

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.

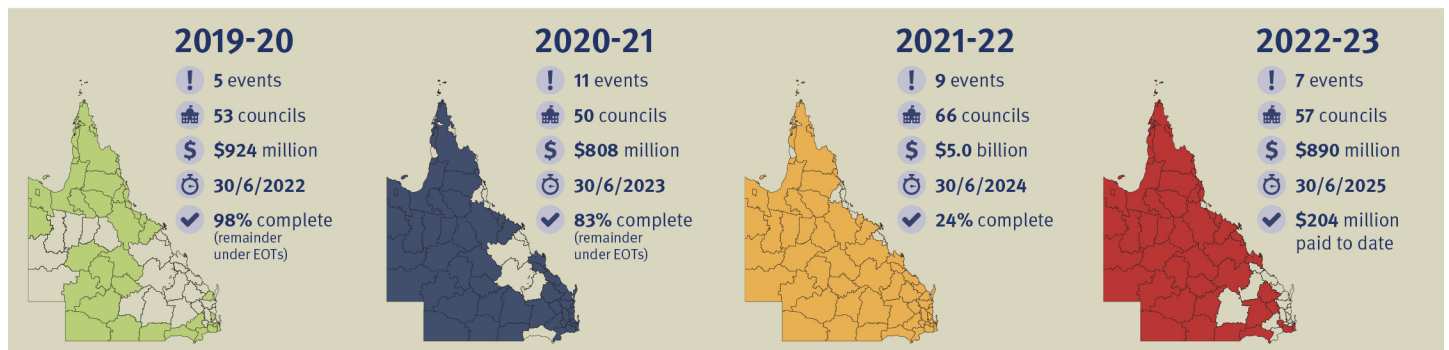
DISASTER ASSISTANCE

DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

QRA is currently administering a recovery and reconstruction program under the joint Commonwealth State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth in excess of \$7.6 billion arising from 32 events from the 2019-20 to 2022-23 disaster seasons in the delivery and/or acquittal phase.

CURRENT STATEWIDE PROGRAM

! 32 events **🏛️** 76 councils with an active program **💰** \$7.6 billion



IN THE JUNE QUARTER

30 June 2022 marked the deadline for delivery of the \$800 million+ program of works related to the 11 disaster events that impacted the state in 2021. By the deadline, all works had been completed other than a small number that had been approved extensions of time for delivery where extenuating circumstances have arisen. Completed works will now be assessed to confirm eligibility through QRA’s submission close-out process.

In addition, QRA secured acquittal of the State’s annual DRFA claim late in the quarter, resulting in the state receiving a payment of more than \$620 million from the Commonwealth on 30 June 2023.

QRA also took other steps towards improving the state’s resilience to natural disasters during the quarter, being awarded \$84 million funding from the Australian Government’s Disaster Ready Fund for 50 resilience-focused projects in Queensland. Through the 2023-24 state budget, a further \$152 million was allocated for a range of resilience projects throughout Queensland, funded from efficiencies realised in the state’s delivery of the DRFA reconstruction program following the 2019 disaster events.

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.

QRA is pleased to outline some of the key activities and progress that has occurred during this quarter.

RECOVERY

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

Across the state it is evident Councils are recovering from cumulative and compounding events, along with many who are already dealing with other longer-term stresses like drought and COVID-19. The Queensland Recovery Plan is driving a collaborative approach across functions of recovery, all levels of government and the whole community to ensure recovery operations are appropriate to the scale of the disaster event.

