



**WHAT WE DO:**

QRA is charged with managing and coordinating the Government’s program of **recovery and reconstruction** works within disaster-affected communities, with a focus on working with our state and local government partners to deliver best practice administration of public reconstruction and resilience funds. QRA is also the state’s lead agency responsible for **disaster recovery and resilience policy**, working collaboratively with agencies and stakeholders to improve risk reduction and disaster preparedness.

**OUR VISION:**

Make Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia.

**OUR PURPOSE:**

Enable recovery and build resilience to disaster events within our communities.

**DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

**NDRRA/DRFA Grants Program**

Since establishment, QRA has administered a recovery and reconstruction program through the joint state-Commonwealth Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth more than \$16.8 billion.

Works for **27 events** from 2019 | 2020 | 2021 disaster seasons are currently in delivery with an estimated value in excess of **\$2.6B**

An additional \$78 million of works from the 2017 and 2018 event periods remain in delivery under approved extensions of time.

**Acquittal:**

The state, through QRA, is up to date with the acquittal of NDRRA/DRFA claims to the Commonwealth. The 2019-20 claim was lodged with the Commonwealth on 31 March 2021. The claim included \$1.2 billion of DRFA expenditure for the 2019-20 financial year, and will secure \$775 million of revenue to the state on acquittal by the Commonwealth. Acquittal is expected by 30 June 2021.

**In May**

In May, six local government areas were activated for counter disaster operation and reconstruction of essential public assets measures for the Far North Queensland Low Pressure System, 15–26 April 2021 event – Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Douglas, Hope Vale, Mareeba and Yarrabah council areas.

The focus of the disaster assistance grants program in May was to progress the approval, delivery and acquittal aspects of the DRFA program with completion deadlines of 30 June 2021.

Final approvals to establish the estimated reconstruction cost (ERC) for the eight disaster events that occurred in 2019-20 must be completed by 30 June 2021. This is considered on-track and is expected to generate an ERC of approximately \$700 million for inclusion in the next annual DRFA due for lodgement by 31 March 2022.

The 2019 event and residual 2018 event program is due for delivery by 30 June 2021. A number of projects within the program have extensions of time to deliver beyond June due to COVID-related impacts. All other works are understood to be on track for delivery within the deadline.

QRA is also engaging with the Commonwealth to facilitate its assurance review and ensure the acquittal and payment due on the state’s 2019-20 DRFA claim is received ahead of 30 June 2021.

**Status of NDRRA/DRFA Delivery Program**

	Prior Events	2019 Events	2020 Events	2021 Events
NUMBER OF EVENTS	-	12	5	10
\$2,663M Delivery Program	\$60M Program	\$1,456M Program	\$855M Program	\$292M Program
Deadline for Delivery	Past	30 June 2021	30 June 2022	30 June 2023
Time Elapsed	100% Remainder being delivered under EOT's	92% Remainder being delivered under EOT's	42%	-
% Completion*	82% complete	80% complete	33% complete	3% complete

\*% complete represents delivery progress reported by delivery agents. This may reflect greater progress than inferred by spend due to program efficiencies.

## RECOVERY

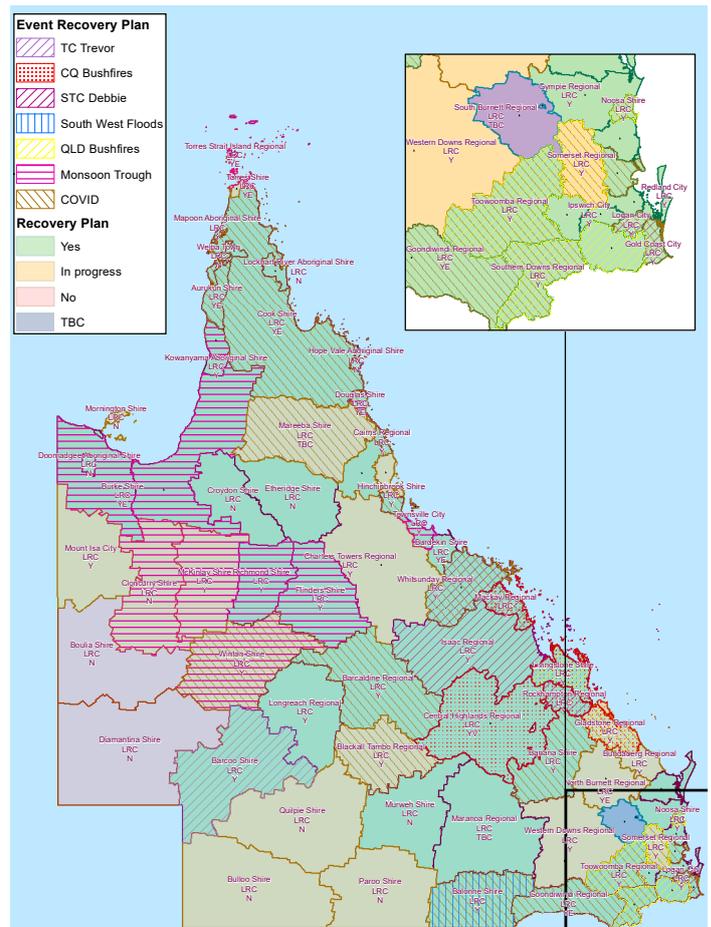
**QRA works extensively on recovery planning with councils impacted by major disaster events, increasing capability and awareness through active participation and providing support for local recovery governance.**

