



# agnes water desalination project case study

## Agnes Water Desalination Project

May 2006 – September 2009

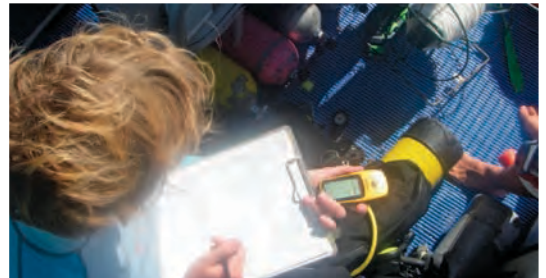
Gladstone Regional Council proposed the development of a seawater desalination facility in the town of Agnes Water, with the intake and brine outfall at Chinaman's Beach. This proposal required significant environmental consideration, as Chinaman's Beach is an important turtle breeding area and lies within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and Marine Park, protected by State and Commonwealth legislation.

### Project requirements overview

frc environmental was engaged to assist Gladstone Regional Council, and subsequently the nominated contractor United Utilities Australia, to contribute to both the feasibility study for the proposed desalination facility and the refinement of the proposed approach to construction.

This largely consisted of undertaking detailed surveys of the marine environment in the vicinity of Chinaman's Beach, including the sea floor, and making recommendations for pipeline alignment and construction approach based on the results of these surveys and our professional understanding of habitat and floral and faunal resilience / sensitivity.

With the added compliance requirements that come with this area's inclusion in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and Marine Park, it was critical for Gladstone Regional Council to appoint an environmental consultant who not only had the scientific credentials and ability to deliver what was needed, but who's credibility would ensure the ready acceptance of recommendations by a range of key stakeholders.



A senior ecologist records GPS locations along a sea floor transect – experience and expertise means understanding never gets lost in vast amounts of data

“We have engaged **frc environmental** on several projects, and have been very happy with their responsiveness, communication and their delivered reports.”

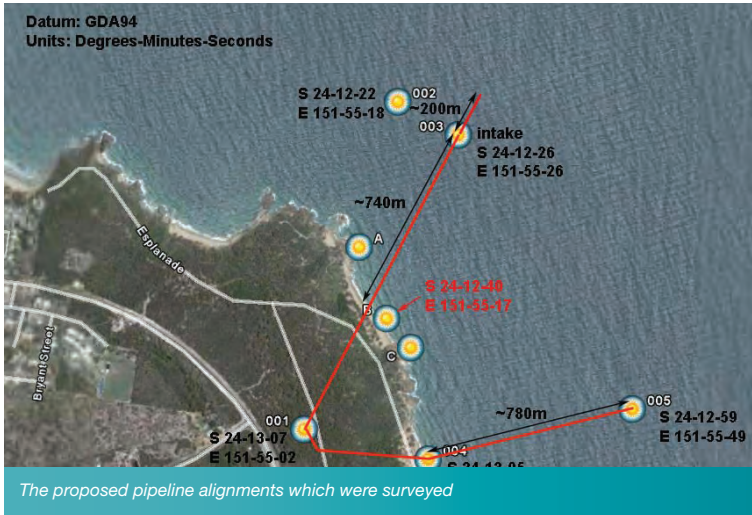
**Chris Campbell,**

Senior Planner Community Development  
Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia

### Project Performance

- Rapid mobilisation of a certified scientific diving team
- Assessment of survey results supported by two decades of experience with the region's ecosystems
- Seamless transition from Council to contractor as client
- Reports that satisfied the agencies 'first go'
- Effective communication of the results and implications to the community
- Effective collaboration with the client's engineers to achieve acceptable outcomes

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Ecologist surveying the rocky shore of the proposed pipeline alignment

## Our tailored approach and methodology

**frc environmental** was able to respond to Council's need for a very fast turnaround time, mobilising a scientific dive team to conduct field studies within a week of confirming requirements. While conducting surveys, our highly-qualified team worked to a rigorous OH&S plan and completed the field requirements on time and on budget.

**frc environmental's** reputation for rigorous science and integrity over several decades provided Gladstone Regional Council with a strong report that was readily accepted by Queensland's Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, the Commonwealth's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, commercial and recreational fishers and tourism operators. **frc environmental's** 'get it right first time' approach enabled Council to advance its planning with absolute confidence.

Through a presence at the Council's Open Day, **frc environmental** was further able to inform and educate the community through presentations in easy-to-understand terms, of the expected impacts on Chinaman's Beach and the surrounding environment. This proved to be a very valuable exercise, and allowed **frc environmental's** scientists to respond directly to the questions and concerns of local residents in a face-to-face setting.

"The Agnes Water desalination facility would represent a large investment by Council, and we needed an environmental consultant who had the experience and know-how to ensure that we got the right information during feasibility planning. We needed solid data that we could fully understand, and that we could rely on with absolute confidence – there are no second chances.

**frc environmental** delivered everything they said they would, coming in on time and on budget. Their work was thorough and the final report was written in easy to understand language. **frc environmental** have proven to us that they have vast capabilities and experience, and we look forward to engaging them on future projects."

### Chris Campbell,

Senior Planner Community Development  
Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia

#### industry experience

- Ports & Maritime Operations
- Mining, Oil & Gas
- Linear Infrastructure
- Power Generation & Distribution
- Waste Management
- Water Infrastructure
- Effluent Infrastructure
- Urban, Industrial & Agricultural Development
- Government
- International Development & Aid
- Fisheries & Aquaculture
- Wetland Construction & Rehabilitation
- Tourism
- Defence
- Forensic & Legal

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