THE 2022-23 DISASTER SEASON UPDATE

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Activations (DRFA)

With the 2022-23 disaster season coming to a close, Queensland has activated DRFA assistance for 57 Local Government Areas across seven events:

1. South Queensland East Coast Low, July 2022
2. South West Trough and Flooding event, September 2022
3. South East Queensland Severe Storms, 22-23 September 2022
4. Southern Queensland Severe Weather, 18 October – 23 November 2022
5. Whitsunday Rainfall and Flooding, 30 November – 1 December 2022
6. Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding, 20 December 2022 – 30 April 2023
7. Western Downs Fires, 30 January 2023 – 24 March 2023

Comparison with 2021/2022

Disaster Season	Number of Events	LGAs activated	LGAs activated more than once
2022-2023	7	57	3
2021-2022	9	66	42

NORTHERN AND CENTRAL QUEENSLAND MONSOON AND FLOODING, 20 DECEMBER 2022 – MARCH 2023

Continuous rainfall throughout December 2022 and into April 2023 caused significant long-term flooding and isolation for many councils in North West Queensland. Among the 45 councils activated for the disaster event, Burke Shire Council, Boulia Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, and Mount Isa City Council have been most heavily impacted and required immediate and ongoing support.

In early May, QRA CEO Jake Ellwood undertook a tour of the severely impacted local government areas (LGAs). The purpose of the trip was to meet with council CEO's and Mayors to have an understanding of the damage, associated recovery challenges and recovery efforts to date.

In conjunction with an Officer from Queensland's Department of Energy and Public Works, a QRA Resilience and Recovery Officer (RRO) met with Burke Shire Council's Local Recovery Coordinator to visit several flood-affected properties to ascertain the need for temporary accommodation in the region. QRA Officers continue to work alongside councils, state agencies and Non-Government Organisations to support the recovery effort across the region.

As part of ongoing recovery efforts, RROs have worked with Burke Shire Council and Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council to assist in the development of Event Specific Local Recovery Plans (ESLRP). This trip has also provided insight into the needs of these impacted councils to assist in the development of recovery programs and initiatives funded by DRFA Category C & D extraordinary assistance funding.

DRFA Category C & D extraordinary assistance packages in delivery

QRA has been working with the relevant Functional Recovery Groups and state agencies to develop a suite of exceptional circumstances funding packages. The packages are designed to assist families, small businesses, primary producers and not-for-profit organisations severely impacted by the monsoon and flooding event.

Phase one and two of the announced category C & D package is below:

Phase 1	Phase 2
Primary producers Grants up to \$75K	Mental Health \$1M
Small business and Not For Profits Grants up to \$50K	Local Recovery and Resilience Grants \$4M
Livestock recovery \$6M	

QRA is working with the state and Commonwealth to determine what further assistance may be made available to provide necessary recovery assistance and support to impacted LGAs and community members.

Damage Assessment Reconstruction Monitoring (DARM) update

FOLLOW-UP DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS PROVIDE SNAPSHOT OF SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND FLOOD RECOVERY

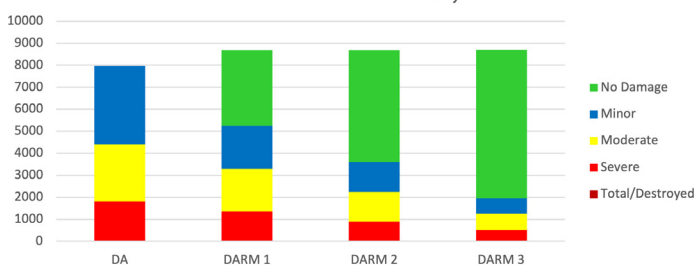
QRA officers, assisted by Commonwealth and State agency staff have undertaken three DARM operations across 17 Local Government areas since the SEQ flooding (at 3-months, 6-months, and 12-months post-event), to monitor the progress of reconstruction and recovery.

Associated data and maps on the 12-month DARM operation were disseminated to impacted local governments and associated state agencies to assist in understanding the progress of reconstruction and recovery, and to assist in identifying those in the community who may require continuing or additional support.

Of the 8,698 homes and businesses damaged, 6,744 are no longer damaged (78%). However, 1,954 properties remain damaged with 944 deemed uninhabitable. Of the 1,954 properties that still remain damaged, 739 have had work commenced.

QRA officers will be undertaking the 15-month DARM operation commencing 10 July 2023 to continue to monitor the progress of reconstruction for homes and businesses in south east Queensland.