### Event Specific Recovery Plans

QRA is currently coordinating three state event specific recovery plans that underpin the Government’s commitment to helping communities recover, rebuild and reconnect from the following major weather events of recent years:

- **Queensland Bushfires (2019)**
- **North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (2019)**
- **Central Queensland Bushfires (2018)**

In addition, QRA is supporting local governments in the development and implementation of their event-specific recovery plans. Local recovery plans highlight initiatives to support recovery, reconstruction and opportunities for communities to reconnect.



### Damage Assessment and Reconstruction Monitoring (DARM)

Following a severe natural disaster or weather event, QRA supports local recovery operations by way of facilitating DARM activities to monitor the progress of recovery and reconstruction.

During May, the recovery team helped plan and participated in the DARM operation six months after the South East Queensland Hailstorm event. This activity was undertaken in partnership with Ipswich City Council and Community Recovery. The focus was on affected residents in Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Lanefield, Rosewood, Willowbank, Thagoona (Ipswich Local Government Area), Boronia Heights, Hillcrest and Greenbank (Logan Local Government Area). More than 85% of the 2,214 properties inspected have been repaired or have works underway, with total of 1,322 (60%) properties having their repairs completed. Issues identified as a result of the DARM were passed on to the relevant bodies including the impacted councils, the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy and the Insurance Council of Australia.

## Recovery Capability

The recovery team support recovery capability at the local, district and state disaster management levels. Recovery capability development activities undertaken this month include:

- Assisting with the Southern Downs and Southern Queensland Severe Weather event-specific local recovery plan.
- Attending and supporting the Regional Resilience Strategy big-map exercises facilitated with Whitsunday, Livingstone, Gladstone and Mackay councils to closely link recovery outcomes and resilience objectives.
- Supporting a number of Local Disaster Management Group meetings and Local Recovery Group meetings.
- Attending the QRA Board field trip with Scenic Rim, Southern Downs and Goondiwindi regional councils.
- A collaborative session with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Emergency Management Coordinators and QRA Recovery Officers with the aim of streamlining service delivery.

## Recovery Planning and Governance Project

The Recovery Planning and Governance project is designed to develop and enhance understanding of recovery governance and planning at the local level, and is continuing to be rolled out across the state.

There are 52 council Recovery Sub-plans endorsed across Queensland, and QRA is continuing to work with 22 councils to support the development of their recovery sub-plans.

In May, QRA participated in recovery planning and governance meetings with Burke, Croydon, Doomadgee, Etheridge and Western Downs councils.

## National Recovery Agenda

QRA is leading and contributing to key projects developed and delivered through the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-committee (CORS), as part of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) framework.

Work continues on the National Recovery Needs Assessment Project, the Interim National Recovery Framework, the Catastrophic Crisis Model Recovery Arrangements, Disaster Recovery Capability Strategy and the Functional Domain Reference Groups.

QRA attended a National Bushfire Recovery Agency workshop focused on community experience in accessing on-the-ground support. The learnings from the workshop will inform the establishment of recovery hubs.

QRA participated in the National Recovery and Resilience Agency's Recovery and Resilience Community consultations in Toowoomba and Gympie to share recovery insights.

## Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

M&E activities are underway to determine the appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Community Recovery Programs in relation to the Far North & Northern Queensland Monsoon (2019), Central Queensland Bushfires (2018) and Queensland Bushfires (2019). Evaluations completed to date include:

- **Far North & Northern Queensland Monsoon (2019):**
  - Industry Recovery Officers
  - Community Development Officers
  - Small Business Recovery Program.
- **Central Queensland Bushfires (2018):**
  - Rural Residential Recovery Program.

Evaluation reports for the completed programs are being developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

Monitoring of the extraordinary funding packages for these events continues with quarterly progress reports completed from a local government, state agency and FRG perspective. Recommendations for future community recovery funding and delivery of future extraordinary funding packages will be developed.

## RESILIENCE

**QRA is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for managing flood risks and improving the resilience of communities, and facilitating mitigation against potential disasters.**

### Resilience grant programs



#### Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund (QDRF) and Prepared Communities Fund (PCF)

For 2018–19, \$10.65 million was allocated to 75 projects to strengthen the resilience of Queensland communities under the state-funded QDRF (\$9.5M, 65 projects) and the Commonwealth funded PCF (\$1.15M, 10 projects). As at 30 April 2021, 49 projects were complete and 25 projects were in progress.

#### Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF)

The QRRRF is part of a five-year National Partnership on Disaster Risk Reduction between the Commonwealth and Queensland governments. This partnership has seen more than \$66.5 million in joint funding dedicated to resilience and risk reduction.

Expressions of Interest for 2020–21 QRRRF opened in March 2021 with \$19.1 million of funding from the Commonwealth and Queensland governments available for allocation. Councils, state agencies and not-for-profit organisations were eligible to apply, with more than 450 applications, seeking more than \$162 million received by the closing date of 7 April. QRA is currently finalising the assessment of applications prior to announcement.

This high level of enthusiasm from applicants demonstrates the desire across the state to improve resilience within our communities.

The 2019–20 round of the QRRRF is also currently being delivered. The fund fully allocated \$13.1 million of funding available at the time to 67 projects across 61 recipients. A list and interactive map of the successful projects is available on the QRA website. As at 30 April 2021, 6 projects were complete, 43 projects were in progress and 19 projects are yet to commence.

#### Recovery and Resilience Grants

QRA is administering a \$12 million grant fund, which was announced on 16 December 2020, to support locally-led recovery and resilience activities in 14 local government areas most impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, January-February 2019.

The grants are being funded by the Commonwealth Government through the (former) National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency.

Local governments have submitted their Programs of Work to QRA. These programs, up to a maximum of \$857,000, outline projects and activities they deem essential for the recovery of their communities and to increase resilience.

### Resilience projects and activities



QRA is currently actively delivering or participating in a suite of projects and activities with the intent of building the resilience of Queensland communities:

- Phase 2 of the statewide rollout of regional resilience strategies as part of *Resilient Queensland 2018–2021: Delivering the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience*.
- Oversight of 52 actions including 12 actions that QRA is responsible for under the *Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan (SFMP)*.
- Delivery of \$1 million Burdekin and Haughton Catchment Resilience Strategy Project and other components of the Flood Mapping and Flood Warning Programs being funded through DRFA Category D following the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough.
- Contributing to a whole-of-government response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (RCNDA).
- Leading reform negotiations on behalf of Queensland Government agencies in the Commonwealth’s review of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

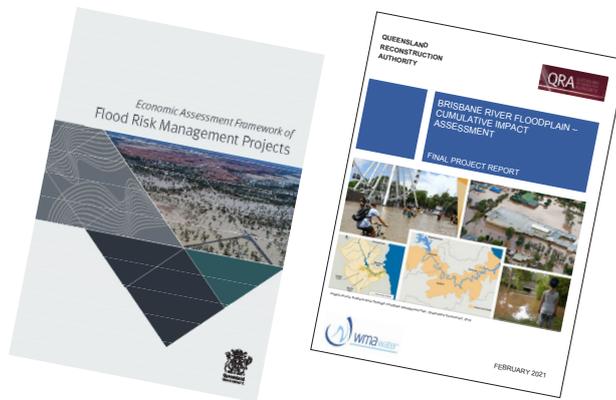
**Resilience projects and activities - key progress points in May 2021.**

**we continually improve how we prepare, respond and recover from disasters**

**Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan (SFMP)**

- Work is progressing on multiple actions and deliverables, with many forecasting completion by mid-2021.
- QRA, with the Brisbane River catchment councils and relevant state agencies, have coordinated the delivery of a ‘Regional cumulative impact assessment for the Brisbane River floodplain’ report and accompanying datasets, which addresses action LU1 of the SFMP.
- The QRA project team has finalised the ‘Framework for the economic assessment of flood management projects’ which will address action FM7 of the SFMP. This was published on the QRA website in May 2021.

