



**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**

**NOVEMBER**

During November, QRA shifted from ‘Getting Ready’ to ‘being ready’ for disaster season, which has already seen four events impact the state in 2022-23.

From a grants administration perspective, QRA focused on finalising the close-out of recovery and reconstruction works completed in 2021-22 in preparation for compilation of the annual DRFA claim to the Commonwealth, continued approval of reconstruction works from the 2021-22 disaster season and monitoring the ongoing progress of works in delivery.

**DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM**

Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth in excess of \$6 billion Works for 29 events from the 2019-20 to 2022-23 disaster seasons are currently in delivery or acquittal. This takes into account works being completed under EOT from prior events and the four events that have occurred in the 2022-23 season to date, for which cost estimates are yet to be compiled.

STATUS OF ACTIVE GRANTS PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY QRA				
	Prior Events	2021 Events	2022 Events	2023 Events
<b>29 Events</b>	5	11	9	4
<b>\$6.0B</b> Delivery Program	<b>\$917M</b> Program	<b>\$823M</b> Program	<b>\$4.5B</b> Program	<b>TBC</b>
<b>Deadline for Delivery</b>	Complete	30 June 2023	30 June 2024	30 June 2025
 Time Elapsed	Remainder under EOT's	 71%	 21%	 0%
 % Completion	 91% complete	 48% complete	 \$345M paid by QRA to date	—

## RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

The Resilience and Recovery team within QRA provides leadership, coordination, direction and advice for the development and implementation of disaster resilience and recovery planning, policy, funding, and support.

To deliver on this commitment, roles and responsibilities are dispersed between and across levels of government and with key stakeholders.

### RECOVERY

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

### Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements activations – 2022-23 disaster season

Following the Southern Queensland Severe Weather event in October, Queensland continued to be impacted by consistent and intense weather systems in November, bringing some heavy rainfall and severe storms to many local government areas.

Noting predictions of the potential for flooding in the state’s saturated catchments for the 2022-23 season, QRA is currently working on pre-season preparedness and is undertaking internal activations training ahead of the traditional 2022-23 disaster season.

### Engagement with Local Governments, other stakeholders, and the community

In early November QRA Recovery and the Commonwealth National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Engagement Branch (Qld) held a combined workshop that focused on Queensland recovery governance, operations, and activations, as well as roles and responsibilities of each Agency. It was intended to increase cohesion between agencies and enable future cross-engagement strategies with mutual stakeholders.

Staff attend the annual Redland City Council exercise, ‘Exercise Milberran’ in early November, which set a scenario to deal with the impacts of a severe tropical cyclone (focusing on the impacts from cyclonic winds and storm surge) across the Redland City Council area but including related impacts to eastern Brisbane city. The exercise was undertaken as part of the Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for South-East Queensland (SWHA(SEQ)) project, which is designed as a nominally two-year collaboration between stakeholders led by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and seeks to gain an improved understanding of the risks associated with the severe wind environment in six local government areas (LGAs) in South-East Queensland, including Redland City.

Local government recovery engagement in November has involved meetings with Redlands City Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Mount Isa City Council,

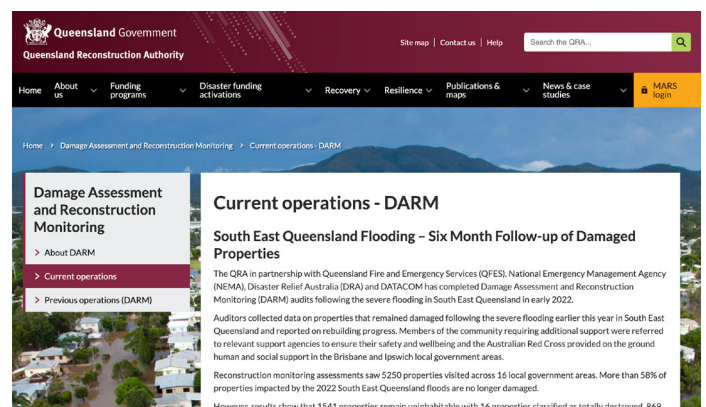
Cloncurry Shire Council, McKinlay Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council, Rockhampton City Council, Livingstone Shire Council, Toowoomba Regional Council, Western Downs Regional Council, Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Cairns Regional Council. Future meetings are proposed with Flinders Shire Council, Charters Towers Regional Council, including follow-up meetings with Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Cairns Regional Council to discuss a Cairns region Recovery exercise in early 2023.