South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 22 February - 5 March 2022
DARM Rate of Recovery



Graph showing the damage assessed during the three DARM operations since the flooding (at 3-months, 6-months, and 12-months post-event)

Engagement with Local Governments, other stakeholders, and the community

The Recovery team continue to engage with many Local Government Areas (LGA's) across the state.

Recovery staff travelled to Isaac Regional Council to participate in a council-led response and recovery exercise for a large-scale earthquake. Multiple local government representatives, state agencies and non-government organisations came together to discuss issues and identify impacts. The exercise also focused on recovery initiatives and activities when facing an event of this magnitude.

QRA representatives attended the Longreach Disaster District Recovery Forum hosted by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES). This provided an opportunity to connect Mayors, CEOs, and council staff members from the district, along with QRA, Inspector General Emergency Management (IGEM) and Royal Flying Doctor Service representatives to discuss disaster risk in the region and how stakeholders can collaborate during recovery from a disaster event.



QRA CEO along with Operations, Resilience & Recovery staff attending the Longreach Disaster District Recovery Forum in Longreach

The resilience and recovery team has recently delivered Disaster Funding Arrangements training to a number of councils including Western Downs Regional Council, Southern Downs Regional Council, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Longreach Regional Council, Bundaberg Regional Council, Fraser Coast Regional Council and North Burnett Regional Council. This training helps build capacity within councils to develop further knowledge and understanding of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and the State Disaster Relief Arrangements.



QRA Recovery staff presenting Disaster Funding Arrangements (DFA) training at Douglas Shire Council

RROs recently assisted the Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation in their development of a Cyclone Preparedness Community Plan. The intent of the plan is to increase capacity of community members in this region of Far North Queensland to prepare, respond and recover from Cyclones and enhance long-term resilience.



QRA Recovery staff meeting with Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation on Country near Bloomfield

Monitoring and Evaluation of Disaster Recovery Programs

QRA has commenced the monitoring and evaluation of the disaster recovery programs included in the extraordinary assistance package for the 2021-22 Southern Queensland Flooding event. The monitoring and evaluation team has been meeting with delivery agents about their programs to help inform an understanding of the status of the programs so they can be monitored throughout delivery.

The evaluations will examine the effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and implementation of the programs and consider whether the programs support disaster affected communities to become more sustainable and resilient. QRA has developed an overarching Disaster Recovery Evaluation Framework, which will form the basis for the evaluations undertaken and reporting developed.



QRA is working collaboratively with local councils and other Queensland Government departments to support the delivery of the Resilient Homes Fund, which aims to help Queensland homeowners whose homes have been affected by flooding in the 2021-22 disaster season to make their homes more resilient to future flooding, or buy them back to remove residents from harm's way.

The Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW) is delivering the Resilient Retrofitting and House-raising component of the Resilient Homes Fund, whilst QRA is managing the Voluntary Home Buyback (VHBB) program together with local governments.

As at 26 June 2023, more than 6300 people have registered for the Resilient Homes Fund including 676 who have expressed a preference for the VHBB. To date, 937 homeowners have been approved to take part in the VHBB

scheme in twelve local government areas (Brisbane, Fraser Coast, Gympie, Ipswich, Logan, Lockyer Valley, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Goondiwindi, Somerset, Gold Coast and Noosa).

Valuations and presentations of offers to homeowners have continued, in consultation with local governments. As at 26 June 2023, 737 valuation inspections have been undertaken across the thirteen local government areas and 591 offers have been presented to homeowners with 403 having been accepted. To date, 251 contracts have settled across eight local government areas and 62 demolitions of properties have occurred across five local government areas.



On 18 June 2023, Senator the Hon Murray Watt and Deputy Premier Steven Miles announced the identification of an additional 300 homes, resulting in more than 800 properties being identified across the program. This announcement also confirmed the closure of the VHBB program.

