ABN 73 089 711 903

Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Union of Employees (Queensland Branch)

ABN 80 519 643 130

**SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL CERTIFIED AGREEMENT 2025 – OPERATIONAL
EMPLOYEES**

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PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

1.1 Title

This Agreement shall be known as Southern Downs Regional Council Certified Agreement 2025 – Operational Employees.

1.2 Purpose of the Agreement

- (a) The parties to this Agreement recognise the importance of a viable, efficient and rewarding local government service to the economic development and social well-being of the Shire.
- (b) This Agreement seeks to achieve benefits as a result of consultation with employees.
- (c) This Agreement provides for: -
 - (i) a framework for management and the employees to work together towards improving productivity;
 - (ii) benefits to local government, employees and the community through best practice;
 - (iii) consultative structures which will ensure that change initiatives are pursued in a co-operative and collaborative manner.

1.3 Objectives of Agreement

- (a) Productivity and Efficiency - to stimulate and provide ongoing productivity improvement in the Southern Downs Regional Council (Council), throughout its Departments/Divisions and work units.
- (b) Service - to improve the quality of customer service through both products and services. To become increasingly customer focused and committed to continuous improvement.
- (c) Equal Opportunity - to ensure the Council provides equality of opportunity in all areas of the workforce including issues relating to family responsibilities.
- (d) Employee Relations - to engender confidence in the Council as a fair and equitable employer and provide a stimulating, satisfying and participative work environment for all employees.
- (e) Improved Work Organisation - To achieve flexible working arrangements, work practices and management systems.
- (f) Performance Measurement - Opportunity for increased wages and improved conditions for employees resulting from measured performance improvement for the Council and improved quality of services to the community.

1.4 Agreement Coverage

- (a) The parties to this Agreement are the Southern Downs Regional Council and its employees and the following unions:
 - Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland;
 - Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union; and
 - Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Union of Employees (Queensland Branch).
- (b) This Agreement will not apply to any employee appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer or Senior Officer employed pursuant to a written common law contract of employment.

1.5 Date of Operation

This Agreement shall operate for three (3) years from 1 July 2025.

1.6 Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)

- (a) A Single Bargaining Unit (SBU) comprising of the delegates and officials of the Unions representing employees of Council and including unions which are parties to this agreement is recognised by the Council.
- (b) The SBU representatives and Council management representatives will form the membership of the JCC which has negotiated this agreement and will monitor and implement this agreement.

1.7 Consultation and Communication Obligations with the JCC

- (a) To facilitate the implementation of this Agreement and ongoing workplace reform, effective consultation and communication are essential.
- (b) The parties are committed to a consultative process which aims to effect a change in the Council's culture through co-operation.
- (c) It is agreed that the JCC will be the committee through which genuine consultation and discussion regarding any workplace reform or changes will occur between council, employees and the relevant unions. The JCC will meet every six (6) months as a minimum.

1.8 Review of Certified Agreement

The parties undertake to commence discussions on a replacement certified agreement, six (6) months prior to the expiry of this Agreement.

1.9 Posting of Agreement

A true copy of this Agreement shall be displayed in a location in the workplace with convenient access to employees.

1.10 Relationship to Parent Awards

This Agreement shall be wholly read and interpreted in conjunction with the terms of the parent awards as listed below:

- (a) Queensland Local Government Industry (Stream B) Award State 2017 (2017 Award Stream B)
Queensland Local Government Industry (Stream C) Award State 2017 (2017 Award Stream C) (the 2017 Awards)
- (b) Training Wage Award – State 2012

Where there is any inconsistency, this Agreement will take precedence to the extent of the inconsistency.

PART 2 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

2.1 Dispute Resolution

The parties will comply with the dispute resolution process contained in the 2017 Awards.

2.2 Redundancy

Objectives

The chief objectives of this clause are:

- (a) to maintain, where possible, employees whose positions have become redundant in continued employment within the Council;
- (b) to retrain such employees where necessary;
- (c) to pay monetary compensation to such employees who are unable to be redeployed and whose employment is to be terminated;

- (d) to assist employees who are unable to be redeployed find employment outside the service of the Council.

