



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 or acquittal with an estimated value of approximately \$3.0 billion.

In addition to DRFA, QRA is currently administering 19 other state, Commonwealth and joint-funded grant programs with a capped value of \$190 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	2022 Events
NUMBER OF EVENTS	3	12	5	11	6
\$3,099M Delivery Program	\$52M Program	\$1,466M Program	\$919M Program	\$630M Program	TBD Program
Deadline for Delivery	Complete	Complete	30 June 2022	30 June 2023	30 June 2024
 Time Elapsed	Complete Remainder under EOT's	Complete Remainder under EOT's	 75%	 21%	 -
 % Completion	 100% complete	 95% complete	 59% complete	 15% complete	 - complete

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

In February

February began with the activation of four local government areas, around the Gulf of Carpentaria, due to flooding arising from the Far North Queensland Low Pressure Trough event. At the end of the month, South East Queensland was subjected to one of the largest weather events to occur in recent years, with extreme rainfall and flooding wreaking havoc in just a few short days, across 20 local government areas.

QRA has been on the ground supporting councils and communities as well as the newly-appointed State Recovery Coordinator, Major-General Jake Elwood, who started the long process towards recovery. This support has included the activation of disaster assistance, preparation of requests for special funding packages, coordination of recovery efforts by state agencies and early assistance with the development of state and local recovery plans. Further detail is provided in this month’s Program Spotlight.

Throughout February, the QRA managed the continuing audit of the State’s annual DRFA claim (due to the Commonwealth by 31 March 2022) and began the assessment of applications for resilience funding programs, following closures of the North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (NQNDMP), the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF) and the National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (NFMIP) 2021–22.

RECOVERY

QRA works extensively on disaster recovery planning with councils impacted by major disaster events. The QRA does this by increasing capability and awareness through active participation and providing support for local recovery governance. The disaster recovery planning provides opportunities for locally-led, integrated and appropriate disaster recovery. This work often provides a unique opportunity to rebuild stronger, more resilient communities, economies, and natural and built environments, supporting the vision of making Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia.



STREAMLINED PROCESS HELP TO FAST-TRACK SUBMISSION APPROVAL

State Recovery coordinator for Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth (7-10 January 2022) Paul de Jersey visited Fraser Coast Regional Council to review its Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements submission process.

Pictured above is Mr de Jersey with Darko Devic, Lianne Schade and Sam Cassell (QRA), RLO Tom Hart. Toni Souvlis and Dan Kernovske working through an in-field assessment to fast-track councils submission.

Fraser Coast Council have finalised their first submission from the event.

Disaster Season Recovery Activities

QRA supports recovery at the local, district and state disaster management levels. The current focus of the recovery team is to provide operational support to those local government areas impacted by disasters.

Activations in February

This month there have been two additional disaster events activated for a range of support measures under the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements:

- South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 22–28 February 2022
- Far North Queensland Low Pressure Trough, 1–7 February 2022

The QRA Activations team continues to work with councils on preparing and assessing activations as required to ensure appropriate support is available to communities.

Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding

Between 10 November and 3 December 2021, large parts of Central, Southern and Western Queensland experienced heavy rainfall and flooding. There has been significant disruption to communities, including damage to private and public property, and the agriculture industry.

On 9 December 2021, QRA General Manager – Recovery, Jo Killick, was appointed as the Regional Recovery Coordinator for the event, and is based in Goondiwindi through to the end of February 2022 to coordinate recovery operations from the event. The role has focused on working with the impacted region to understand their recovery needs; coordinating locally-led recovery planning and recovery operations; helping to identify suitable grant programs; and advising on applications for funding to support recovery and resilience.

QRA is also undertaking a range of activities to support recovery operations including on-the-ground engagement with impacted councils to providing strategic, technical, coordination, reporting and communication support.

Goondiwindi Regional Council’s Flooding & Rain Event Local Recovery Plan was approved by their LDMG on 15 February 2022 and will be submitted to Council for endorsement at their March 2022 meeting.