On 23 June 2023, a formal extension of the Allowable Time Limit (ATL) request for the Resilient Homes Fund, as well as an additional ten programs within the \$2.1 billion DRFA package, was submitted to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), seeking an additional two years to deliver RHF, with the program extending out to 30 June 2026. This extension of ATL is essential for RHF, particular the Resilient Raise and Retrofit programs, to allow the local building industry adequate time to deliver all identified scope for the programs.

PROPERTY LEVEL FLOOD INFORMATION PORTAL

Delivery of Property Level Flood Information Portal ("the Portal") continues, with the QRA working closely with the supplier to deliver the project.

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)

Flood-impacted councils across Queensland will share in a total of \$18.25 million to improve flood resilience through flood studies, risk assessments and other special projects.

A total of 36 councils have received funding for 127 projects through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements in response to the 2021-22 disaster season.

This funding allows councils to invest in flood studies, flood risk management plans, and flood warning intelligence systems, so they're better prepared for the threat of natural disaster.

This package is one of three made available through the \$31 million Flood Risk Management Program, which is being administered by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

Other packages under the program include support for community engagement and education around disaster preparedness; and for remote sensing technology to create 3D maps and models of environments, to better understand potential risks.

The Flood Risk Management Program is part of the extraordinary disaster assistance package delivered jointly by the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments through the DRFA following the 2021-22 season to address the medium and long-term recovery and resilience needs of Queensland communities.

LIDAR CAPTURE (WP2)

\$6M in funding has been approved for the Department of Resources to capture Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data and the creation of a floor level database through Work Package 2 (WP2) of the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) under the QRA administered \$31M Flood Risk Management Program.

Detailed analysis of flood risks is vital to support flood intelligence in preparing for the onset of wide-scale flooding within the national best practice approach to flood risk management.

QRA has worked with the Department of Resources to determine the LiDAR extents required to support Council flood risk management projects such as flood studies and flood risk management studies and plans, and total flood warning systems funded under Work Package 3 of the Flood Risk Management Program.

The program will collect LiDAR for over 73,000 square kilometres, which equates to an area larger than the size of Tasmania, and the provided funding that exceeds the amount spent by the State on LiDAR capture over the preceding decade.

RESILIENCE

QRA is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for disaster recovery, managing flood risks and improving the disaster resilience of communities.

Progress in delivering key QRA strategies

In this quarter, QRA provided the first progress reports on the implementation of two key disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies to the Queensland Resilience Coordination Committee (QRCC):

- [Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022-2027 \(QSDR\)](#)
- [Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework \(QFRMF\)](#)

The Queensland Government agencies responsible for the implementation of the QSDR have recorded all 52 actions are in progress with no issues or delays in delivery indicated to date.



A summary of all QSDR actions to reduce disaster risk and strengthen community resilience can be found on the [QRA website](#).

The QFRMF progress report provided a summary of key activities underway in the management of flood risk, including:

Delivered

- The Queensland Government [flood website](#) has been delivered by QRA to ensure Queensland’s flood related content uses consistent messaging that is coordinated, current, and provides a consistent user experience with easy-to-find information, and links to partner agency content.
- The State wide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors is now available on the QRA website.
 - » the outputs from the State wide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors will be used as the technical evidence base for the development of a Flood Risk Management Investment Plan (QFRMIP) for Queensland.

In Delivery

- The delivery of the 10-year QFRMIP is currently in early stages of planning with extensive stakeholder consultation to be undertaken throughout 2023

REFORMS TO QUEENSLAND DISASTER MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

On 30 June 2023, the Queensland Government progressed the whole-of-government action plan to implement the recommendations of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management’s (IGEM) review of Queensland’s Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA).

[The review](#) examined the structures and governance relevant to the QDMA and informs the future operating arrangements for Disaster Management in Queensland.

Implementation of several recommendations of the review will see QRA take on additional responsibilities in the areas of resilience, risk reduction and disaster preparedness from 1 July 2024.

Under the reforms, QRA will lead the establishment of a State Recovery and Resilience Group (SRRG) and guide the development of Functional Recovery and Resilience Groups (FRRGs). The establishment of the SRRG and FRRGs most practically embeds resilience and greater interagency coordination as business as usual and is a key element to support the implementation of the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022-27.