Process

- (a) In the event of a proposed redundancy Council will comply with its consultation obligations under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (IR Act) and the 2017 Awards.
- (b) Where following the consultation process in accordance with clause 2.10 below, Council has decided that redundancies are still required, Council shall consider available redeployment options, if any, for each employee whose position has become, or will become, redundant.
- (c) Each such employee shall be individually interviewed to determine what options may exist for their retraining for Council.
- (d) If a redeployment option is identified Council will offer redeployment to relevant employee/s.
- (e) An employee whose position has been made redundant may agree to accept redeployment to suitable alternative employment.
- (f) Where an employee agrees to accept suitable alternative employment at a classification with a lower rate of pay, that employee shall continue to receive, as a minimum for all work performed, the actual rate of pay for the classification held at the time of transfer for a period of one (1) year or until the rate for the lower classification exceeds that actual rate, whichever is the earlier.
- (g) Where redeployment is not available or not accepted, Council will initially seek expressions of interest from employees of the relevant classification in the affected area, in accepting a voluntary redundancy.
- (h) Council will consider expressions of interest, based on the business needs of Council, and determine if the voluntary redundancy can be offered to those employees expressing interest
- (i) Employees who are offered and accept voluntary redundancy and leave the organisation within fourteen (14) days of acceptance will be paid a further 4 weeks' pay (in addition to their redundancy entitlements prescribed in clause (k) below).
- (j) Should there be insufficient expressions of interest and/or Council determines that voluntary redundancy cannot be offered to those employees who expressed an interest, Council will then consider whether involuntary redundancies need to be implemented.
- (k) In the event of an employee being made redundant, a severance payment consisting two (2) weeks' payment per year of service with no proportionate payment, to a maximum payment of fifty-two (52) weeks, as well as a proportionate amount for an incomplete year of service will be paid, provided that the employee must receive as a minimum, an amount equal to the employee's salary for four (4) weeks.

2.3 Assistance to Employees Whose Positions are Redundant

- (a) During the redeployment/retrenchment notice period, providing each case has the prior approval of the employee's supervisor, leave with pay shall be granted for the purpose of attending personal employment interviews.
- (b) Each employee whose position has been made redundant will be given a statement showing the calculation of an estimate of the payments to be made to the employee should retrenchment occur, at least fourteen (14) days before the date on which retrenchment is to take effect.
- (c) Council will meet financial planning costs of up to \$500 for each employee subject to retrenchment.

2.4 Positive Employment Relations

New Employees

New employees will be advised the names of all workplace delegates during their induction.

Workplace delegates are responsible for introducing themselves to new employees.

Workplace Delegates

The Council recognises the role that relevant unions workplace delegate's play in promoting understanding of industrial arrangements, knowledge of industrial arrangements (including awards and agreements) and dispute resolution. On being notified in writing by the relevant union that an employee has been appointed as a workplace delegate the Council will recognise the employee as the relevant union's workplace delegate and allow them the following:

- (a) reasonable time in working hours, without loss of pay, to perform the task required to effectively represent the union members in the workplace;
- (b) reasonable private access to union members to discuss union business and to non-union members for recruitment purposes;
- (c) reasonable access to representatives of the Council for the purpose of resolving issues of concern to union members.

Facilities and Conditions

The following facilities and conditions will be made available to the relevant union's workplace delegates or any other employee involved in any consultative forum:

- (a) wherever possible meetings should occur in normal working time. When a meeting occurs outside normal working time the appropriate rate of pay will be paid. This includes preparation for meetings, reporting back and travelling to and from attendance at meetings;
- (b) reasonable access to normal Council facilities such as typing, word processing, photocopying, postal system and telephone, storage facilities, email, notice boards and meeting rooms;
- (c) access to a room with normal office facilities will be provided to discuss employment matters;
- (d) no employee will be disadvantaged as a result of activities conducted in accordance with this Clause.

Workplace Delegates Leave

A relevant union's workplace delegate, or an employee nominated by the relevant union, shall be entitled to paid leave of absence of up to five (5) days per person per annum to attend any of the following:

- (a) Trade union training or specific relevant union's training courses approved by the relevant union's; and
- (b) Relevant union annual or biennial conference; and
- (c) Relevant union's executive meetings; and
- (d) Biennial congress of the ACTU; and
- (e) Undertake a secondment to the relevant union.

2.5 Right of Entry

An authorised officer of the relevant unions will have rights of access, and entry to the premises of the Council with twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the relevant Manager/Director, for the following purposes:

- (a) Meeting with workplace delegates; and
- (b) Meetings with employees; and

- (c) Meetings with relevant management team members on matters associated with agreement or current industrial workplace issues; and
- (d) Conduct union business matters or matters incidental to union business.

2.6 Meetings

Employees will be entitled to reasonable time off with pay within working hours to attend meetings designed to improve employment relations with the employer, including union meetings.

2.7 Meeting Notices and Newsletters

Council will provide an accessible space within each work location for the posting of any relevant award and the agreement, and notices pertaining to employment relations within the workplace produced by the relevant unions. The relevant union's workplace delegate will be provided with access to this space.

2.8 Payroll Deduction

The employer shall on the written request of an employee, pay to the Union nominated by the employee out of the money due to the employee for wages, the annual contribution fees payable by the employee as a member of that Union.