Of the 77 reportable actions to be completed under the SFMP, 19 are now complete, 43 are in progress, two have not commenced and 13 are either for the future or business as usual actions.



**we understand our risk**

**North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough Cat D - Flood Mapping and Flood Warning Programs**

- As part of the \$8 million Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Project, project managers are appointed in each of the three areas of operation, to oversee the implementation and commissioning of more than 170 flood warning infrastructure assets. Site selection and associated tender documents are being drafted to enable the selection and appointment of delivery contractors. Tenders for the Townsville and surrounds area of operation were released to the market in February 2021, with tenders for the Far North and North West areas of operation released by the end of May.



Manual river height gauge.



Automatic rain and river gauge with a manual read gauge for backup.



Flood Camera.

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### RATE OF RECOVERY PROMISING FOLLOWING HALLOWEEN HAILSTORM

Wherever a natural disaster strikes in Queensland, the nation’s first dedicated recovery and resilience agency is there to lend a hand on the long road to recovery.

A devastating hailstorm hit the Logan/Springfield region in south-east Queensland on 31 October 2020, causing damage to more than 2000 houses and impacting the lives and livelihoods of local residents.

The Insurance Council of Australia classed the event, dubbed the ‘Halloween Hailstorm’, as ‘Catastrophic’, logging more than 42,000 claims totalling close to \$1 billion.

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, QRA swiftly activated the joint state-Commonwealth DRFA to support community recovery and provide assistance for impacted residents.

To date, more than \$1.5 million in DRFA personal hardship assistance payments have been distributed to more than 5800 residents in the Ipswich and Logan areas.

### DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS

Immediately after the hailstorm, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) completed 1774 damage assessments of properties in the Ipswich and Logan council areas, identifying 520 properties with severe damage, 602 dwellings with moderate damage and 652 properties with minor damage.

QRA monitors the progress of recovery and reconstruction through subsequent damage assessments at three month intervals, the first of which, dubbed Operation Willow, was in February with the most recent occurring 10-14 May.

Of the 2214 properties inspected across the two assessments, more than 1886 properties – which equates to about 85 per cent – have been repaired or have works underway.

Breaking it down further, 1322 properties – or approximately 60 per cent – have been repaired. By comparison, only 35 per cent of properties in Townsville had been repaired at the same point in time following the 2019 Monsoon event.

Currently, there are 120 properties impacted by the Halloween Hailstorm still with severe damage, 426 properties with moderate damage and 346 properties with minor damage.

These figures have improved dramatically between the February and May assessments, showing a promising rate of recovery.

### FEEDBACK FROM THE FIELD

A number of QRA staff participated in last month’s operation and provided their feedback on the experience:

- *“Getting out and listening to people’s stories has given me a great insight into the event and the subsequent issues they are facing. The data we collected is crucial, but if we can listen, provide advice on the support available, or even put a smile on one person’s face, then we have helped their recovery and achieved something positive.”*  
**Belinda Whelband, Principal Policy Officer, Resilience**
- *“The damage assessments keep you in touch with the impact of events and the difficulties that people face when trying to get their lives back on track. I started doing the assessments in 2013 and haven’t done an operation for a while – the process has got so much slicker and quicker. The iPads are so much better than the trimbles we used to use.”*  
**Greg Scroope, Technical Lead, Resilience**
- *I found it fantastic to be out of the office, in the field, talking to impacted residents about how their recovery is progressing and the challenges some of them are still facing. It gave me some great insights into the assessments and this recovery effort in particular.”*  
**Mick Ryan, Manager, Media and Communications**

For more information on the damage assessments, visit [www.qra.qld.gov.au/darm](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/darm)



Images: QRA staff monitoring the rate of recovery in Springfield.

## GET READY QUEENSLAND (GRQ)

GRQ is a year-round, community resilience program that helps Queenslanders prepare for disasters. The program integrates a state-wide research driven awareness campaign led by QRA, alongside a grass roots grants program providing \$2M across Queensland's 77 councils and the Weipa Town Authority to deliver locally-led disaster preparedness initiatives.