Recovery Planning and Governance

QRA works closely with local councils to develop and enhance understanding of recovery governance and planning at the local level through the delivery of recovery planning workshops and the development of Recovery Sub-plans. This ongoing body of work 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 54 council recovery plans endorsed across Queensland. A total of 51 councils have established Local Recovery Groups with 37 councils having a permanent Local Recovery Coordinator. QRA continues to work with councils across the state to support the ongoing or enhancement of their recovery plans.

District Recovery Project

QRA is delivering the District Recovery Project, designed to understand recovery needs at the district level, and provide District Disaster Management Groups (DDMGs) with specific training, based on those needs. The Longreach District Recovery Strategy will be submitted for endorsement by DDMG at the March Annual meeting. QRA continues to liaise with the Queensland Police Service to roll out additional workshops associated with the project.

National Recovery Agenda

The Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) is a senior officials committee responsible for informing, influencing and advocating for national policies and capabilities that reduce disaster risk, minimise the potential for harm and uphold public trust and confidence in emergency management arrangements. Each Australian state and territory is represented on ANZEMC as is a member from New Zealand and the Australian Local Government Association. ANZEMC has two sub committees:

- The Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee (CORS)
- The Mitigation and Risk Sub-Committee (MARS).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services represent Queensland on ANZEMC with QRA support. However, QRA is the Queensland lead for CORS.

Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee (CORS)

QRA is leading and contributing to key projects developed and delivered through the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee (CORS).

Work continues on the refining of the National Recovery Needs Assessment Guidelines. These guidelines will be tested in a non-simulated environment through the recovery operations for the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 22-28 February 2022. The practical testing of resources ensures final products are fit for purpose and informed by lessons.

National Recovery and Resilience Agency (NRRRA) National Recovery Training Project

QRA is participating in and contributing to the NRRRA's National Recovery Training Project. The intent of the project is to develop accredited training for recovery practitioners. This project has resulted in the development of new recovery training modules that will be delivered as a component of a new Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Recovery Management) and a Diploma of Public Safety (Recovery Management). QRA has used its vast experience and knowledge of recovery operations and stakeholder management activities to coordinate and provide feedback on the new skill set to be delivered as a result of this package. The training programs will assist with professionalising recovery practice across the country.

Natural Hazards Research Australia – Wicked Challenge

The Centre's Wicked Challenge Program has been developed to engage early career researchers in a program that will allow them to explore innovative solutions to wicked problems related to disaster risk reduction and building disaster resilience. The program will be run nationally, however, Queensland is the first state to host the Challenge. QRA is participating on the working group for the development of Queensland's Wicked Problem along with other state agencies and universities. QRA offers the working group insight into recovery challenges in Queensland, approaches solutions from the five domains of recovery and can contribute to the conversation from a preparedness and resilience perspective.

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.

Key resilience projects and activities



As the state's lead agency for resilience policy, QRA makes resilience-building a key priority to help Queenslanders be better prepared for disasters. QRA is currently delivering or participating in a suite of projects and activities with the intent of building the resilience of Queensland communities, such as:

- Phase 2 of the state-wide rollout of regional resilience strategies as part of *Resilient Queensland 2018–2021: Delivering the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience* – due to be complete in mid-2022
- 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*
- continuing to deliver on the *Queensland Strategic Flood Warning Infrastructure Plan*
- reviewing and updating the *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2017*
- 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

Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience (QSDR)

Queensland's disaster resilience is built through collaborative approaches that are regionally coordinated, locally led and supported with state resources. Over the past few months, QRA has been continuing the implementation of Resilient Queensland 2018-21 by working with key stakeholders to ensure every local government is part of a regional resilience strategy that clearly identifies and prioritises actions to strengthen disaster resilience over time.

With the implementation of Resilient Queensland due to be complete in mid-2022, QRA has begun work to build on the evidence and data collected as part of this project to develop the next iteration of the QSDR. The revised strategy will take into consideration the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters and focus on actions to build resilience into business as usual activities.

QRA will work with key stakeholders on the development of the new strategy over the coming months.