To support these reviews, QRA has established an Integration and Coordination function, that will also work with QRA’s leadership team to support



the coordination of QRA’s external engagement and service delivery functions and to drive improved engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders. The purpose of the function is to drive an integrated and coordinated approach to QRA’s service delivery, ensuring the best possible recovery and resilience outcomes for Queensland communities. The function will draw on organisational expertise and experience, along with key stakeholders across state, local and federal government, private sector, academia, non-government organisations to influence the wider policy agenda, and ensure that QRA continues to be an internationally recognised, national leader.

UPDATING THE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES INDEX

On Monday 12 June 2023, QRA participated in a workshop from the Minderoo Foundation to help inform the update of the Resilient Communities Index, a nationally consistent dataset to measure and understand community resilience. The objective of the updated Resilient Communities Index is to provide an evidence and risk-based approach to allocating resilience investment and provide support to communities, using consistent and comprehensive data and methodologies.

QRA was able to share our insights in measuring resilience and identify important data that could help inform the index. QRA will continue to be involved in the development of the index to ensure it could be used for the betterment of Queensland communities.

RESILIENCE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Along with QRA’s lead role in managing and coordinating Queensland’s program of recovery and reconstruction funding within disaster-impacted communities, QRA also administers a range of disaster resilience funding programs on behalf of the State.

A number of resilience funding programs are currently in delivery, helping to strengthen the disaster resilience and preparedness of Queensland communities.

Program	Approved \$	Approved projects
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2019-20)	\$13.1M	68
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2020-21)	\$13.1M	57
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2021-22)	\$13.1M	33
Managing Disaster Risk (2020-21)	\$6M	25
Managing Disaster Risk (2021-22)	\$6M	20
North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (2021-22)	\$10M	22
Recovery and Resilience Grants – Stream 1 (2020-21)	\$11.5M	66
National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (2020-21)	\$4.1M	3
National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (2020-21)	\$0.894M	2

DISASTER READY FUND (DRF)

The DRF repurposes the Emergency Response Fund (ERF), established by the previous Commonwealth Government, by turning it into a dedicated ongoing source of funding for natural disaster resilience and risk reduction measures.

The DRF is the Australian Government’s flagship disaster risk reduction initiative which will fund a diverse set of projects in partnership with states and territories to deliver national outcomes.

On 7 June 2023, the Australian Government awarded \$84 million in Commonwealth funding for 50 projects, spread across Local Government Areas (LGAs), State Government Departments, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Universities.

Queensland was awarded the largest portion of funding across Australia, recognising that we are the most disaster impacted state. QRA is excited to work with successful applicants over the coming months as funding arrangements are finalised with the Commonwealth.

For more information, please visit the [QRA website](#).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (ERF)

The ERF was an investment fund to maximise the former Commonwealth Government’s capacity to support states and territories’ responses to major natural disasters into the future. The ERF is to be replaced by the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) on 1 July 2023.

The \$75 million for Queensland under this program is to assist recovery and post-disaster initiatives in the 23 local government areas (LGAs) significantly impacted by the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, 22 February to 5 April 2022 event (eligible event).

The \$75 million is split into two separate grants:

- \$1 million Recovery Grant to support recovery in LGA’s affected by the eligible event; and
- \$74 million Resilience and Recovery Grant to support post-disaster resilience and other recovery components for LGA’s affected by the eligible event.

The \$1 million Recovery Grant will be used to fund a scoping study across all 23 local government areas to identify unmet recovery needs and where appropriate fund eligible recovery activities.

The \$74 million Resilience and Recovery Grant will be allocated to 6 projects, including:

Project delivery agent	Project name	ERF funding
Department of Energy and Public Works	Bundaberg East Levee	\$57,350,000
Gympie Regional Council	Southside Transport Flood Detour Route Upgrade	\$986,047
Scenic Rim Regional Council	Price Creek Bridge	\$3,133,055
Southern Downs Regional Council	Easey Street Drain	\$1,141,104
Toowoomba Regional Council	Perth Street (Lake Annand) culverts	\$3,351,322
QRA (various councils)	Flood Warning Infrastructure Network 2.0	\$7,000,000

For more information, please visit the [QRA website](#).

