



**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 eighteen other State, Commonwealth and joint-funded grant programs with a capped value of \$170 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	4
\$3,091M Delivery Program	\$52M Program	\$1,466M Program	\$919M Program	\$654M 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	 99% complete	 95% complete	 55% complete	 13% complete	 complete

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

**In January**

In January, assistance measures were activated for 27 Local government areas arising from three disaster events that impacted the Far North, Western and South-East Queensland. Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth caused flood damage across nine LGAs in Cape York and South East Queensland in early January; Tropical Cyclone Tiffany impacted four LGAs in Far North Queensland on 10-11 January 2022; and the Western Queensland Low Pressure Trough caused flooding across 14 LGAs from 19 January 2022. During January, QRA supported these flood impacted regions as well as those already in recovery from the flooding in west/southwest Queensland in late 2021. Through careful planning and compliance with health advice, Regional Liaison Officers and Recovery Officers have maintained both in person and remote connections to councils and communities.

The focus of the disaster assistance grants program in January has been to facilitate activation of assistance measures as well as continue to monitor the ongoing progress of works in delivery and to manage the audit of the state’s annual DRFA claim which commenced during the month. The audited claim is due to be submitted to the Commonwealth by 31 March 2022.

In addition, QRA engaged with Councils to assist with identification of projects for submission for funding under the North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (NQNDMP), Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF) and National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (NFMIP) 2021–22 which are all due to close for applications in February 2022.

## 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.**

### Disaster Season Recovery Activities

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

- Activation of a range of measures under the joint Commonwealth-State DRFA for three new disaster events:
  - Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth 29 December - 10 January 2022
  - Tropical Cyclone Tiffany 10-11 January 2022
  - Western Queensland Low Pressure Trough, 19 January - 4 February 2022
- Support for impacted councils following Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth, including:
  - Engagement and support to the Gympie Local Recovery Group and associated Sub-Group meetings associated with Ex-TC Seth
  - Engagement and support to the Fraser Coast Local Recovery Group meetings and associated Sub-Group meetings associated with Ex TC Seth
  - Engagement and support to District Human and Social Recovery meetings for Fraser Coast, Gympie and North Burnett regional councils
- Support for State Recovery Coordinator Paul de Jersey, appointed to assist recovery efforts of impacted communities in the Wide Bay-Burnett following Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth.
- Participation in local, district and state recovery planning meetings associated with the Central, Southern and Western Queensland rainfall and flooding event
- Participation in local and district disaster meetings

Engagement with Mount Isa District Disaster Management Group to discuss newly endorsed District Recovery Sub-Group.

### Current Activations – Ex Tropical Cyclone Seth

On 11 January 2022, the Queensland Premier appointed Mr Paul de Jersey, AC, CVO, QC State Recovery Coordinator for this event. Mr de Jersey will coordinate locally-led recovery planning and recovery operations, in consultation with local governments, state agencies and the Commonwealth.

In recent visits to the impacted regions, Mr de Jersey, along with QRA Senior Director, Recovery, have discussed recovery issues with impacted councils, primary producers, as well as small business owners. Impacts to some areas are still being assessed, however, the SRC will work with QRA to support impacted communities and work with local councils to develop and priorities recovery activities. Some of the themes that have arisen during discussions include: overlapping events having impact on recovery for councils, challenges with gathering and understanding intel and the extensive damage to local road network.



Image: Lamington Bridge, Maryborough.



**Event Specific Recovery plans**

State event-specific recovery plans underpin the Government’s commitment to supporting the locally led rebuild, recovery and reconnection of disaster affected communities. State event-specific recovery plans contain Local event-specific recovery plans, highlighting initiatives that support recovery and reconstruction activities and provide opportunities for communities to reconnect.

QRA Recovery Officers are supporting councils impacted by the Central, Southern and Western Rainfall and Flooding and Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth disaster events with the development of event-specific local recovery plans.

**Recovery Officers Network**

A Recovery Officers Network is being developed to foster and support a trusted network of recovery practitioners working at a local level across regions throughout the state. The working group continues to further develop the concept and implementation plan for this network.

**National Recovery Agenda**

***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) as part of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) framework.

The priority focus areas for CORS over the past month has been the review of the National Recovery Framework, preparations of the Catastrophic Crisis Model Recovery Arrangements exercise and the development of the National Recovery Capability Strategy.

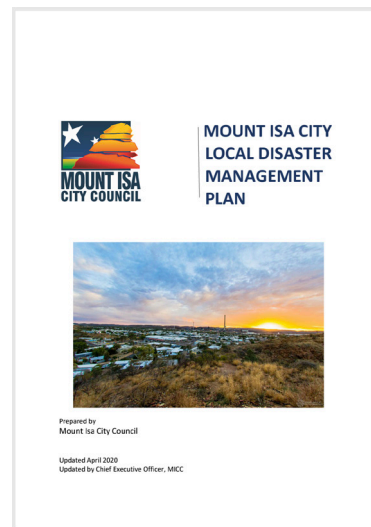
**Recovery Planning and Governance**

QRA works closely with 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 is continuing 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. Mount Isa District has endorsed its District Recovery Sub-plan. QRA continues to liaise with the Queensland Police Service to roll out additional workshops associated with the project.