Resilience grant programs



State funded program – Applications closed February 2022

North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (NQNDMP)

The \$10 million NQNDMP will fund disaster mitigation initiatives that aim to help reduce the cost or growth of insurance premiums in high risk, cyclone-prone coastal areas by reducing disaster risk and/or supporting a better understanding of future risk.

The program was open to high risk, cyclone-prone coastal areas with population centres within 50 kilometres of the coastline, from Bundaberg north to the Northern Territory border.

QRA is reviewing EOI applications before seeking a detailed application form for eligible projects.

State and Commonwealth funded programs – EOI closed February 2022

Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF)

The QRRRF is part of a five-year national partnership on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) between the Commonwealth and Queensland governments. This partnership has seen more than \$66.5 million in joint funding which aims to help communities understand, mitigate and manage the risks associated with natural disasters.

QRA is also administering funds through the QRRRF the Commonwealth-funded Managing Disaster Risk (MDR) program, with an additional \$6 million available in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 QRRRF round, available to the 14 local government areas hardest hit by the 2019 North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

A total of \$19.1 million is available, with the Queensland Government contributing \$8.3 million and the Commonwealth Government contributing \$10.8 million. QRA is reviewing EOI applications before seeking a detailed submission form for eligible projects.

Commonwealth funded program – recently announced

Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program (CERMP) 2022–23

The \$50 million CERMP was announced by the National Resilience and Recovery Agency (NRRA) on 13 February 2022. The program was established under the Australian Government's Emergency Response Fund to target high priority locally and nationally significant coastal and estuarine disaster risk mitigation projects.

The program guidelines are due to be released in March 2022. QRA will work with the Department of Environment and Science, who are responsible for coordinating this program on behalf of Queensland, to consult with stakeholders and identify relevant projects.

Commonwealth funded programs – recently closed

Preparing Australia Communities Program (PACP) for projects of local significance

The PACP local program was launched by the NRRA in late 2021 and closed 6 January 2022. The aim of the program is to improve the resilience of communities against natural hazards, specifically bushfires, floods and tropical cyclones.

NRRA are currently reviewing and assessing applications submitted for this program and indicate they will prioritise selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) based on their level of comparative hazard risk, informed by the Australian Climate Service.

There has been significant interest in this program from local governments, community organisations, and businesses throughout Queensland.

National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (NFMIP) 2021–22

The NFMIP 2021–22 was released by the NRRA on 30 November 2021, and aims to support state, territory and local governments to build long-term, national flood resilience and preparedness and reduce the often-devastating impacts of flooding events on communities.

QRA is responsible for coordinating applications on behalf of the state, in consultation with local governments and communities. On 4 February 2022, Queensland submitted 14 projects for the program. NRRA are currently reviewing and assessing applications and will advise states and territories of successful projects in the coming weeks.

Resilience grant programs in delivery



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 January 2022, two projects remain in progress.

\$10.65M	75	97%
Program	Projects	Complete

Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF)

The 2020–21 round of QRRRF received more than 450 applications 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. In July 2021, 82 projects were announced for \$19.1 million, these include extensive road, floodway and levee upgrades, flood and river studies, and disaster management workshops across Queensland. As at 31 January 2022, six projects were complete, 36 projects were in progress and 40 projects were yet to commence.

A list and interactive map of the successful QRRRF projects for 2019–20 and 2020–21 is available on the [QRA website](#).

\$19.1M	82	7%
Program	Projects	Complete

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.

\$12M	14	57%
Program	Projects	Complete

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.



Research shows 2021 Get Ready Queensland campaign hit the mark.

This month, Market and Communication Research (MCR) delivered a research report for the Get Ready Queensland 2021 campaign, evaluating the impression and impact of the advertising effort.

The state-wide campaign encouraged all Queenslanders to take three steps to get ready:

- 1. Know your local disaster risk**
- 2. Prepare a household plan**
- 3. Pack an emergency kit.**

The 2021 annual advertising campaign built on the success of the 2020 campaign, featuring the same television advertisement to entrench awareness and grow brand recognition. The TV advertisement was complemented by a new

30 second radio advertisement and two online videos targeting new arrivals to Queensland.