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING

During the second quarter of this year, QRA has focused activities on research and continuous learning. On 20 June 2023, Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA) opened expressions of interest for QRA’s and NHRA’s first joint research project – *Evaluating the Resilient Homes Fund*. The purpose of this project is to evaluate Queensland’s first Resilient Homes Fund which was established to provide Queenslanders whose homes were damaged by floods access to grants to raise, retrofit or have their home voluntarily bought back. The program is being implemented across 39 Local Government Areas impacted by the 2021-22 Queensland floods. Researchers from across Australia are encouraged to apply, with the successful researcher being notified on 15 August 2023. Further details can be found [here](#).

QRA has also enhanced our research and lessons engagement in this quarter which included:

- Participation in the NHRA Research Forum which brought together a diverse group of people from research, government, industry and community, providing an opportunity to share knowledge and learn more about the current state of natural hazards research to impact the future.
- Presentations on QRA’s proposed research approach at the Griffith University internal Disaster Management Forum.
- QRA representatives also provided a guest lecture at the Griffith University Australia Awards Short Course on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction – South Asia to provide insights into how QRA works with communities in Queensland and provided a walkthrough of key online resources for drafting local recovery and resilience strategies.
- Participation in the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Lessons Management Forum in Canberra to formulate opportunities to enhance QRAs Lessons Management Program.

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 wins top national campaign award

GRQ was all smiles at the Emergency Media and Public Affairs (EMPA) Australian Awards ceremony in June, after taking out the top award for Readiness and Resilience Communication.

The win recognised the effectiveness of GRQ’s six-week ‘Check Out What You Need’ campaign, which used behaviour change theory and state-wide research insights to encourage Queenslanders to pack or update their emergency kits ahead of severe weather season.

The annual EMPA Awards for Excellence in Emergency Communication recognise those who have made a significant contribution to emergency communications in Australia.



QRA’s Kasey Donald and Kate Retzki accepting the Readiness and Resilience Awards from Barbara Ryan, Australian Chair of Emergency Media and Public Affairs

GRQ puts flood risk beliefs under microscope

Get Ready Queensland has been exploring how people who live in flood-prone areas think and feel about their flood risk. The research is a part of a wider package of work to develop a mass media behaviour change campaign, to encourage Queenslanders to consider and act on their flood risk.

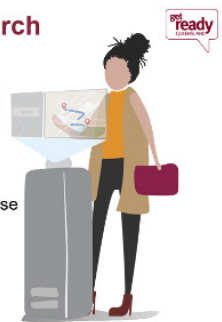
In June, GRQ reported on the findings of qualitative research, involving focus groups with people from across South East Queensland. The group members lived in high-risk flooding areas but had never experienced flooding to their homes.

Key take-outs were:

- Most people (in this research) see flooding as a potential inconvenience rather than serious issue in their lives.
- The extent to which people pay attention to severe weather warnings depends on several factors including their inclination to take notice of warnings, past experience of weather events, work situation, and how specific the details are.
- There is a general sense that severe weather events are becoming more frequent – whether linked to climate change, or not, Queenslanders expect severe weather to be a part of their future.
- The roles and responsibilities of different organisations and individuals before and during disaster are not clear.
- Urban residents expect highly localised disaster and risk information. Therefore, there is a need to give realistic understandings of what happens and what information is available during a weather event.
- The term ‘risk’ in this context has no clear meaning nor consistent definition. Rather than offering clarity and understanding, people struggle to agree on what it means.
- Any campaign should have clear, practical calls to action.

Why we did qualitative research

1. Unpack risk perception
2. Get insights about what people find difficult
3. Get direction on how we talk about risk & floods
4. Understand if, when, & how people would use an online risk assessment tool
5. Understand the value proposition for ‘understanding your risk’.



