



**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:**

Stronger, safer, resilient Queensland communities.

**OUR PURPOSE:**

Coordinate action to improve the resilience of Queensland communities and facilitate locally led disaster recovery.

**DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

**Disaster Assistance and Resilience Grants Program**

Since establishment, QRA has administered recovery and reconstruction programs through the joint State-Commonwealth Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth more than \$16.5 billion. Works for 28 events from the 2019, 2020 and 2021 disaster seasons are currently in delivery with an estimated value of approximately \$3.0 billion.

In addition to DRFA, QRA is currently administering six other State, Commonwealth and joint-funded grant programs with a capped value of \$86.75 million, focused on disaster risk reduction and resilience building.

**Status of Active Grants Programs administered by QRA**

	Prior Events	2019 Events	2020 Events	2021 Events
NUMBER OF EVENTS	-	12	5	11
\$3,057M Delivery Program	\$73M Program	\$1,465M Program	\$919M Program	\$600M Program
Deadline for Delivery	Complete	Complete	30 June 2022	30 June 2023
 Time Elapsed	Complete Remainder under EOT's	Complete Remainder under EOT's	 58%	 8%
 % Completion	85% complete	87% complete	42% complete	4% complete

**In August**

The focus of the disaster assistance grants program in August has been to progress the close-out of submissions completed up to 30 June 2021 and monitor the ongoing progress of works in delivery.

In addition, QRA has continued to work with delivery agents to progress the development and approval of 2021 Event reconstruction submissions.

## 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.**

### Disaster Season Preparation

#### **State Recovery Coordinator (SRC)**

When appointed by the Premier, the role of the SRC is to work in partnership with QRA to coordinate the recovery operations for the QDMC in alignment with the Queensland Recovery Plan.

As part of pre-season planning, the Recovery team is working to ensure that all background information, including role descriptions, reporting requirements and a list of suitable nominees, is in place so that should a large-scale disaster event happen, we are well-placed to rapidly on-board an SRC should the Premier appoint one.

#### **Functional Recovery Groups (FRG)**

The Recovery team is working with our FRG partners to ensure that terms of reference, memberships, plans and networks are updated and live before the start of the season, with a particular focus on impact data collection and understanding. We will also ensure that lessons learnt from evaluation activities are incorporated into planning for any future funding.

#### **Recovery Officers Network**

A Recovery Officers Network is being developed to foster and support a trusted network of recovery practitioners working at a local level across regions throughout the state. In the event that a Council impacted by a disaster event has a potential gap in recovery workforce capacity and capability and requires additional resourcing and support, the network could be utilised to redirect support to the impacted LGA. A working group including representation from local government, the state and LGAQ has been established to develop the concept and outline a strategy for implementation.

#### **Recovery in Practice Exercise**

In October, the Recovery team on behalf of QRA will lead the 'Recovery in Practice' exercise designed to demonstrate Queensland's local and state recovery planning processes following an extraordinary flood event scenario in the Brisbane River Catchment.

The exercise will be comprised of two phases:

- **Phase 1:** Recovery planning workshops with relevant LGAs and FRGs will be facilitated by the QRA Recovery team to familiarise LGAs and FRGs with the scenario, and enabling event specific local or functional recovery planning to commence prior to Phase 2.
- **Phase 2:** Multi-agency 'FLOOD-EX21 Recovery in practice' full day event on the 18th October 2021 will involve selected officers from the participating agencies working through the scenario, highlighting the importance of all levels of Government working together to transition from disaster event response, to recovery and building resilience.

#### **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 Catastrophic Crisis Model Recovery Arrangements, Disaster Recovery Capability Strategy and the Functional Domain Reference Groups. A final draft of the National Recovery Needs Assessment Project has been completed and returned to CORS for finalisation. The Disaster Recovery Capability Strategy has been drafted and is out for consultation with stakeholders.

#### ***National Recovery & Resilience Agency (NRRRA) Recovery Training***

The Recovery team will be working with the NRRRA to ensure they are educated on the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) and how they apply to disaster recovery in Queensland. NRRRA Recovery Support Officers (RSO) will undertake online Queensland Disaster Management Framework Training (QDMFT) modules to ensure they are appropriately trained to maintain or enhance recovery capability under the QDMA.