The campaign ran from Sunday 10 October to Saturday 20 November 2021 across TV, radio and social media.

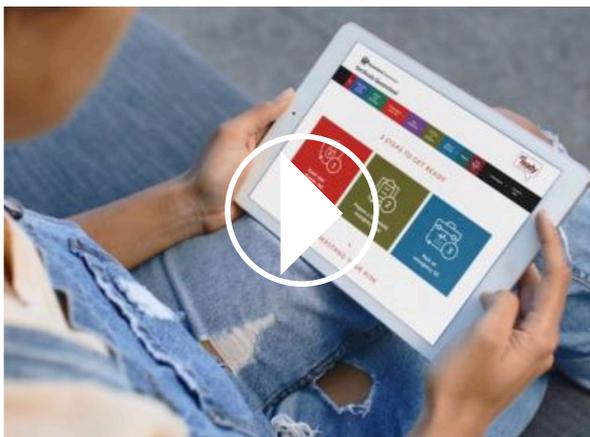
In December and January, 861 interviews were carried out across Queensland to determine community awareness of program messages and the Get Ready Queensland ambassador, Johnathan Thurston, plus analyse campaign recall and calls to action.

By comparing the outcomes with the 2020 campaign results, the Get Ready Queensland team can determine areas of success or where improvements are required. The results showed positive impact overall.

Key results:

- **53 per cent of respondents recognised the campaign creative (up from 43 per cent in 2020).**
- **Television continues to be the most impactful channel, although social media is particularly strong for First Nations Communities and non-English households.**
- **90 per cent of respondents said the campaign message was easy to understand.**
- **87 per cent agree the campaign is a good way to encourage action-taking.**
- **83 per cent recognise Johnathan Thurston as the Get Ready Queensland 2021 ambassador and 76 per cent agreed he is a good spokesperson for the campaign.**
- **New arrivals to Queensland had much lower recognition (17 per cent), but 84 per cent agreed that the campaign would be helpful to someone new to the state.**
- **New arrivals (41 per cent) are less likely than other Queenslanders (71 per cent) to consider themselves prepared.**

Recommendations to improve the campaign include featuring more “real Queenslanders” in the creative, trialling more emotional concepts and providing more specific advice about what to do to get prepared.



Get Ready Queensland 2021 Sofa video (social).



Get Ready Queensland 2021 Safe hands video (social).

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND RAINFALL AND FLOODING EVENT



Just 11 years after the devastating floods of 2011, South East Queensland has once again undergone an extreme rainfall and flooding event across 20 local government areas, this time in the space of just a few short days.

Nine people lost their lives (and two are still missing), hundreds were displaced and cut off, more than a thousand schools were closed, and tens of thousands of people and businesses were left without power (57,000 people at the event’s peak).

Over the weekend of 25 February 2022 the “**weather bomb**” lingered over the state’s south east, leading to dire consequences. Dams from the Sunshine Coast to the Gold Coast reached capacity, and by Sunday 27 February 2022 the river running through Queensland’s capital had breached its banks.

As a result of the extreme weather, inflow into Somerset and Wivenhoe dams was 2.2 million megalitres – that’s the equivalent of about four Sydney Harbours.

On Thursday, 24 February, Wivenhoe was at approximately 58 per cent drinking supply level, with full flood storage capacity available. This means around 2,459,000 megalitres of storage was available before the weather event. At its highest, Wivenhoe reached 180+ per cent.

At high tide on Monday morning, the Brisbane River peaked at 3.85 metres, leaving many city suburbs flooded, homes inundated, and roads closed.

It was the wettest three-day period in recorded history. Over the course of those three days, Brisbane received 80 per cent of the rainfall it would normally get during a whole year. Over the seven days of the event, an average of 795mm fell over the south east catchment. **More than 30 suburbs across the south-east received more than 1,000mm of rainfall in six days** – more than two thirds of what we would usually see in a year.

