

RESPONSE

RESILIENT AND READY FOR THE PEOPLE OF QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND'S OFFICIAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MAGAZINE EDITION 20



STRATEGY 2030

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE - PAGE 4

CELEBRATE
PARTNERSHIPS
TECHNOLOGY

NAIDOC WEEK: BECAUSE OF HER, WE CAN
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ON THE COVER

Sarina Fire Fighter Richard Tapim poses for a photo after receiving the Sarina Community NAIDOC Award for his outstanding contribution to the Sarina Indigenous community.

Photo: Senior Fire Fighter Peter Carroll

RESPONSE is a bi-monthly magazine produced by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' Media, Communication and Engagement Unit. Contributions and feedback are welcome. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions for brevity and clarity.

Let the editor know what you think about this edition of Response by providing your feedback to QFESMagazine. Editor@qfes.qld.gov.au

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FOREWORDS



KATARINA CARROLL
Commissioner
QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Recently, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel joined 188 firefighters from across Australia and New Zealand to help the United States battle ravaging wildfires in 14 different states. Two QFES fire behaviour analysts were also deployed to Canada. Being able to deliver international assistance is a huge credit to QFES and I am confident that our highly trained and skilled team are providing much-needed relief. My thoughts and prayers are with all those affected.

Last week the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) came together for a three-day workshop where we discussed key issues and topics facing our department. On day one the ELT looked forward to the year 2030 to envision what external influences may shape the way we go about our day-to-day operations within QFES. As a department, it is extremely important we consider what our communities might look like in the future when we make decisions around our operating model - more on page 4. Day two saw an update on the Digital Transformation work being carried out across our department. The final day focused around engagement and looking at how as a department we can embed engagement into our daily activities. There has been a lot of work done in the engagement space with all our regions now having their own Stakeholder Engagement Plans.

QFES' Regional Challenge has now launched to raise funds to purchase life-saving equipment for critically ill children – as part of our partnership with the Children's Hospital Foundation (CHF). We are excited to be supporting this important cause for the second year and I have no doubt our people will help make a real difference - more on page 10.

As predicted, we've already seen a demanding start to the fire season with high levels of bushfire activity across the state. Please make sure you take care of yourselves by taking regular breaks, staying well hydrated and supporting your colleagues. As always, I thank you for your continuous efforts in keeping Queenslanders safe.

Katarina Carroll
Commissioner
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services



STEPHEN SMITH AFSM
Acting Deputy Commissioner
READINESS AND RESPONSE SERVICES

Our 2018 bushfire season preparation is continuing with Operation Cool Burn now in full swing and planned to continue through to the end of August. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is proactively working with landowners and other stakeholders to reduce the risk of bushfires. Internally, fortnightly video conferences are occurring that will continue until the end of the season, with regional updates offered through your regional leadership teams providing the state with a common operating picture of activities and outcomes.

The Community Infrastructure Branch held the Manager Community Safety Operations and Building Approvals Officer State Conference in Brisbane in June. This annual conference provided regional personnel and state units the opportunity to openly discuss contemporary issues in the building assessment field to ensure state-wide consistency in QFES service delivery.

I was fortunate enough to attend the Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Cadet Games both in Brisbane on 30 June and Townsville on 14 July where cadets from the Australian Air Force, Navy and Military competed with those from Surf Lifesaving Queensland (SLSQ), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and emergency services. It was great to see these young participants not only showcasing their skills across all cadet disciplines but also displaying team work skills and having fun. Well done to all those involved.

Operation Knock Knock will commence on 15 September 2018. This state-wide multi-agency community engagement exercise will involve staff and volunteers from QFES, SLSQ, Volunteer Marine Rescue, Queensland Police Service and the Red Cross. Together they will mobilise for a mass door knock and undertake community engagement activities in their local area to raise awareness of building resilience, preparing for emergency events and encouraging community connection.

Lastly, I'd like to give a special thank you to all those involved in the QFES Estimates process, your hard work is greatly appreciated and never goes unnoticed.