#### ***Disaster Management Team (DMT)***

QRA's DMT Operations Plan is being reviewed and updated to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and accurately reflects the DMT's operational activities that are undertaken during a disaster. Activities include updating the DMT structure and reporting responsibilities with a strong focus on improving the efficiency in which the DMT collates, manages and reports data impacts and other information as it becomes available.

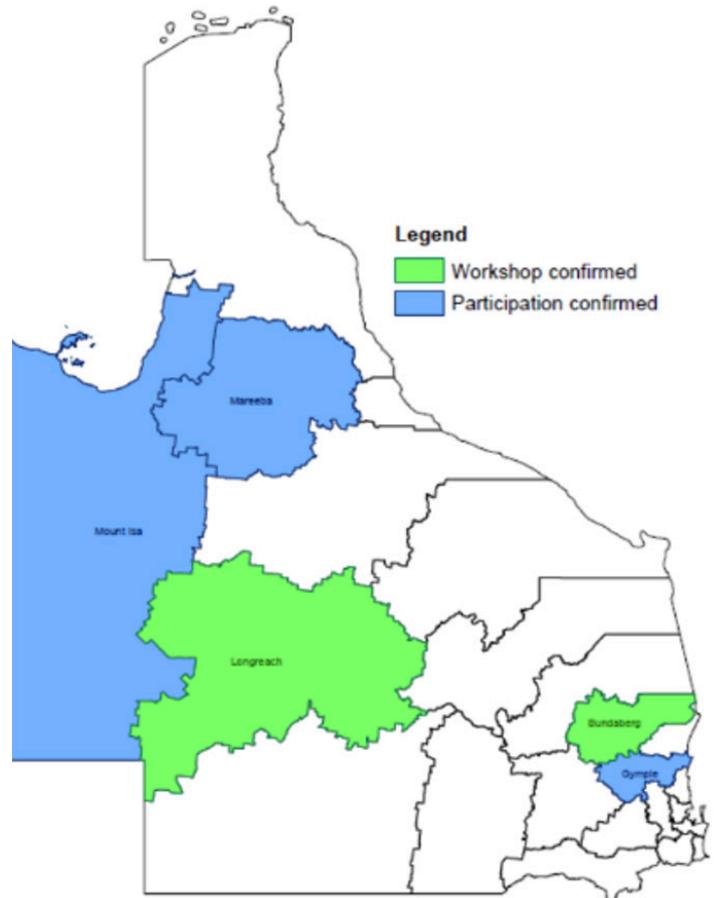
**Recovery Capability**

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

- Facilitating a recovery planning development workshop with North Burnett Regional Council and attending the Local Disaster Management Group meeting.
- Facilitating a recovery planning development workshop with Scenic Rim Regional Council.
- Providing an update on the evaluation process at a tourism recovery meeting in Warwick.
- Evaluating a recovery exercise with Moreton Bay Regional Council.
- Attending a virtual Local Disaster Management Group exercise with Fraser Coast Regional Council.

**District Recovery Project**

The District Recovery Project is designed to understand recovery needs at the district level, and provide District Disaster Management Groups (DDMGs) with specific training based on those needs. During August, QRA continued liaising with the Queensland Police Service on the roll out of the workshops associated with the project. Three districts have formally confirmed their intention to participate in the project and two districts have confirmed workshop dates. Another 13 districts have expressed interest in participating. The District Recovery Session Plan and Presentation are currently being finalised.



**Recovery Planning and Governance Project**

QRA works closely with Councils to develop and enhance understanding of recovery governance and planning at the local level. Local recovery planning continues to be rolled out across the state and will be an ongoing body of work that contributes to QRA’s strategic objective of assisting local governments and communities build knowledge and capability that drives best practice in recovery and building resilience.

There are 53 council recovery plans endorsed across Queensland, and QRA is continuing to work with 45 councils to support the ongoing development or enhancement of their recovery plans.

In August, QRA facilitated recovery planning and governance workshops with North Burnett Regional Council and Scenic Rim Regional Council.



Image: North Burnett Recovery Sub-plan development workshop.

## Event Specific Recovery Plans

QRA is currently coordinating the event specific state recovery plan for the Queensland Bushfires (2019). This is the plan that underpins the Government’s commitment to rebuilding, recovering and reconnecting disaster affected communities following major weather events.