### Follow-up damage assessments provide snapshot of South East Queensland flood recovery

During October, QRA in partnership with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Disaster Relief Australia (DRA), and Australian Red Cross conducted follow up assessments on properties damaged following the severe flooding in South-East Queensland in early 2022.

More than 5200 properties were visited across 16 local government areas over three weeks in October to check in on residents that were impacted in the Southern Queensland rainfall events of February/March.

The data collected from this operation has been analysed by QRA and has been provided to the Functional Recovery Groups and impacted Local governments for their information and use in understanding the progress of ongoing community recovery.



## Update on Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

QRA is continuing to work with state and Commonwealth partners on the roll out of exceptional circumstances packages, jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments, to support Queensland communities in their recovery from significant weather events during the 2021-22 disaster season.

The QRA secured more than \$2 billion in extraordinary assistance packages under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), to provide support to communities

in need following the Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, Ex TC Seth, SEQ Rainfall and Flooding and Southern Queensland Flooding (6-20 May 2022).

Some recently released or operationalised assistance measures include the release of Rural Landholder Recovery Grants available through QRIDA, and the continued roll out of the Mental Health support package being implemented by QLD Health throughout disaster affected regions.



## RESILIENT HOMES FUND

### **\$741 MILLION RESILIENT HOMES FUND - REGISTRATIONS OF INTEREST STILL OPEN**

As at 28 November, 5444 homeowners from eligible local governments area whose property was inundated have registered their interest in the Resilient Homes Fund. This includes 663 people registering their interest in the Voluntary Home Buy-Back program, 1529 in the house-raising and 2230 in the retrofit, with 1022 people unsure which option is best suited to their individual needs.

Rollout of the Home Buy-Back component of the Resilient Homes Fund has continued in Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Gympie, Moreton Bay and Lockyer Valley local government areas. As at 28 November, there have been 205 valuation inspections undertaken, 117 offers presented, 75 offers accepted and 25 contracts executed by the homeowner.

In response to community questions about the Resilient Homes Fund, a series of community information sessions have been organised to answer questions, provide updates on home assessment status and offer information relating to community support assistance programs available. During October and November, sessions held in Yeronga, Red Hill, Oxley, Fitzgibbon, Gympie and Goodna were attended by over 400 residents. During December community information sessions are scheduled for Deception Bay, Wynnum, Logan and Gold Coast.

Further details: [Resilient Homes Fund Eligibility and funding factsheet](#)

### **PROPERTY LEVEL FLOOD INFORMATION PORTAL**

Delivery of Property Level Flood Information Portal (“the Portal”) is well underway, with the Expression of Interest from the market currently being reviewed and shortlisted for the next stage of procurement.

The Portal has the principal aim of assisting residents to understand, be more informed and better prepared for future flooding events by giving them access to flood risk information specific to their property.

Delivery of the Portal will enable any member of the public in an eligible local government area to enter their address into a locally hosted platform and obtain key information about flooding at their property. Where data is limited, the system will still be implemented using existing datasets and allow for updates as new data becomes available.

The project is funded under the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund to support resilience measures in Queensland homes impacted by the following events across 39 activated Councils.

### **FLOOD STUDIES, RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS (WP3)**

Applications are now closed and undergoing review of the 39 Councils activated for DRFA funding from the 2021-22 events for the \$20 million Flood studies, risk assessment and management strategies and intelligence systems (WP3) work package. Successful applicants will be notified of funding approval no later than 30 January 2023.

**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.

As the most disaster-prone state in Australia and with on-going disaster impacts across the state, QRA is continually considering new ways to improve the safety and resilience of Queensland communities. This includes building trusted, reciprocal and robust relationships with community leaders, thought-leaders, and local, state, Commonwealth and international partners, and participating in a wide range of activities to inform our policies.

**Disaster Ready Fund**

The Australian Government’s commitment to create the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) was confirmed in the October 2022 Budget and passed into law in the House of Representatives on 23 November 2022. The DRF will provide up to \$200 million annually to build disaster resilience and mitigation projects across Australia. The first round of the DRF will likely open in early 2023, and QRA is leading the state’s negotiations on the funding guidelines to ensure the needs of Queensland’s communities are considered. For more information on the Disaster Ready Fund visit [nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund](https://nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund).