2.9 Abandonment of Employment

An employee who has been absent for seven (7) or more working days without Council's consent and does not establish to the satisfaction of Council a reasonable cause for the absence shall be deemed to have abandoned their employment.

Before an employee's employment is terminated for abandonment, Council shall make a reasonable effort to contact the employee.

Termination of employment for abandonment shall be effective from the date of the employee's last attendance at work or the employee's last day's absence with Council's consent.

2.10 Introduction of Change/Consultation

The parties are committed to a consultation process that fosters a positive organisational culture.

Council will consult with employees before a decision is made where required by s198 (a) of the IR Act and in accordance with the consultation provisions and process in the 2017 Awards.

PART 3 – WAGES AND ALLOWANCES

3.1 Wage Increase

All employees covered by this Agreement will receive the following wage increases;

- (a) A 6.0% increase effective from first full pay period after 1 July 2025;
- (b) A 5% increase effective from the first full pay period after first full pay period after 1 July 2026;
- (c) A 4% increase effective from the first full pay period after first full pay period after 1 July 2027 .

3.2 Productivity Measurement

The parties recognise that improved service to the public and internal clients constitutes a productivity increase for the Council.

The parties shall aim to improve the quality, efficiency and accessibility of client services.

The parties agree that they will use their best endeavours to increase productivity.

The parties will discuss and develop appropriate productivity measures through the Joint Consultative Committee.

3.3 **Boot Allowance**

Permanent employees required to wear steel cap boots for work will be reimbursed by Council \$220 (excluding GST) per annum upon receipt of an appropriate tax invoice. Consideration will be given to additional reimbursement on the basis of fair wear and tear. Boots will be required to be sighted.

3.4 **Extraordinary Conditions Allowances**

Where an employee is required to perform duties such as toilet cleaning which requires them to come into contact with substantial human faeces, soiled nappies, human urine, putrescible waste, blood, used syringes, soiled sanitary items and/or human vomit, the employee may record such incidents on a daily timesheet for the supervisor to approve payment of an extraordinary conditions allowance of \$50.00 for the occurrences on that day.

The employee should promptly report the matter to their supervisor and may be required to produce photographic evidence to support a claim for this allowance.

3.5 **Mixed Functions**

An employee primarily engaged on the duties of a higher level for a total of more than 2 hours on any day shall be paid the rate applicable to such higher level for the entire day.

3.6 **Flexibility of Meal Breaks**

The parties agree to a more flexible arrangement for the purpose of taking of lunch breaks. These flexible arrangements shall apply without attracting penalty rates, and include;

- (a) Delaying lunch break up to one hour for job completion.
- (b) Staggered lunch break, which may assist in reaching time table for job completion.

3.7 **Salary Sacrifice**

Salary sacrifice options in accordance with applicable state and federal legislation are available to all employees. Council have engaged an external company (as varied from time to time) to provide this service to interested employees.

Administrative costs associated with salary sacrifice are the responsibility of the employee. Employees are responsible for obtaining their own independent financial advice with respect to salary sacrifice.

3.8 **WorkCover Top Up Payment**

During the life of this agreement, personal leave entitlements may be utilised to “top up” WorkCover payments to 100% of the pre-injury enterprise agreement salary.

Conditions applying to access “top up” are as follows:

- a) Top up workers compensation payments may only be topped up via an employee’s existing accrued sick leave balance.
- b) Top up provision can only apply from the end of the first 26 weeks of the incapacity.
- c) Employees must make a written application to Council before any “top up” arrangement is implemented.

3.9 **Casual Conversion**

A casual employee shall, at the completion of six months' service, have a right to request to have their employment converted to full-time or part-time employment if it could be reasonably expected that their employment is to continue.

After receiving the request, the Council will assess the request and, within five (5) weeks from receiving such request, either agree and make an offer to the worker to start within the five (5) week period; or refuse the request.

The Council can only refuse a request on the following reasonable business grounds:

- (i) The employee's position is likely to be eliminated within 12 months of the request, or if the hours of work will be significantly reduced.
- (ii) If converting the employee to permanent employment would require significant changes to their work hours or duties to accommodate a full-time or part-time arrangement.
- (iii) If granting the request would mean the employer could not comply with a recruitment or selection process required by law.
- (iv) The employee is performing duties with a clearly defined specific end date that is not likely to continue beyond the six months.
- (v) The employee is performing the duties of a position that is occupied by an existing permanent employee that is away on a period of extended leave that is likely to return to work at the end of that period of leave.
- (vi) The employee is performing duties which are subject to an external funding arrangement which may not be continued.

If Council accepts the request the casual employee shall be employed as either a part-time or full-time employee according to the pattern of ordinary hours worked in the preceding six months period or as otherwise mutually agreed in writing.