Maryborough and Gympie, which just six weeks previously had suffered terrible flooding in the wake of **Tropical Cyclone Seth**, struggled under the weight of the deluge, with the Mary River reaching heights not seen in Gympie since the 19th century. For Maryborough, despite widespread flooding, this time around the town’s levee held.



The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) wasted no time in activating the joint State and Commonwealth **Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)** to address the immediate and long-term effects of the floods. So far, personal hardship assistance (for individuals in immediate need) has been extended to 15 local government areas.

Many of these areas were also activated for the **Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme**, helping people get services such as electricity and water back up and running once they could safely return to their homes.

Grants for counter-disaster operations and reconstruction of essential public assets were extended to all 20 councils, helping rebuild infrastructure so communities can begin functioning again as soon as possible.

QRA is currently working closely with Queensland Government agencies such as the **Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Department of Communities, Housing and the Digital Economy and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries** to understand the quantum effects of the weather event and to work out what assistance is required and where.

Extraordinary disaster assistance grants have been activated to help flood-affected small businesses, primary producers, not-for-profit organisations, and sporting and community clubs. Grants of up to **\$50,000 are available for affected small businesses and not-for-profit organisations; up to \$75,000 for primary producers; and \$20,000 for sporting and community clubs and associations**, to help affected communities get back on their feet.

The 19 affected councils will also be supported through a \$1 million injection each to assist with urgent clean up works. Both the weather event itself and the recovery efforts are ongoing, so the next few weeks will see more disaster assistance unveiled, and more boots on the ground helping communities fight back. QRA is working with all stakeholders, including the Commonwealth, state agencies, local governments, non-profit organisations, charities, NGOs, as well as state, district and local disaster management organisations, to ensure as swift a recovery as possible.

Images: (left): West End Brisbane. (Right): The levee in the centre of Maryborough managed to keep the flood waters at bay.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

QUICK RESPONSE REOPENS MUNGAR ROAD IN TWO DAYS

Thanks to the quick response of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), Mungar Road was reopened just two days after water receded from the damaged Mary River Bridge, near Tiaro in the Wide Bay/Burnett.

Roads across the district suffered significant damage following downpours from Ex-Tropical Cyclone (Ex-TC) Seth in early January 2022. Some areas near Maryborough reported rainfall of more than 600mm overnight on 8 January 2022.

Although Maryborough felt the worst effects of Ex-TC Seth, it wasn't the only town affected by the deluge. Many towns around the Wide Bay/Burnett region were affected by flooding and subsequent road damage, including Ban Ban Springs in North Burnett Regional Council, Dallarnil in Bundaberg Regional Council, and Goomeri and Woolooga in Gympie Regional Council.

Mungar Road runs parallel to the Bruce Highway from Tiaro to Maryborough—Biggenden Road, west of Maryborough. Its connection with the Bruce Highway at Tiaro crosses the Mary River with a low-level timber bridge.

Access to Tiaro via Mungar Road is often closed at the Mary River during flood events, with the bridge closed for several days at a time.

Just one of several bridges submerged by rising river levels associated with Ex-TC Seth, the Mary River Bridge at Tiaro was closed on 8 January 2022.

River levels dropped below the bridge surface on 12 January 2022, however the damage to the bridge surface and the road surface at a culvert west of the bridge required extensive emergency repairs before the road could be reopened to traffic.

TMR's RoadTek and local government crews prioritised the clean-up of Mungar Road with asphalt repairs completed at both the bridge and culvert locations. Mungar Road was reopened to traffic on 14 January 2022.

The extent and cost of damage to roads in the Wide Bay/Burnett is being assessed.

Eligible reconstruction works will be jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



Image: (top): Mungar Road – pavement damage to culvert west of Mary River Bridge. (Bottom): Mungar Road – emergency pavement repairs to culvert west of Mary River Bridge.

Images:(top/middle): Mungar Road at Mary River Bridge – damage from Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth. (Bottom) Mungar Road at Mary River Bridge – completed emergency works.