**Betterment funding**

On 17 November 2022, another round of Betterment funding was announced, which will see projects worth \$20 million help build back better infrastructure following events in the 2020-21 disaster season. Communities from the Torres Strait in the north to Goondiwindi in the south and Bulloo in the west will benefit from 39 projects that will help protect community assets in the next disaster.

**North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program**

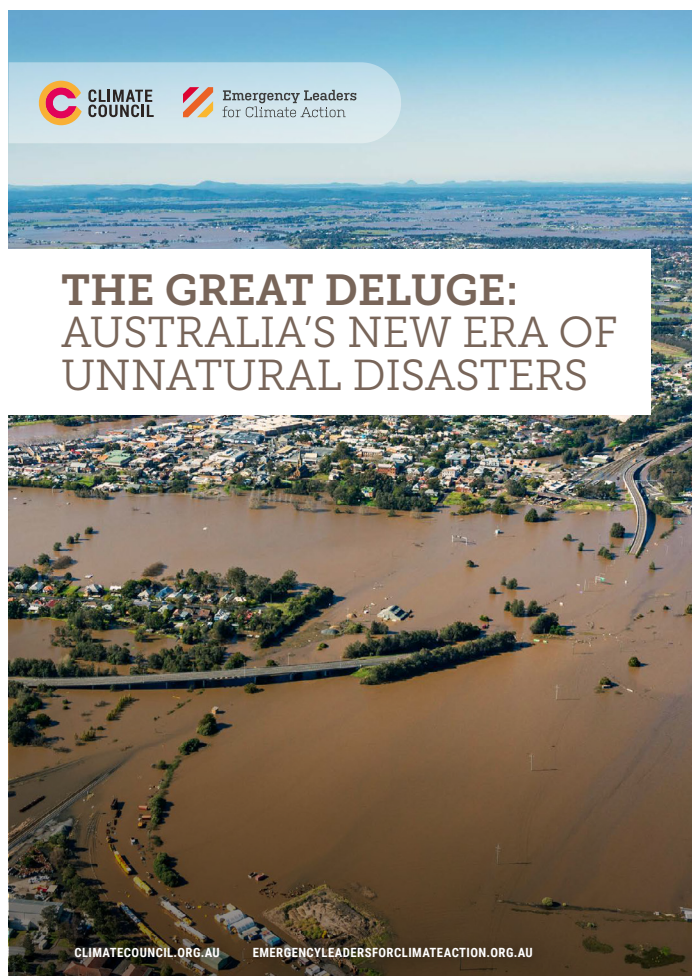
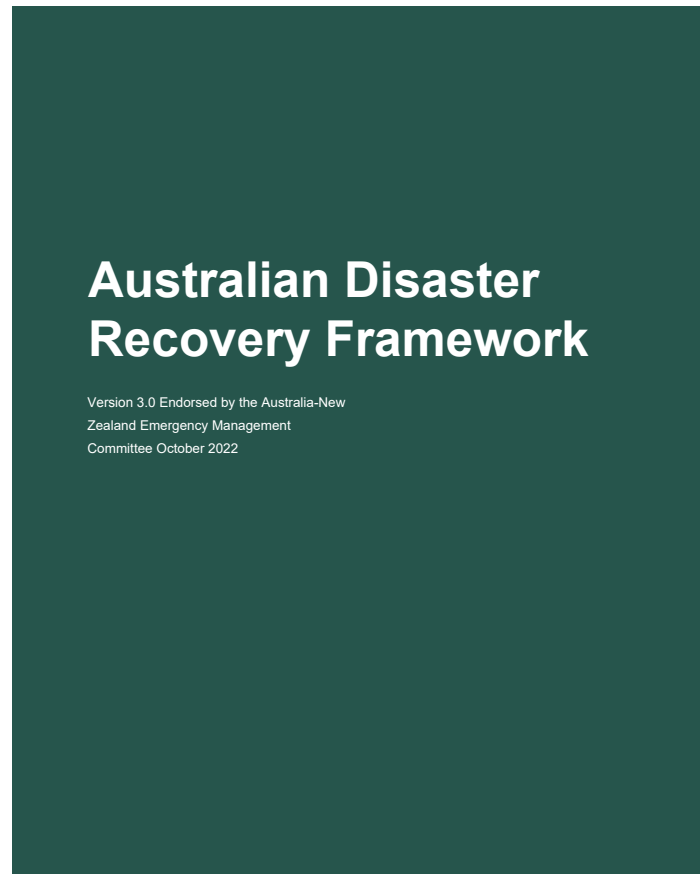
On 10 November 2022, projects totalling \$10 million were approved for delivery across North Queensland. The Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program is funding projects that support disaster risk reduction with the aim of helping to lower insurance costs for communities in North Queensland. The Program was designed in response to the final report from the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission’s Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry, which encouraged governments and insurers to identify mitigation works that could help reduce insurance premiums. The projects will support high risk communities in North and Far North Queensland.