Stephen Smith AFSM
Acting Deputy Commissioner
Readiness and Response Services



HON CRAIG CRAWFORD
Minister
MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

It's always great to catch up with our hardworking Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff and volunteers, and better now that there are going to be even more of you to potentially meet with – especially in the regions.

That's because this government is delivering on its promise to employ 100 new firefighters across the state.

Under the initial round of this \$29 million four-year commitment, I recently announced where the first 62 of these new firefighters will be placed.

Twenty-one new recruits will be heading to Bundaberg, Sunshine Coast and Fraser Coast.

Another 20 will be based in communities stretching from Townsville to Cairns and west to Mount Isa.

Central Queensland will welcome 16 additional firefighters, and five new positions will be funded in the South West Region.

These deployments - determined by QFES, based on operational priorities – have been well-received.

We will continue working with Commissioner Carroll and stakeholders in relation to the placement of the remaining 38 new recruits.

We're also funding 12 new fire communications officers and again Commissioner Carroll will determine where these officers will be best placed to serve Queensland communities.

Additionally, there will be 180 new urban and rural fire appliances (119 for the Rural Fire Service, and 61 for Fire and Rescue Service) rolled-out across the state this financial year.

This will mean more than 280 new appliances have been delivered over the past two financial years.

Our staff and volunteers do a fantastic job, and it's terrific to see additional resources being allocated to protecting the community.

I'm looking forward to keeping you all updated on what areas will benefit under our second round of firefighter deployments.

Hon Craig Crawford
Minister for Fire and Emergency Services

Planning for our future

The signals of change are already here. What decisions do we need to make today to prepare for our future?

In today's uncertain world, where governments and organisations are facing dynamic and rapidly changing environments, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) has taken a considered and progressive approach to shape our preferred future. Together with our staff, volunteers, partner organisations and the community, we have explored the drivers of change that might shape the path to 2030.

Through workshops, focus groups and other conversations, we have considered the opportunities and challenges the next 12 years might bring. It has not been an exercise in predicting the future; rather it has been using well-constructed, real-world reasoning and objective investigation.

The processes have been strengthened by the involvement and knowledge of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC) and associated academic institutions to help make communities more resilient.

Community focus groups were facilitated by the BNHCRC across seven locations: Longreach, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Cairns, Goondiwindi, Logan and Newmarket. The BNHCRC also delivered a research project on community expectations.

The QFES Futures team undertook an analysis of the factors that may impact the department over the next decade. These drivers of change informed a Horizon Scanning Workshop in March this year where more than 60 people from across QFES and the BNHCRC participated.

A major scenario development workshop was also held in May, which included more than 80 people from QFES and partner organisations. Ideas and analysis drawn from the workshops helped to inform the development of four possible futures for us to consider.

Our preferred future starts with the decisions we make today. Whether we are thinking about what we would like to achieve this year, or by 2030, our everyday choices make a difference.

– Commissioner Katarina Carroll

What if one of these scenarios became our reality?



Helpful Strangers

In this 2030 world, public education is still a valued cornerstone of an egalitarian world view.

Communities place more faith in companies with active Corporate Social Responsibility programs than in governments.

There is heightened community and private sector altruism.

Strategy 2030



Virtually Stranded

In this 2030 world, people are older, self-obsessed, technology dependent and living in 'filter bubbles'.

Many prefer the more reliable companionship of their robotic flatmates.

We are unconcerned about greenspace and prefer to exercise and travel - if at all - using virtual reality in the comfort of our own rooms.

Strategy 2030



Waste Not, Want Not

In this 2030 world, Australia has made a green switch with a healthy cyber economy funding ecological advancement.

Farming is widespread on reclaimed arid land, in city microherb cooperatives and out to ocean algae plots.

Subterranean living preserves land for farming and offers respite from increasingly hotter summers.

Strategy 2030



Wasted Opportunity

In this 2030 world, Australia missed the move from West to East. Our cyber economy is as weak as our global power.