As at 30 June 2021, the event specific recovery plans for the North & FNQ Monsoon Trough (2019) and Central Queensland Bushfires (2018) have been finalised. Close out reports have been drafted and are being reviewed.

QRA also supports local governments in the development and implementation of event-specific recovery plans. These local recovery plans highlight initiatives that support recovery and reconstruction and provide opportunities for communities to reconnect.

A number of local **event specific recovery plans** have been developed and progress reported on:

Queensland  
Bushfires (2019) **8** plans

COVID-19 (2020) **22** plans

South West Queensland  
Flooding (2020) **1** plan

## Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

QRA’s monitoring and evaluation capability (M&E) contributes to its strategic objective to produce evidence based data, analytics and evaluative materials that are useful to, and used by, communities and decision makers.

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).

M&E program status as of August:

- **Queensland Bushfires (2019):**
  - **Tourism Recovery Program** (*program logic, outputs and outcomes agreed and developed*)
  - **Mental Health Program** (*monitoring framework designed*)
- **Far North & Northern Queensland Monsoon (2019):**
  - **Industry Recovery Officers** (*evaluation report drafted for internal review*)
    - Guidelines for future programs agreed with Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF)
  - **Community Development Officers** (*evaluation report drafted for internal review*)
  - **Small Business Recovery Program** (*evaluation report drafted for internal review*)
  - **Mental Health Program** (*evaluation report being drafted*)
  - **Environment Recovery Program** (*data collection and stakeholder interviews in progress*)
  - **Tourism Recovery Program** (*desktop review in progress*)
- **Central Queensland Bushfires (2018):**
  - **Mental Health Program** (*evaluation report being drafted*)
  - **Community Development Officer Program** (*evaluation report being drafted*)
  - **Rural Residential Recovery Program** (*evaluation report drafted for internal review*)

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 31 July 2021, 70 projects were complete and 8 projects remain 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. More than 450 applications were received, seeking a total of \$162 million. This high level of enthusiasm from applicants demonstrates the desire across the state to improve resilience within our communities.

The 82 successful projects for QRRRF 2020–21 were announced on 23 July 2021. These include extensive road, floodway and levee upgrades, flood and river studies, and disaster management workshops across Queensland.

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 68 projects across 61 recipients. A list and interactive map of the successful projects is available on the QRA website. As at 31 July 2021, 12 projects were complete, 45 projects were in progress and 9 projects were 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 National Recovery and Resilience Agency.

Local governments' Programs of Work for projects and activities they deem essential for the recovery of their communities and to increase resilience are underway.

### 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)*.
- Scoping the implementation of the *Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework*.
- Continue to deliver on the *Queensland Strategic Flood Warning Infrastructure Plan*.
- 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.

**Key progress in August 2021 included:**



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

- The QRA project team completed the *Strategic Assessment of Service Requirement (for improvements to) Brisbane River Catchment Flood Forecasting and Warning Systems*, which has been shared with key stakeholders. This comprehensive body of technical work involved many agencies and was directly supported by the Bureau and Seqwater. The work addresses action DM4.2 of the SFMP, to lead discussions with the Bureau on a regional hydraulic modelling and flood intelligence system.
- DTMR, in collaboration with QRA and other key stakeholders, completed the *State Guideline: Flood evacuation route improvements*, which is published on QRA's website. This guideline and supporting materials provide guidance on a process to support the identification of 'fair and reasonable' flood evacuation route improvements in Queensland. This supports completion of action FM12.3 of the SFMP.
- On 31 May 2021, the Queensland Government endorsed the *Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework* which was subsequently released on QRA's website in mid-July. This framework outlines the expectations and roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in flood risk management, and guides and support decision-making by councils. This supports completion of action FM5 of the SFMP.



**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, a group procurement arrangement has been established, with QRA supporting work across three areas of operation; Far North Queensland; North West Queensland; and Townsville and Surrounds. One contractor has been appointed for all three areas of operations and works are due to be delivered by June 2022.

## 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.

### Get Ready Queensland Schools Competition

In August, Get Ready Queensland received its first entry for the 2021 Get Ready Queensland Schools Competition. Miss Robson and the Year 5 students at St Francis Primary School in Ayr completed the new design activity which challenged students to create a flood resilient house.