**Reviewing the role of DRFA in supporting resilience and risk reduction**

QRA met with representatives from Deloitte this month, appointed by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to investigate how disaster funding arrangements can better support resilience. As the nation’s leader in delivering Betterment funding and resilience-building activities, QRA was able to shed light on the key benefits of resilience-focussed funding and some of the administrative and policy synergies that can maximise resilience outcomes for our communities.

## Australian Disaster Recovery Framework

The Community Outcomes and Recovery Subcommittee (CORS) of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee has recently completed CORS Project 8 – Australian Disaster Recovery Framework (ADRF). NEMA was the project lead for this work, with QRA providing significant ongoing support as a member of CORS. This ADRF acknowledges the impact of natural disasters in Australia, and the complex nature of recovery. The ADRF has been established to support all governments and recovery partners in their respective and collective recovery efforts. It brings together essential policy, doctrine and arrangements in one place, for recovery leaders and practitioners. The ADRF reflects today’s approach to recovery, but notes that our experiences, capabilities, policies and arrangements are always evolving. The document has now been published by NEMA, and is available [here](#).



## The Great Deluge: Australia’s New Era of Unnatural Disasters

As part of QRA’s efforts to stay informed about current thinking in policy and research, QRA is reviewing the Climate Council’s recent [report](#) ‘The Great Deluge: Australia’s New Era of Unnatural Disasters’. The report highlights the cascading impacts and effects of the changing climate on Australia’s natural disasters and gives an honest depiction of what can be expected with regards to the ‘unnatural’ changing shape of disasters within Australia.

One of the key findings within the report was that Queensland has suffered from the most economic damage from disaster events, with the total losses from extreme weather since the 1970s being around three times those of Victoria and 50 percent greater than New South Wales. Following the record-breaking rainfall and flood in February and March 2022, Queensland alone is expected to bear an estimated \$7.7 billion cost in social, financial and economic impacts.

Reports such as this ensure QRA continues to lead resilience discussions that are informed by relevant and current research.

## 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.

### GRQ makes tracks

Every LGA is unique in its strengths and opportunities – That fact was expressed strongly during a 10-day regional visit to North and North West Queensland by Get Ready Queensland in November.

GRQ joined QRA’s Regional Liaison Officers and Resilience and Recovery Officers to meet with seven councils about local preparedness needs. Meetings were held with:

- Flinders Shire Council
- Charters Towers Regional Council
- Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council
- Townsville City Council
- McKinlay Shire Council
- Richmond Shire Council
- Cloncurry Shire Council
- Mount Isa City Council

Having the chance to speak face-to-face with councils far away from city conveniences showed the unique requirements of regional and rural locations.

While councils indicated diverse support needs, the common theme was a practical approach to preparedness, as well as building resilience through community connectivity. Things like disaster training exercises and new communications assets with a rural tone were highly desired.



*Get Ready Queensland on an asset inspection on Palm Island*



*Get Ready Queensland and Resilience and Recovery Officers met with Richmond Shire Council*



*GRQ Ambassador Johnathan Thurston with St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School students*



*GRQ Ambassador Johnathan Thurston enjoys emergency services displays at St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School students*

### Johnathan Thurston goes back to school with GRQ

GRQ Ambassador Johnathan Thurston joined the GRQ team in Mackay this month, making a special visit to St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School to talk about the 3 Steps to Get Ready and hear what students had learned about local disaster risks.

Students and teachers rubbed shoulders with the NRL superstar after winning this year’s GRQ Schools Competition. The visit included a presentation and games by GRQ, Mackay Regional Council, Mackay SES and the Rural Fire Service. However, perhaps the most memorable moment was JT’s GRQ pop quiz, with 6 lucky students taking home signed footballs.

The GRQ School Competition is a way to put Get Ready Queensland lessons into classrooms, aimed at building positive preparedness habits early to future-proof Queensland resilience. The competition will run again in 2023.