Government has consolidated to two levels: federal and regional. Efficiencies have improved our lot, but we still had to accept significant overseas investment in hazardous waste recycling and storage.

Thinking machines mean life isn't so bad...unless there's an outage.

Strategy 2030



QFES personnel recognised and celebrated in Queen's Birthday Honours



Six Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel were recently recognised for their dedication to community safety as part of the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

QFES personnel demonstrate dedication and commitment to community safety as part of their daily lives. At times, this can result in putting their own lives at risk for the safety of others. Their outstanding service to the Queensland community deserves to be formally recognised.

Congratulations to Kay Healing, David Woods, Alan Richards, Les Green and Donald Baldwin who received the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM), alongside Terrence Chapman who received an Emergency Services Medal (ESM).

Queen's Birthday Honours List 2018 – medals

Kaye Healing

Rural Fire Service (RFS) South Eastern Region Inspector Kaye Healing received the AFSM for more than 20 years of outstanding leadership, care and devotion to volunteers. During her career, Ms Healing continually supported brigades, helped to build resilience in local communities and has helped broaden the Fire Warden network throughout south-east Queensland.

David Woods

North Coast Region Duty Manager Operations Inspector David Woods was awarded the AFSM for his expertise and leadership in enhancing technical rescue capabilities, as well as his contributions to the Australasian Road Crash Rescue Challenge. Known for his advocacy for continual improvement and passion for supporting fellow technical rescue operations, Mr Woods is commonly described as highly skilled, dedicated and selfless.

Alan Richards

South Eastern Region volunteer firefighter Alan Richards received the AFSM for his outstanding commitment to the development of training and operational capabilities within the RFS. His innovative approach has increased the capability of brigades to manage large scale fires in the Gold Coast Region and has earned him a well-deserved reputation as a highly respected trainer.

Les Green

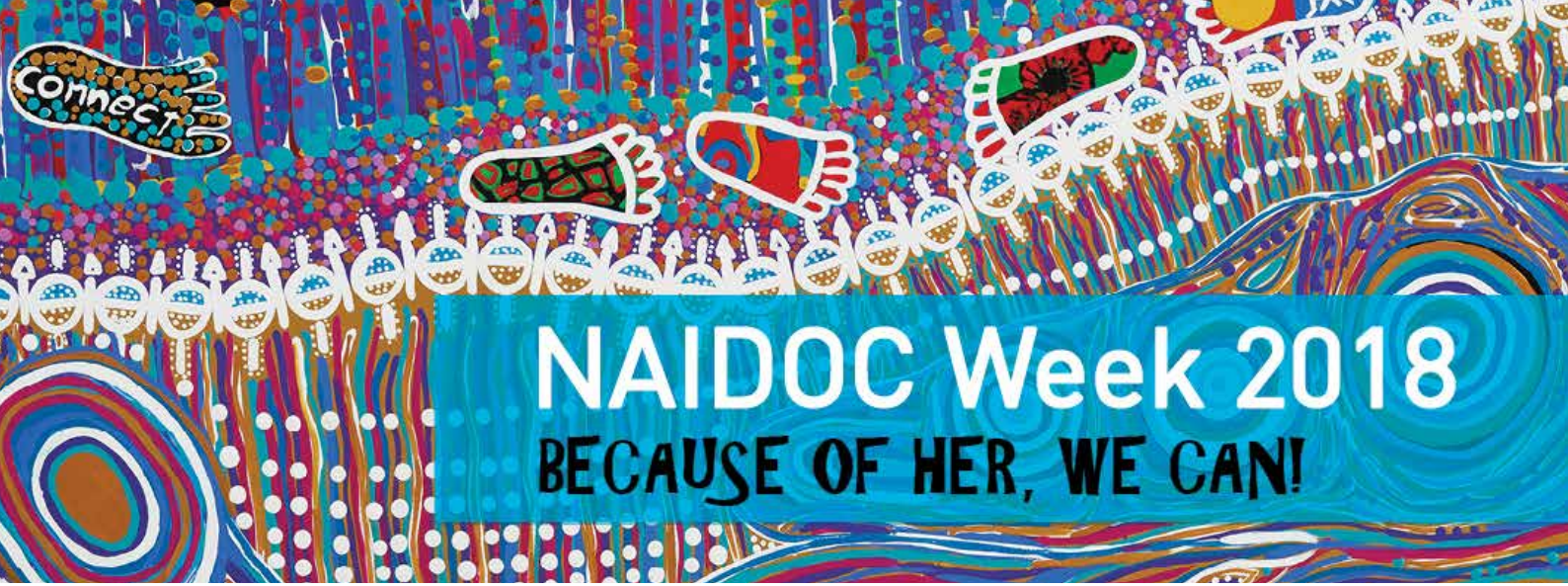
Les Green, founding member and First Officer for the Tinaroo Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) was awarded for his commitment to the safety and resilience of the Tinaroo and Kairi communities in far north Queensland through exercises and initiatives to bolster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Donald Baldwin