An employee's continuous service as a casual will count towards the fulfillment of any probationary period should they convert from casual to full-time or part-time employment.

PART 4 – HOURS OF WORK

4.1 Spread of Hours

- (a) By standing arrangement, the ordinary hours of duty shall be spread from Monday to Saturday, 6.00am to 6.00pm all inclusive.
- (b) With the agreement of the majority of effected employees and approval of the employer, employees can commence their ordinary hours of duty at 5:00am.
- (c) Employees are only required to work any five (5) days out of six (6) days and shall be paid at ordinary time. The above arrangement shall be implemented by a process of consultation and negotiation with employees and unions and be rostered so as to ensure that employees are consulted prior to implementation. Requirement to work the "Saturday", as part of the ordinary working week, shall receive a loading of time and one half. "Sundays" shall be entirely voluntary and any work performed shall be paid at appropriate award overtime rate.
- (d) As per clause 15.2.b) of the Queensland Local Government Industry (Stream B) Award, Division 2, Section 5, any arrangement of hours which includes a Saturday as ordinary hours shall be subject to agreement between the employer and the majority of employees concerned.
- (e) The relevant unions will be notified of a proposal to change ordinary hours should the period exceed four (4) weeks in duration and before a final decision is made and a vote of employees is conducted.
- (f) The relevant unions will be invited to participate in consultation regarding this process should the period exceed four (4) week in duration. However, this does not preclude the relevant unions making representations to the employer on behalf of their membership if the period is less than four (4) weeks duration.
- (g) The ordinary hours of duty of employees covered by the Local Government Award Stream A, having other workers under their immediate supervision shall, if so determined by the employer, be the same as the ordinary hours of the workers supervised. These employees will be paid at time and a half for 3 hours and 30 minutes every fortnight.

4.2 Job Start Arrangements

Council will pay employees travelling time at ordinary rates to and from job sites, provided that the work commences at the normal start time and concludes at the normal finishing time within the employees spread of hours.

Travelling time shall only be paid when the total distance travelled from the employees allocated depot to the job site is in excess of 5km and only for that portion of the journey which is in excess of 5km.

Travel time is only paid at overtime rates for drivers of vehicles.

4.3 Nine Day Fortnight

A nine (9) day fortnight will apply to all employees employed by this Agreement.

4.4 Rostered Day Off (RDO)

The following provisions for the working of RDO's shall apply:

- (a) Where employees are requested to work their RDO, and it is mutually agreed, then no prior notice is required.
- (b) Where an employee is directed to work on an RDO then two (2) days' notice shall be provided by the employer providing always that the two (2) days' notice shall not constitute the sixth or seventh day of the working week. No employee may be directed to work in excess of two (2) consecutive RDO's.
- (c) An employee who works on an RDO, may by mutual agreement, bank the day in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement, or be paid the ordinary hours worked at ordinary time rates.
- (d) No employee shall accrue more than a total of five (5) days in RDO's and/or time in lieu and any RDO's worked after five (5) days have been accrued shall be paid at ordinary time.

4.5 TOIL Arrangements

An employee may, with the approval of their supervisor, elect to take time off in lieu of overtime subject to the following conditions:

- (a) the option of taking time off in lieu of overtime shall apply to hours worked within the agreed span of hours, Monday to Sunday inclusive;
- (b) the maximum number of days an employee can accrue for TOIL and/or RDO shall not exceed five (5) days in any six (6) month period;
- (c) time off in lieu of overtime will accrue on the basis that the time accrued will be equivalent to the time actually worked;
- (d) accrued time shall be taken off at a mutually agreed time between the employee and their supervisor;
- (e) accrued time not taken within twelve (12) months of its accrual must be immediately taken by the employee or paid out to the employee at appropriate award rates.

4.6 Ten Hour Break Rule

Should an employee receive more than two (2) call-outs of less than two (2) hours duration between the hours of 10.00pm and 5.00am or a call-out of more than two (2) hours duration between the hours of 9.00pm and 2.00am, then the 10 hour break rule shall apply.

Supervisors shall have the discretion of allowing employees an additional rest period in circumstances where the 10 hour break rule does not apply.

Apart from cases of emergent need, employees must not present to work within the 10 hour break period.

Employees who present for work within the 10 hour break rule without their supervisor's permission, must advise their supervisor that they are in breach of the 10 hour break rule. The supervisor, in consultation with the employee and Council's work health and safety officer, shall then determine if the employee should be sent home until the 10 hour break period has been met or if the employee will be permitted to work if there is an emergent need. Safety must be a paramount consideration when making this determination.