### Longreach road show

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the Get Ready Queensland team visited regional Queensland to present a disaster education roadshow in collaboration with Longreach Regional Council and local emergency services. The roadshow educated primary students in Isisford, Ilfracombe and Longreach on the region's unique disaster risks and how to prepare, as well as showcasing the role of local emergency services.

Coordinated by Longreach Regional Council, the event was attended by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, State Emergency Services, Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service. Jill and Kate from the Get Ready Queensland team began each session with a presentation about the importance of being prepared, focusing on the three steps to Get Ready. Students then had the opportunity to interact with emergency services, learn about their roles, see how their vehicles work during a disaster and hear their tips for staying safe. Students also had an opportunity to play the Get Ready Queensland Snakes and Ladders game which challenges students to make decisions during a disaster scenario and stay safe.

The visit to Longreach was also a great opportunity to learn about the positive impact of QRA's work on the community. Jill and Kate visited Tocal Road, a 2019 Category D Queensland Betterment fund project. The road is the only access point for many residents to the nearest shops and services. Previously, the gravel road would be cut off during flood events and take weeks to dry out and become safe to drive again. QRA worked with Longreach Regional Council to seal the road using funding from the 2019 Betterment Fund. The road is much more than 880 metres of bitumen, it reunites families and connects stranded people with their community and services sooner following a disaster.



QRA, Longreach Regional Council, QFES and SES visit at Our Lady's College, Longreach.

### 2021 Resilient Australia Awards

Submissions for the 2021 Resilient Australia Awards have been extended, now closing Friday 18 June 2021. The awards highlight initiatives that build resilience and inspire others to act, making communities safer, more connected and better prepared for disasters and emergencies.

2020 was a demanding year and Queenslanders have proven time and again they are extremely tough in times of disasters and adversity. Queenslanders have important stories and a wealth of experience to share with all Australians.

There are seven categories in this year's awards including Business; Government; Local Government; School; Photography; Community; and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Award is a new national category for the 2021 Resilient Australia Awards and is particularly relevant this year in light of the widespread and isolating impacts of COVID-19.

In 2020, Queensland won the national award for the Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health's Birdies Tree resources. Queensland also took the top spot in the Schools Category with Thuringowa State School's Disaster Resilience for a Changing Climate Grand Challenge. The Resilient Australia Awards are managed by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) and coordinated through the Strategy and Engagement team. For more information and to submit your project, visit the [AIDR](#) website.



Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health was awarded the 2020 National Resilient Australia Award for its Birdie's Tree program.

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**MONSOON TROUGH BOUNDARY FENCING PROGRAM COMPLETED**

Works have been completed to assist property owners across north Queensland repair boundary fencing along state roads, after they were damaged during the 2019 Monsoon Trough flooding event.

Between 25 January and 14 February 2019, the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough dumped record rainfall across the region, with almost 600mm recorded at Julia Creek. As a result, key transport routes including the Flinders Highway suffered significant damage, as did the region’s pastoral landholdings and infrastructure including fencing.

A total of 23 properties, primarily along the Flinders and Landsborough Highways, were helped through the program to reinstate boundary fencing between privately owned land and state-controlled roads.

While maintaining private fencing adjoining a road is a property owner’s responsibility, assistance was provided due to the exceptional circumstances caused by the extreme impacts of this flooding event. Animals on the road posed a significant safety risk to drivers, especially along major freight routes in north west Queensland, so fixing boundary fences to prevent stock from wandering was a priority.

Payments totalling \$566,000 have been made to landholders through the boundary fencing assistance program, which is now complete.

Due to the exceptional damage to roads and surrounding infrastructure, the Queensland Government worked closely with other levels of government to access funds under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to repair damaged infrastructure.

Local governments were consulted and assisted with engaging and identifying impacted landowners, while Transport and Main Roads (TMR) administered the delivery of funds to those impacted landowners.

The program also provided much-needed employment opportunities for people in the wider affected cattle industry, including fencing contractors and material suppliers, who were engaged by landholders to undertake the fencing construction. This enabled graziers to complete other urgent works.

The fencing program is in addition to \$9.5 million in reconstruction and betterment works on the Flinders Highway following the Monsoon Trough event.

Repairs to other state roads following the Monsoon Trough event are on track to be completed by June 2021.

Eligible reconstruction works are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Queensland governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



*Images (top): Flinders Highway at Nelia – in flood.*



*Images (bottom): Reinstated boundary fencing.*