Miss Robson said the students loved learning about flood resilient houses, with some especially eager students getting online after school to do more research. As proud North Queenslanders, the students are familiar with cyclone resilient housing so they had a great chat about the different materials and structures for cyclone versus flood resilience.

The Flood Resilient House challenge is just one of the activities from our 2021 Get Ready Queensland Schools Competition. Teachers can select a range of activities from the Get Ready Queensland website, including worksheets, an online game, and a snakes and ladders style board game.

The Grade 5 students at St Francis Primary School in Ayr completed the Flood Resilient House design challenge and became the first class to go in the running to win a visit from Johnathan Thurston as part of the 2021 Get Ready Queensland Schools competition.

- Participating schools will go into the draw to win a visit from **Get Ready Queensland Ambassador Johnathan Thurston**.
- Entries for the 2021 Get Ready Queensland Schools **Competition close 6 October 2021**.
- Winners will be announced in **Get Ready Queensland Week, 10-16 October 2021**.



*Image: Grade 5 students at St Francis Primary School in Ayr.*

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**INNISFAIL BOWLS BACK WITH \$1.2 MILLION UPGRADE**

**The role of community sporting clubs cannot be underestimated.**

They allow communities to connect, catch up, share a meal, make some friends, improve physical and mental health, and unleash our collective inner sporting hero.

That’s why it was so important to ensure the recovery of the Innisfail Bowls Club, which was severely impacted by the 2019 Monsoon floods.

The floods weakened the riverbank of the Johnstone River and retaining wall below the club, damaging the surrounding structures and causing the club’s closure.

A total of \$1.2 million was approved under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to restore the riverbank the club sits atop of, ensuring a new bowling green could be constructed.

The funding was provided through the \$20 million Community Assets Program, part of the \$242 million package of extraordinary assistance jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments established in the aftermath of the 2019 floods.

An 85-metre long mass block wall was built to stabilise the eroding section of riverbank allowing a new bowling green to be built, along with new fencing, an equipment shed and shade structures with seating.

With riverbank repairs completed following major flooding in the Johnstone River, a bright new future lies ahead for the Innisfail Bowls Club.

Innisfail Bowls Club President Alf Strano said the club can now plan events with certainty for its centenary in 2023.

*“Solving the riverbank erosion issue is a great breakthrough for the club,”* Mr Strano said.

*“The committee and I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the project.”*

The DRFA-funded project was managed by Cassowary Coast Regional Council and completed by Mager Construction, Berry Bowling Systems and a number of local subcontractors.

In addition to the Innisfail Bowls Club, a total of 44 community and not-for-profit sport and recreation grounds have been repaired through DRFA Community Assets Program in the Townsville, Richmond, McKinlay, Flinders, Cloncurry, Hinchinbrook, Cassowary Coast, Lockhart River and Carpentaria council areas.



Images (left): New bowling green. (Top right): a flooded Innisfail Bowls Club – February 2019 (right bottom) new retaining wall.

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**RESILIENCE PROJECTS COMPLETED IN CENTRAL WEST**

Works to boost the resilience of key central western Queensland transport routes impacted by the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough have been completed.

Rainfall associated with the Monsoon Trough and a near stationary tropical low produced record rainfall across north Queensland, with significant flood impacts flowing on to the Channel Country catchment.

A number of important road links across central western Queensland suffered flood damage, including sections of the Landsborough Highway and Kennedy Developmental Road.

Pavement and culvert repairs were completed on the Landsborough Highway (Winton–Kynuna) in June 2021, and a further section was completed in late July 2021. On the Kennedy Developmental Road, pavement repairs from Hughenden to Winton and earthworks and pavement repairs from Winton to Boulia were completed in mid-March 2021.

Betterment works to improve flood immunity and resilience were also undertaken in conjunction with the reconstruction program, with two projects in Central West District. These works aim to minimise future flood damage and reduce road closures.

Pavement resilience works on the southern section of Kennedy Developmental Road (Hughenden–Winton) were completed in mid-March 2021. Pavement upgrades, including foamed bitumen stabilisation, on the Landsborough Highway (Winton–Kynuna) were completed in late July 2021.

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



*Image: Landsborough Highway (Winton–Kynuna) – betterment works in progress.*



*Image: Kennedy Developmental Road – completed betterment works.*