If the employee is sent home, payment of overtime for the 10 hour rule break shall not apply.

4.7 On Call

An employee who is on-call and being paid the on-call allowance shall be entitled to the minimum payment of one and a half hours for the first call out (at the relevant overtime rates). However, if an employee does not leave home to perform the overtime work, e.g. handled by phone or on a laptop, they will be paid a minimum of one (1) hour at ordinary time for up to the first hour.

The minimum payment shall only apply to the first call out. Any subsequent overtime worked will be paid at the relevant overtime rate prescribed in the relevant Award for the time actually worked.

An employee directed to remain on call must be able to be contacted and be able to respond within a reasonable timeframe.

4.8 Recall to Duty

An employee who is recalled to work overtime shall, where applicable, receive a minimum payment of three (3) hours at the relevant overtime rate.

PART 5 – LEAVE

5.1 Annual Leave Arrangements

Payment of annual leave in advance will only occur when four (4) weeks or more annual leave is taken.

Annual leave debits will be equivalent to the ordinary hours employees would have worked had they not been on paid leave. Such leave will therefore be paid and debited on the basis of hours actually taken.

Employees may request to cash out their annual leave in accordance with the provisions of the IR Act as amended/varied from time to time but must maintain a balance of four (4) weeks.

An employee may only request to cash out annual leave instead of taking the leave on one (1) occasion per calendar year.

5.2 Sick Leave

In cases where an employee's record of attendance at work is unsatisfactory, Council will require the employee to produce satisfactory evidence, which may include a doctor's certificate before payment of any sick leave, is made.

Should satisfactory evidence not be provided other leave (annual, RDO, TOIL) will need to be taken for the period of leave.

5.3 Special Family Leave

The parties agree to five (5) days / one (1) week paid leave per year, taken from accumulated sick leave entitlements, for the purposes of special family leave, to be available on the following basis:

- (a) An employee with responsibilities in relation to their dependent child or children, or to immediate members of their family or household who need their care and support shall be entitled to special family leave.
- (b) The basis for the payment of special family leave will be in relation to issues dealing with the family, excluding 'social' and sporting events, and where there are:
 - (i) cultural matters
 - (ii) educational matters
 - (iii) legal issues
 - (iv) medical concerns
 - (v) religious matters

- (c) If the Council requests proof of the employee’s responsibility for the family member, the employee should provide written evidence in the form of a birth certificate, letter from an adoption agency, statutory declaration or other letter of authority.
- (d) The period of paid leave as specified above shall not be increased where an employee has responsibility for more than one member of their family who needs care and support.
- (e) Such paid leave as specified above shall not be cumulative from year to year.
- (f) The employee will obtain approval from Council for access to special family leave no later than 48 hours prior to the absence. Prior to accessing the leave, the employee will provide:
 - the name of the member of the employee’s immediate family or household and their relationship to the employee,
 - the reasons for taking such leave, and the estimated length of absence.
 - Evidence to the reasonable satisfaction of Council.

In emergent circumstances where it is not possible for the employee to obtain prior approval to take special family leave, the employee shall notify the Council by telephone of such absence at first opportunity on the day of the absence, generally this should be prior to usual commencement of their ordinary work hours.

5.4 Carers Leave

Employees are entitled to carers leave in accordance with the provisions of the IR Act.

5.5 Cultural Leave

Employees are entitled to cultural leave in accordance with the provisions of the IR Act.

5.6 Bereavement Leave

Employees may be granted up to three (3) days bereavement leave, on full pay on each occasion, where the deceased person was related to the employee in any of the circumstances listed below.

Where the leave is granted to those persons listed over and above those mentioned in the relevant Awards, the leave shall be deducted from sick leave credits.

husband	wife	step-father	step-mother
father	mother	father-in-law	mother-in-law
brother	sister	half-brother	half-sister
step-brother	step-sister	brother-in-law	sister-in-law
son	daughter	son-in-law	daughter-in-law
grandfather	grandmother	step-son	step-daughter
de facto/partner		grandson	granddaughter
		uncle	aunt

Employees who attend the funeral of an existing employee are entitled to use their sick leave credits to attend the funeral.

5.7 Parental Leave

Employees are entitled to birth-related, adoption, surrogacy and cultural parental leave and to request to work part time in connection with the birth or adoption of a child in accordance with the provisions of the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*.

After 52 weeks (1 year) of continuous service, on the birth or adoption of a child, a permanent employee is entitled to paid leave as prescribed below. In the event that both parents are Council employees, this leave is only available to one (1) parent at a time, in a single unbroken period, except that both parents may simultaneously take leave for an unbroken period of up to five (5) ordinary working days at the time of the birth of a child, exclusive of public holidays.