Get Ready Queensland’s flood research rationale

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

QRA PARTNERS WITH FIRST NATIONS COUNCILS

QRA regularly works with all 17 First Nations local councils and many First Nations organisations around the state to assist them recover from recent natural disasters and plan to make them more resilient to future ones.

Most recently, Principal Resilience and Recovery Officers Louise Robertson and Siobhan Hessing travelled to Bloomfield in North Queensland to meet with Elders and members of the Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation to help create a Cyclone Preparedness Community Plan.

During phase one of the project, Louise and Siobhan met with Elders, received a tour of the region and the Traditional Owner Group was formed to provide cultural guidance for all aspects of the project.

This awareness and capacity project is anticipated to improve the resilience of the community and increase the community’s ability to mitigate, avoid and withstand tropical cyclone in the social environment by developing a ‘Cyclone Preparedness Community Plan’ tailored for and driven by the Dabu Jajikal people.

Some of the project activities include collaborating with community, documenting the Dabu Jajikal people’s oral histories, language and knowledge, providing educational workshops on country and to produce a co-designed a ‘Cyclone Preparedness Community Plan’ to be completed by June 2024.

Speaking about the project in the lead up to NAIDOC Week 2023, Louise said the theme ‘For Our Elders’ was fitting with their work to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils and their communities.

“NAIDOC Week provides an opportunity to stop and reflect on the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recognise and continue to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and celebrate and acknowledge their achievements,” Louise said.

“Throughout my career I have had the absolute privilege to work for, work alongside and be mentored by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.

“It’s really exciting to be part of this project at QRA which will benefit the Dabu Jajikal community by way of preparing a culturally informed Cyclone Preparedness Community Plan to reduce risk and improve the resilience of the community against tropical cyclone events.”



QRA’s Louise and Siobhan visit the Wujal Wujal Waterfall with Elders from the Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation and project coordinators



R&R’s Louise with Aunty Betty at Weary Beach in Bloomfield

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

EMERGENCY WORKS FAST-TRACKED TO RESTORE ACCESS TO GULF COMMUNITIES

Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has prioritised emergency works on Wills Developmental Road to quickly restore access to key Gulf communities.

Monsoonal flooding caused widespread impacts across the northern two-thirds of Queensland in early 2023, with more than one-quarter of the state-controlled road network closed or under restricted access during the disaster event.

North-western Queensland was hardest hit when a tropical low dumped more than 500mm of rainfall over two days in early March 2023 in the Nicholson, Gregory and Leichhardt river catchments. The low produced weekly totals of 300 to 600mm over the Gulf Country, about 2.5 to 5 times the March average for these areas.

This led to record flood levels at many townships around the Gulf of Carpentaria, including the isolated community of Burketown.

The Wills Developmental Road – the main road leading to the Gulf communities of Gregory, Doomadgee and Burketown – was severely damaged, with major washouts near river crossings and sections of pavement damaged by weeks-long inundation.

While works were undertaken to restore access, TMR liaised with the local and district disaster management groups to put interim measures in place for essential services including food and fuel provisions, and for critical workers to assist with recovery.

As well as severe scouring at water crossings, prolonged inundation for more than three weeks caused extensive pavement damage along Wills Developmental Road. Once floodwaters had receded, TMR mobilised road crews to site to undertake damage inspections and emergency works.

Most of Wills Developmental Road was reopened to two-lane traffic on 31 March 2023, except for two severely damaged sections where additional emergency works were required under single lane closure via traffic lights and vehicle escort for safety. The two severely damaged sections between Gregory and Burketown were reopened with caution on 6 April 2023.

Further damage assessments and repairs are underway on other impacted roads, with the full extent of damage anticipated to be significant.

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



Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – pavement delamination and scouring as a result of Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)



Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – pavement delamination and scouring as a result of Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)



Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – damage from Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)



Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – extensive areas underwater as a result of Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)



Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – installing rock base (April 2023)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

MAJOR LANDSLIP REPAIRS UNDERWAY ON GOLD COAST–SPRINGBROOK ROAD

Major repairs are continuing on Gold Coast–Springbrook Road, after consecutive rainfall events in early 2022 resulted in multiple severe landslips and temporarily closed a section of the road.