## RESILIENCE

**QRA is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for managing flood risks and improving the resilience of communities, and facilitating mitigation against potential disasters.**

### Resilience grant programs - closing soon

#### State funded program

#### *North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (NQNDMP)*

The \$10 million NQNDMP opened on 11 November 2021 to 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 is 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.

Expression of interest (EOI) from eligible councils close on 18 February 2022.

#### State and Commonwealth funded programs

#### *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 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. EOIs for the 2021-22 round of QRRRF close on 18 February 2022.

### Commonwealth funded programs – Recently closed

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

The PACP local program was launched by the National Resilience and Recovery Agency (NRRRA) 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.

NRRRA 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, businesses and other businesses throughout Queensland.

#### *National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (NFMIP) 2021-22*

The NFMIP 2021–22 was released by the NRRRA 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. State applications are due by 4 February 2022.

### Resilience grant programs in delivery

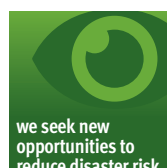
#### *Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund (QDRF) and Prepared Communities Fund (PCF)*

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 December 2021, 3 projects remain in progress.

#### *Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund*

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 December 2021, 5 projects were complete, 24 projects were in progress and 53 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](#).



**Resilience projects and activities**

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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:

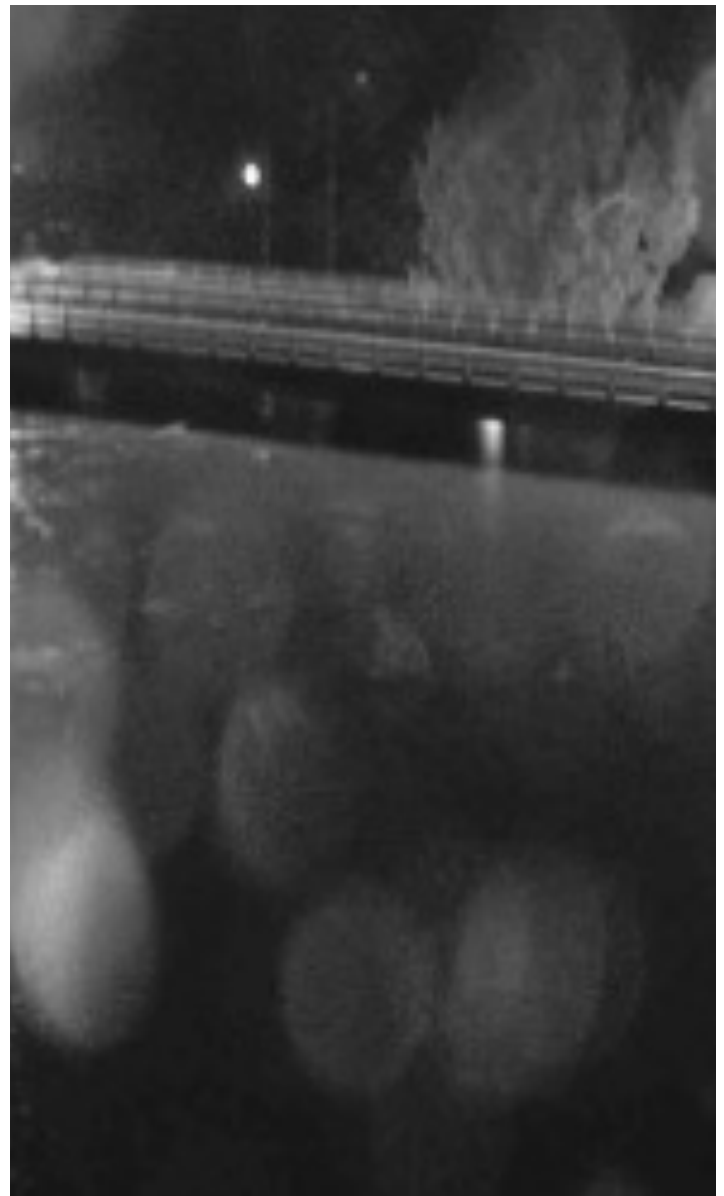
- Phase 2 of the statewide rollout of regional resilience strategies as part of *Resilient Queensland 2018-2021: Delivering the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience*
- oversight of 52 actions including 12 actions that QRA is responsible for under the Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan (SFMP)
- scoping the implementation of the Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework
- 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

**Resilience spotlight - North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough Cat D - Flood Mapping and Flood Warning Programs**

As part of the \$8 million Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Project, a group procurement arrangement has been established, with QRA supporting work across three areas of operation; Far North Queensland; North West Queensland; and Townsville and Surrounds. One contractor has been appointed for all three areas of operations and works are due to be delivered by June 2022.