5.8 Parental Leave Entitlement

Employees will remain entitled to parental leave as follows:

A permanent fulltime employee who gives birth to a child is entitled to paid parental leave dependent on the number of year's paid service the employee has with Council. This leave may be taken at half pay. An employee will be entitled to twelve (12) weeks of paid leave after a period of 52 weeks (one (1) year) continuous service with Council.

The abovementioned entitlements may be taken at double the length of time at half pay.

The total period of Parental Leave available to an employee on any one occasion shall be fifty- two (52) weeks, which is inclusive of the above periods of paid leave.

Payment will commence upon the birth of the child and no lump sum payments shall be made.

An employee must provide written notice to Council in advance of the expected date of commencement of parental leave. The notice requirements are:

- (a) At least ten (10) weeks prior to the expected date of confinement notice of intention to take parental leave must be provided. This must be accompanied by a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating that the employee is pregnant and identify the expected date of confinement.
- (b) At least four (4) weeks prior to commencing leave, a leave form must be submitted identifying the period of leave to be taken.

An employee will not be in breach of the above notice requirements if failure to give the stipulated notice is occasioned by confinement occurring earlier than the presumed date.

An employee must provide a statutory declaration stating any period of paternity leave sought, or taken, by the employee's partner.

For the period of parental leave the employee will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with their conditions of employment or undertake any other form of paid employment without written consent of Council.

Where an employee continues to work within the six (6) week period immediately prior to the expected date of birth, or where the employee elects to return to work within six (6) weeks after the birth of the child, Council may require the employee to provide a medical certificate stating that they are fit to perform normal duties. If normal duties cannot be offered, Council will explore other opportunities for the employee to undertake until the employee can return to their normal substantive role.

Permanent part time employees who otherwise meet the criteria above will be entitled to parental leave as specified above on a pro rata basis based on their part time hours of work.

5.8 Partner Leave

An employee whose partner has given birth to a child will be entitled to up to two (2) weeks paid partner leave from the time of the birth, inclusive of RDO's.

An employee will provide to Council notice in accordance with Council's Parental Leave Policy.

The partner leave will be paid in one (1) continuous block period.

If an employee's partner dies during childbirth and the employee becomes the sole caregiver of the child, the employee will be entitled to maternity leave in accordance with clause 5.6 above.

5.9 Adoption Leave

An employee who adopts a child is entitled to paid adoption leave as set out below subject to supporting evidence being provided at least six (6) weeks prior to the date of adoption, inclusive of RDO's.

A primary caregiver is entitled to four (4) weeks paid adoption leave provided a statutory declaration identifying the employee as the primary caregiver is supplied.

An adopting parent, other than the primary caregiver, is entitled to two (2) weeks paid leave.

5.9 Long Service Leave

The parties recognise the anomalies in the different long service leave provisions in the 2017 Awards.

Accordingly, from the commencement of this Agreement, each full-time employee shall be entitled to thirteen (13) weeks paid leave or the proportionate equivalent for part time employees based on hours of work after ten (10) years of continuous service, with a pro-rata payment after seven (7) years continuous service.

The parties agree that employees may apply for, on a voluntary basis, and Council may consider, applications for Long Service Leave to be taken at half pay.

Having regard to Council's operational and resourcing requirements, where approval is granted for Long Service leave to be taken at half pay it must also be taken at twice the period the employee would normally be required to take Long Service Leave on full pay. The wage rate applicable in these circumstances is therefore effectively apportioned over the total period of Long Service Leave taken, at the rate of half pay.

Payment of long service leave in advance will only occur when four (4) weeks or more long service leave is taken.

An employee may be paid for all or part of their entitlement to long service leave instead of taking the leave on entering into a written agreement with Council to do so, with such payment to be made in the next fortnightly pay of the employee.

An employee may only request payment of all or part of their entitlement to long service leave instead of taking the leave on one (1) occasion per calendar year.

5.10 Personal Leave

Personal leave shall accrue fortnightly from the employee's commencement date at fifteen (15) days per annum, or the proportionate equivalent for part time employees based on hours of work. No lump sum accrual shall occur at the beginning of each anniversary date of the employee.

5.11 Domestic and Family Violence

Council recognises the impact of domestic and family violence on affected persons and acknowledges its obligations under the IR Act. Domestic and Family Violence matters will be managed in accordance with the IR Act and Council's Domestic and Family Violence Operational Standard.

PART 6 – MISCELLANEOUS

6.1 Training

Council will continue to commit itself to:

- (a) developing a more highly skilled and flexible workforce;
- (b) providing employees with career opportunities through appropriate training; and
- (c) such training shall be structured and wherever possible nationally accredited.

Council will undertake its training and development program in accordance with identified priorities and in consultation with its employees within the annual allocation set in Council's budget.