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**SIX-MONTH DAMAGE ASSESSMENT SHOWS SEQ FLOOD RECOVERY PROGRESS**

The Queensland Government has recently completed 6-month audits of impacted properties following the severe flooding event in South East Queensland in early 2022.

After every significant event, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) visits impacted communities to conduct Damage Assessment and Reconstruction Monitoring (DARM). The assessments usually occur every three months after an event, for up to a year.

Officers conduct street by street, house by house inspections to record the progress of reconstruction and recovery, as well as check on residents' ability to access financial and human social support. This helps to identify and provide assistance to the most vulnerable in our communities.

DARM is one of the main ways QRA monitors and supports reconstruction and recovery after a severe natural disaster or significant weather event.

According to the latest property assessments, dubbed Operation Nimbus II, more than 58 per cent of the 8694 properties affected by the 2022 floods in South East Queensland are no longer damaged.

October's assessments saw 5250 of 8694 properties across 16 local government areas re-visited following the assessments carried out in June and July.

Of the 5250 properties visited, approximately 31 per cent are no longer damaged.

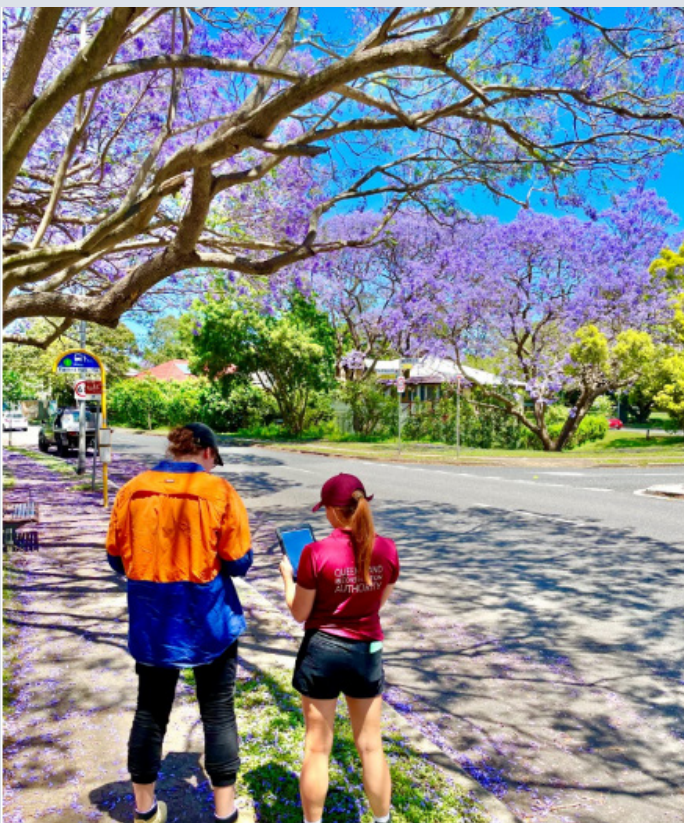
While steady progress is being made, there is still plenty of work to be done. 3602 properties still show signs of damage, including 885 that are severely or totally damaged.

QRA was supported in the October assessment by the National Emergency Management Agency, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Disaster Relief Australia, the Australian Red Cross and Datacom.

Having officers from a range of agencies and not-for-profit organisations carrying out and supporting assessments, provides faster answers and more personalised care.

The operation captures vital information that is then shared with councils, relevant state agencies, and critical stakeholders such as insurers.

Damage assessment and reconstruction monitoring operations are undertaken at regular intervals following a severe natural disaster, depending on the scale of the event and extent of damage.



*October assessments in Brisbane means it's Jacaranda time*



*DARM officers travel street by street to monitor recovery progress*

For more information on DARM visit [gra.qld.gov.au/darm](https://gra.qld.gov.au/darm)

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**CUNNINGHAMS GAP RECONSTRUCTION READY TO START**

Cunninghams Gap reconstruction works are set to start in November 2022, following extensive investigations, detailed design and the construction tender process.

Numerous severe bushfires burned across forested areas along Main Range in southern Queensland in late 2019, causing significant slope damage along the Cunningham Highway at Cunninghams Gap. Geotechnical investigations identified bushfire-related slope stability issues that required an innovative solution for batter slope protection works.

The unique challenges presented by the area’s complex topography meant significant design work was needed, including geotechnical and structural assessments, before construction works could commence.

