**Ten years of Betterment brings best value for Queensland infrastructure**

Queensland has shown how rebuilding disaster impacted assets to a more resilient standard saves public money and minimises the impacts of future disasters.

The Queensland Betterment Fund helps councils and state agencies rebuild essential public assets to a more resilient standard so they can better withstand the force of Mother Nature.

Established in 2013 by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) following Severe Tropical Cyclone (STC) Oswald, the Betterment Fund was an Australian first.

Since then more than 520 projects valued at over $263 million across 70 local government areas have been approved.

Works vary widely across vital infrastructure and can include the stabilisation or resurfacing of roads, bridge upgrades or construction, and the expansion of floodways or other drainage solutions.

**Federal Minister for Emergency Management Murray Watt** said with the number of disasters in Queensland predicted to rise, the focus of Betterment is on creating stronger, more resilient communities, and reducing future rebuilding costs.

“Throughout the last decade, Queenslanders have faced floods, fire, cyclones and drought, in many instances concurrently or in quick succession,” Mr Watt said.

“We understand it has been a challenge as communities, local and state governments are tested time and time again.

“Their unified efforts to create positive outcomes for those who have faced the worst are commendable, and the Australian Government is proud to support those efforts through our joint funding.

"By building back better, not just restoring damaged infrastructure, we can reduce the impact of disasters in the future.”

Betterment in Queensland is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and state under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

**Queensland Deputy Premier and minister responsible for the QRA Steven Miles said** nation-leading disaster reconstruction initiatives like the Betterment Fund have helped make Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia.

“Over the past 10 years more than 520 projects valued at over $263 million across 70 Queensland local government areas have been approved with Betterment funds,” Mr Miles said.

“In addition to 2013’s STC Oswald, damaged infrastructure has been built back following STC Marcia in 2015, STC Debbie in 2017, the North Queensland Floods of 2019, and the 2021-22 disaster season.

“As of July 2022, 375 of these projects have been subsequently impacted by disasters, with an investment of $137 million generating more than $391 million in savings or avoided costs.”

“Betterment helps local councils build back better following a disaster, reducing future impacts on Queensland communities and minimising recovery bills when the next disaster strikes.

“A great example of this is the iconic Scenic Highway in Yeppoon, which together with neighbouring Statue Bay suffered major landslips and erosion during STC Marcia, essentially cutting off direct tourism access to the Keppel Islands,” he said.

“The complex Betterment project that followed balanced engineering needs with coastal and marine conservation.

“By mid-2018 a fantastic new stretch of road was reopened to the public, again proving a drawcard for the region.

“Betterment showcases the strength and results that come from all levels of government working together to improve the resilience of Queensland communities.”

The Queensland Betterment Fund is an initiative of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

QRA is the state’s lead agency for disaster recovery and resilience policy.

Since its inception following the 2010-11 disaster season, QRA has helped the state respond to more than 100 disaster events.

For more information on Betterment in Queensland visit [www.qra.qld.gov.au/betterment](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/betterment)

**ENDS**

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