Where possible, training and skill development will be carried out in normal working hours. Any training outside normal working hours shall have regard to workers' family responsibilities.

The parties agree that ordinary time will be paid to those employees unless otherwise specified who agree to attend a Council approved course of mandatory training and retraining held outside of normal hours of work. This will include Saturdays, Sundays and RDO's.

Accommodation will be provided where employees are required to travel distances beyond a reasonable day's travel.

6.2 Multiskilling

All employees of Council are committed to maximising productivity and efficiency for the work they do for the community. To achieve this outcome, they are prepared to continue with their multi-skilling of tasks.

Multi-skilling means that employees shall undertake all tasks, which they are trained for and legally qualified, and is to be used to maximise the performance of the task.

Where practical, the multi-skilling shall be performed in a team environment and not used to promote de-skilling.

Where multi-skilling occurs at a lower Award level, their classification shall be maintained and where tasks of a higher level are performed, that Award level shall be paid in accordance with the provisions for higher duties allowance contained in the various state and federal awards.

Council shall recognise demonstrated capacity to work in a multi-skilling environment. This shall lead to accelerated progress between classification levels found in the relevant Awards and wage structures located in the Awards.

6.3 Employment Security

Council acknowledges that, in general, services are provided as a community service obligation and not on a commercial or for profit basis to the disadvantage of local communities or Council employees.

If a service is already outsourced by contract at the time of signing of this Agreement, then that service will not be affected by this clause.

Council will maintain a permanent workforce during the term of this Agreement. Council will strive to achieve full utilisation of its permanent employees prior to engaging any labour hire employees.

Council will not use any shared resource joint enterprises, shared services companies or regional collaboration (however named) unless they are wholly owned and operated by one or more Queensland local governments.

Council employees providing a shared service (s) will be employed in accordance with the terms of this Enterprise Agreement.

Service delivery levels provided by Council will be maintained and/or improved during the term of this Enterprise Agreement. Savings through economies of scale or otherwise will be returned to the community through additional services.

6.4 Joint Depot Meetings

Where required, joint depot meetings will be held annually during ordinary hours. Council will organise and pay for transport to the depot where the meeting is being held.

6.5 Servicing of Plant

Where practicable, within the capability and capacity of workshop tradespersons and apprentices and not inconsistent with any warranty/manufacture obligations, Council will endeavour to have all major plant services conducted by workshop tradespersons and apprentices.

6.6 No Extra Claims

The parties to this agreement undertake that during the period of operation of the Agreement, there shall be no further claims for wage or salary increases or improvement in employment conditions sought, or granted, except for those provided under the terms of this Agreement.

6.7 Merit Based Appointments

Council has the right to advertise permanent positions internally and externally simultaneously, where there is no clear suitable internal candidate. Following the requirements of clause 6.3 (Employment Security) and Council's preference to enhance the career prospects of its own employees, internal applicants will be given preference over external applicants where all else is equal.

6.8 Transition to Retirement

Council wishes to provide support to employees seeking to transition to retirement. To achieve this, Council wants to work with employees to develop a retirement plan that supports a positive transition for both parties.

Subject to operational requirements, an employee and Council may enter into an agreement for the employee to work on a phased retirement arrangement.

Phased retirement arrangements will be agreed on an individual basis but may include reduced hours of employment and/or a reduction in duties/responsibilities.

A phased retirement arrangement will involve the employee giving up their permanent role and being employed on phased retirement with agreed work hours, agreed role/level, agreed duties/responsibilities and an agreed retirement date. Council and the employee will also identify agreed arrangements with respect to all accrued annual and long service leave.

Council will provide employees who enter into a phased retirement agreement with an agreed retirement date of up to \$750.00 for use by the employee to obtain financial and associated retirement advice.

6.9 Major Projects Agreements (MPA)

Major projects are important and significant planned pieces of work or activities carried out over a period to achieve a particular purpose but would not include day to day operational projects and would normally include a requirement for a change in work patterns.

For major projects, the ordinary hours of work and span of hours shall be by mutual written agreement between Council, the relevant Union and the employee/s considering the needs of the project and to give flexibility for the workforce. The parties agree to consider the following but not limited to:

- (a) Spreading ordinary hours over seven (7) days;
- (b) Ordinary hours at any time over the day.

The following process will be followed:

- (a) Council will confer with relevant employees to identify those employees who are prepared to consider changing their ordinary hours of work and span of hours;
- (b) Directly affected employees, relevant Union (if applicable) and Council will consult and agree on arrangements to be implemented;
- (c) The arrangements need to meet the operational requirements of Council;
- (d) Agreement needs to be obtained from more than sixty percent of affected employees;
- (e) Both parties agree to genuinely consider any reasonable agreement proposed.