A total of 676mm was reported at Springbrook from 23 February to 1 March 2022. This resulted in multiple landslips along Gold Coast–Springbrook Road, which were cleared by Transport and Main Roads (TMR) crews to allow the road to reopen under traffic control and traffic signals.

Further heavy rainfall on 29 and 30 March 2022, including 218mm at Springbrook, resulted in a large section of the upper slope slipping down the mountain, north of Little Nerang Dam. From 31 March 2022, an ongoing road closure has been in place from Neranwood Park to Pine Creek Road.

Since then, TMR has undertaken substantial slope stabilisation and reconstruction works at 15 sites along the road that suffered damage during the record weather events, as well as an additional three sites damaged by severe storms in September 2022.

So far, more than 800 soil nails have been installed at damage sites along the road, with approximately 400 more to go. At the main slip site (Site 1), approximately 70% of planned soil nailing has been completed and about half of the rock catch mesh installed.

At another significant slip site (Site 8), an innovative machine known as a spider rig is being used to undertake works. The spider rig is suspended across the slope face to perform works via an operator in the rig’s cabin. It can drill soil nails at a significantly faster rate than manual rigs and can provide real time information on each hole drilled, including depth and angle.

The machine is secured by steel wires that are anchored at the top of the slope and it can traverse the slope by ‘walking’ into position before drilling the next hole.

Following the installation of soil nailing and mesh, shotcrete will be sprayed to further stabilise the slopes.

While the department is making good progress, it is not yet safe to reopen Gold Coast–Springbrook Road to the public due to the risk of further rockfalls and the safety of the workers onsite. Full access is expected to be restored by early 2024.

Traffic detours are in place so residents can access their properties – the alternate route is west of Springbrook via Pine Creek Road.

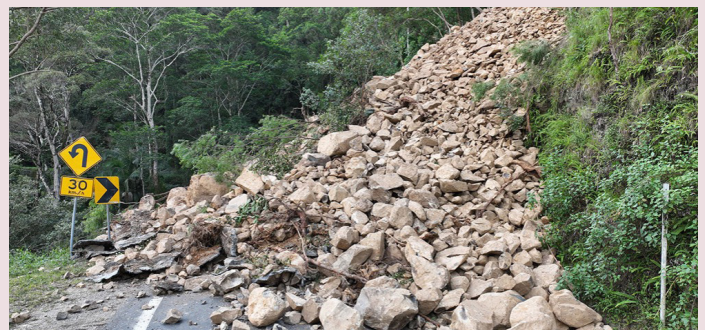
Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



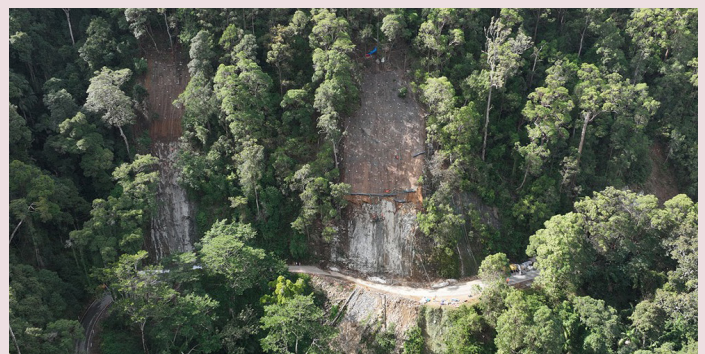
Gold Coast–Springbrook Road – Site 8 landslide following SEQ Rainfall and Flooding event (February 2022)



Gold Coast–Springbrook Road – spider rig undertaking soil nailing on Site 8 (April 2023)



Gold Coast–Springbrook Road – Site 1 landslide following heavy rainfall in late March 2022



Gold Coast–Springbrook Road – slope stabilisation works in progress at Site 1 (May 2023)