*Image: Installation of a flood warning camera asset in Airlie Beach.*



*Image: A night-time snapshot of a flood warning camera vantage point of Mt Low, in Townsville.*



## 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.**

### Virtual reality natural disasters may help Queenslanders prepare for the real thing.

Research shows that Queenslanders are more likely prepare for a disaster if they have experienced severe weather in the past but results from Get Ready Queensland’s most recent community education campaign shows virtual reality may have a similar effect.

In October 2021, QRA released three animations placing viewers at the centre of Queensland’s most frequent natural disasters – severe storms, cyclones and flooding – highlighting the importance of being prepared for extreme weather.

The animations were promoted across Get Ready Queensland’s Facebook and Instagram pages and the Bureau of Meteorology Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts between October 2021 and January 2022. At 31 January 2022, the animations had reached more than 365,000 Queenslanders.

Of this, Get Ready Queensland’s promotion reached 146,538 people and the Bureau of Meteorology accounts reached 218,462 people.

Between October 2021 and January 2022, the Get Ready team not only saw people were watching the videos, but also a significant increase in people accessing resources on the Get Ready Queensland website.

While the videos were being promoted on social media, the Get Ready Queensland website had 174,902 unique page views – an increase of nearly 25 per cent compared to the same period in the previous year.

There were also increases in page views on webpages that shared themes with the animations including:

- 3 Steps to Get Ready – 33.8% (6,439 page views between October 2021 and January 2022).
- Cyclone and storm surge – 64% (4,428 page views between October 2021 and January 2022)
- Flood – 29.7% (2,383 page views between October 2021 and January 2022)
- Alerts and warnings – 56.8% (4,730 page views between October 2021 and January 2022)

While QRA has run preparedness campaigns during the same period in previous years, the unique aim of the animation campaign was to be highly targeted and immersive. The results suggest the videos may have prompted people to better prepare for disasters, including educating themselves about disaster risks, how to be ready and how to stay informed.

Using virtual reality means Queenslanders don’t have to wait for disaster to strike before being prompted to learn how to be prepared.



*Image: Cyclones are one of the hazards shown in the Get Ready Queensland immersive videos presented by experts from the Bureau of Meteorology.*

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**2021-2022 DISASTER SEASON – QRA RESPONSE**



**The summer disaster season is well and truly upon us, with four natural disaster events, as well as wild storms already impacting much of the State.**

Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth and Tropical Cyclone Tiffany, both from early January, along with floods in Western Queensland in late January and a mini tornado in the South East in early February have compounded the widespread floods of November and December 2021 that has once again seen Queensland earn our unenviable reputation as the most disaster-affected state in the nation.

Intense rainfall and flooding has resulted in the loss of life, inundation of commercial and residential properties, isolated communities and damaged highways and regional roads.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) has moved swiftly to activate the joint State and Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) funding assistance for each of these events to ensure all disaster-affected communities receive the recovery support they need.

To date, 33 of Queensland’s 77 local governments have been activated for DRFA assistance in response to these four events, including Personal Hardship Assistance, Counter Disaster Operations, Restoration of Essential Public Assets, low interest loans for primary producers, not-for-profit organisations and small businesses, freight subsidies and extraordinary disaster assistance grants for the hardest hit primary producers and small businesses.\*

With many regions affected by flooding, special mention goes to the communities of Goondiwindi and the Fraser Coast, including Maryborough, which have borne the brunt of the 2021–2022 disaster season to date.

The Premier has appointed the Honourable Paul de Jersey as the State’s Recovery Coordinator to guide recovery efforts in response to Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth, while QRA’s own General Manager of Recovery Jo Killick has been deployed as the Recovery Coordinator for South West Queensland, based in Goondiwindi, following the 2021 floods.

As SRC, Mr de Jersey as well as QRA officers has been in constant contact with the Wide Bay-Burnett region to see first-hand the damage and talk to community members and the local governments on their priorities for recovery, including how they can access DRFA assistance to help them with the financial costs of clean up and restoration.

In the immediate aftermath of both the late-2021 floods and ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth, approximately \$475,000 in Personal Hardship grants were distributed to more than 2000 residents in Fraser Coast, Gympie, North Burnett, and Goondiwindi who were affected by the floods.

Extraordinary Assistance Grants of up to \$50,000 and low interest loans of up to \$250,000 are available for eligible primary producers, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations to help them through the tough times.

To date, more than 40 grants totalling \$380,000 have been approved assisting primary producers and small businesses.

And of course DRFA assistance is there to cover the costs of clean-up and restoration of damaged roads, bridges and other essential public infrastructure for the local governments and state agencies who once again find themselves with a massive recovery job ahead of them.

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 a swift recovery from this latest round of natural disaster events to strike Queensland.

*\*Not all DRFA assistance measures activated for each event. Please refer to [www.qld.gov.au/activations](http://www.qld.gov.au/activations) for more detailed information.*

*Image: Lamington Bridge, Maryborough flooded by the Mary River 10 January 2022.*