Where established, MPA's will be read in conjunction with the relevant awards and this agreement.

The terms of an MPA must be in writing setting out the terms, including a predetermined term of the agreement and provision for termination of the agreement and signed by Council and the relevant employees.

6.10 Individual Flexibility Agreements (IFA)

To meet the needs of Council and an individual employee, Council and an employee may enter into an IFA to vary the terms of this Agreement with respect to:

- (a) Overtime rates;
- (b) Penalty rates;
- (c) Allowances;
- (d) Leave loading; and
- (e) Arrangements about when work is to be performed.

The following process will be followed:

- (a) The employee, the employee's Union (if applicable) and Council will consult and agree on arrangements to be implemented;
- (b) The arrangements need to meet the operational requirements of Council;
- (c) Both parties agree to genuinely consider any reasonable agreement proposed.

The terms of an IFA must be in writing setting out the terms, including a predetermined term of the agreement and provision for termination of the agreement and signed by Council and the employee and must not, on balance, result in an overall reduction in the entitlements or protections the employee has under this Agreement and are only about matters required or permitted to be in this Agreement.

6.11 Local Area Work Agreements (LAWA)

The parties recognise the value and benefit in providing for a process that enables Council, workgroups or individuals to develop and implement flexible working arrangements suited to the needs of the workgroup and requisite work to be performed.

Where Council and relevant workgroups and individuals agree there is a need for flexible work agreements the following process will be followed:

- (a) Directly affected employees, relevant Union (if applicable) and Council will consult and agree on arrangements to be implemented;
- (b) The arrangements need to meet the operational requirements of Council;
- (c) Agreement needs to be obtained from more than sixty percent of affected employees;
- (d) Both parties agree to genuinely consider any reasonable agreement proposed.

6.12 Equal Remuneration

The parties recognise the importance of maintaining diversity in the workplace, equal remuneration for work of equal value and ensuring that existing practices that encourage quality of employment and development opportunities continue and are promoted during the life of this Agreement. This will include Council:

- Reviewing position descriptions prior to advertisement to ensure non bias/gender neutral language;
- Including statements during recruitment that Council is an equal opportunity employer;
- Ensuring selection of applicants for vacant positions is conducted in accordance with the law;
- Giving appropriate and meaningful consideration of workplace flexibility or adjustment requests;
- Ensuring approval of development opportunities is managed in a fair and equitable manner, irrespective of gender or any other identified attribute under the *Anti Discrimination Act 1991*;
- Continuing to explore other ways to implement equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value.

SCHEDULE A - Wage Schedule

Stream C	Current Salary	6% for Year 1	5% for Year 2	4% for Year 3
(Engineering	(fortnightly)	(first full pay	(first full pay	(first full pay
Mechanics)		period after	period after	period after
		1 July 2025)	1 July 2026)	1 July 2027)
Senior C10	2,390.02	2,533.42	2,660.09	2,766.50
Senior C9	2,448.27	2,595.17	2,724.92	2,833.92
Senior C8	2,510.75	2,661.40	2,794.46	2,906.24
Senior C7	2,585.35	2,740.47	2,877.49	2,992.59
Stream B	Current Salary	6% for Year 1	5% for Year 2	4% for Year 3
	(fortnightly)	(first full pay	(first full pay	(first full pay
		period after	period after	period after
		1 July 2025)	1 July 26)	1 July 27)
Grade 1	2,270.25	2,406.47	2,526.79	2,627.86
Grade 2	2,305.66	2,444.00	2,566.20	2,668.85
Grade 3	2,333.30	2,473.30	2,596.96	2,700.84
Grade 4	2,361.45	2,503.14	2,628.29	2,733.43
Grade 5	2,390.02	2,533.42	2,660.09	2,766.50
Grade 6	2,448.39	2,595.29	2,725.06	2,834.06
Grade 7	2,510.45	2,661.08	2,794.13	2,905.90
Grade 8	2,585.66	2,740.80	2,877.84	2,992.95
Grade 9	2,661.33	2,821.01	2,962.06	3,080.54

SIGNATORIES

Signed for and on behalf of **Southern Downs Regional Council**
ABN 59 786 792 651

.....
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

In the presence of
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

Signed for and on behalf of **The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland**
ABN 54 942 536 069

.....
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

In the presence of
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

Signed for and on behalf of **The Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy, Industrial Union of Employees, Queensland** ABN 73 089 711 903

.....
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

In the presence of
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

Signed for and on behalf of the **Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Union of Employees (Queensland Branch)**
ABN 80 519 643 130

.....
(signed)

.....
(printed name)

In the presence of
(signed)

.....
(printed name)