Works will involve restoring lanes to their pre-bushfire functionality by reopening the currently closed lane and installing protective rockfall barriers with catch fencing for motorist safety.

As Cunninghams Gap is located within the Main Range National Park and is part of the Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Area, the project will be carefully managed to ensure the surrounding area is not impacted.

Elements of the rockfall design are a first for road infrastructure projects in Queensland. The 1.4 kilometres of continuous rockfall protection and rockfall catch fence up to 11 metres high will be one of the longest and tallest of its kind for road infrastructure in the world.

The catch fences will be built close to the upslope rock face, to make optimum use of the available road corridor space. This method will minimise construction impact to the existing lanes on this key freight route, a criterion set during the concept design phase.

Significant rock-scaling works will be needed, including removing unstable material to prepare the site, and temporary traffic changes will be in place for the safety of motorists and workers.

Given the magnitude of the repairs at this site, an Independent Technical Review on behalf of the Commonwealth was also required to validate that the works are eligible under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and the treatment represents value for money for taxpayers. The Independent Technical Review supported the eligibility of the initial concept option to restore the road back to its pre-disaster functionality.

Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State DRFA.



*Cunninghams Gap damage site*



*Cunninghams Gap – onsite geotechnical investigations*



**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**WORKS UNDERWAY ON MAJOR LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK ROAD LANDSLIP**

Transport and Main Roads has commenced a substantial works program to repair more than 75 damage sites along Lamington National Park Road, including the major landslide that occurred in November 2021.

The steep terrain of the Gold Coast hinterland has a long history of being impacted by severe weather, with six major natural disaster events in three years resulting in landslips, embankment failures, road damage and hazards. Multiple locations on Lamington National Park Road require repairs.

As a result of the Central, Southern and Western Queensland Heavy Rainfall and Flooding event in November 2021, a significant landslide occurred on the mountainside, taking part of Lamington National Park Road with it and resulting in instability to the road.

TMR crews responded quickly to clear unsafe material, stabilise the slope and build a side-track to ensure the road could remain open for the local community and visitors to nearby O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat.

Following geotechnical assessments, reconstruction works at the major slip started in mid-August 2022. Repairs will include stabilising the slope with soil nails, mesh and shotcrete, undertaking road pavement works and asphaltting.

Other repairs are underway or scheduled to commence on Lamington National Park Road before the end of the year.

Slope stabilisation works started in June 2022 between 1482 and 1626 Lamington National Park Road, including removing fallen debris, stabilising the slope with soil nails and installing mesh with erosion control matting.

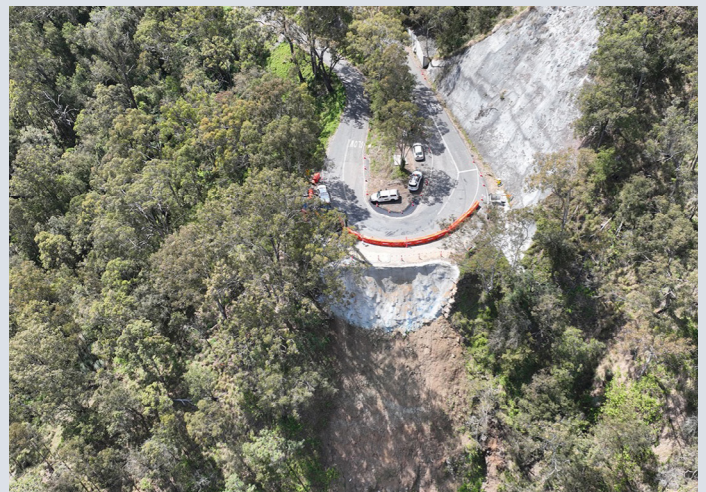
Works were completed in August 2022 at a site near Double Crossing Road to remove loose debris, stabilise the slope with soil nails, install shotcrete across the slope face, rehabilitate the road and undertake pavement and drainage works.

Reconstruction works on more than 75 sites will commence in December 2022 following natural disaster events in December 2020 and March 2021. Project works will include slope stabilisation with soil nails, mesh installation, placement of debris fencing, and drainage and pavement rehabilitation.

Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



*Lamington National Park Road – major landslide site (December 2021)*



*Lamington National Park Road – major landslide repairs in progress (September 2022)*



*Lamington National Park Road – soil nailing in progress (September 2022)*