Thangool Auxiliary Fire Station Captain and Thangool RFB First Officer Donald Baldwin received an AFSM for more than 50 years of outstanding service and dedication to the Thangool and greater Callide Valley communities. Mr Baldwin is known for his passion and contribution to QFES, particularly through the delivery of fire education to youth and senior members of his community and the implementation of a local Emergency Services Cadet program.

Terrence Chapman

Logan State Emergency Services (SES) Unit Deputy Local Controller Terrence Chapman was awarded an ESM for distinguished leadership and prolonged service to the SES. Mr Chapman has focussed on training delivery and leading the establishment of the Logan Emergency Services Cadet program.



Because of her, we can!

Australia has a rich history where for at least 65,000 years Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have enriched our country through dreaming stories, songlines, languages, dance and more.

This year's NAIDOC theme, *Because of her, we can*, celebrates the essential role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have played – and continue to play – as influential leaders in our communities.

Here at Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women help with emergency preparation, mitigation, response and recovery right across Queensland.

Through their work, they are continuing the legacy of past generations and are paving the way for the future of emergency response.

As part of NAIDOC Week celebrations, Response caught up with QFES members Kia Thomas and Selina Ansey to learn about their journey as influential women.

KIA THOMAS

Deputy Group Leader for State Emergency Service (SES) Brisbane Unit, Southern Group

Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I am a Kamilaroi woman and my family is from Dirranbandi in South West Queensland.

My favourite part of being in the SES would be the friends you make and the skills you learn; and being deployed to Bowen at the start of 2017.

What is your proudest moment?

My proudest moment was achieving Group Member of the Year Award for 2017.



Kia Thomas.



Who is your biggest inspiration?

The women in my life who have had a significant influence on me are my sister and my mother.

My sister is a very calm person who always manages to rationalise things for me and I admire her for being in the army.

My mum proved to me that anything is possible when she completed her degree in education at 40 years old while being a single mum of four.

SELINA ANSEY

Secretary for the Yarrabah Rural Fire Service

Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I am a Secretary for the Yarrabah Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Work Health and Safety Officer for the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council (YASC).

I was born and raised on Thursday Island. I come from the Peibre tribe (Meriam) and the Baniol Bard tribe east of Djardijin, Western Australia.

I have a passion for working in the Yarrabah community for RFS and the YASC as it gives me the opportunity to meet and greet new people, achieve good things for my community and most of all I love the positive energy.

Who is your biggest inspiration?

My grandmother is my biggest inspiration. She was my mentor and the best one too. Grandma was a cook at the Thursday Island Hospital, serving meals for many years, ensuring that everyone from patients to staff and visitors would have a good meal.

She would often say to me, "work hard, pay your bills, cook for everyone, always share and finally, love and care for others as one day you may need their help."

Through my journey I've learned that life is like a circle of people that sit around a fire place. When one person leaves the circle everyone gets cold, so therefore to keep everyone warm, we must stick to the circle.



Pictured left Selina Ansey.





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Creating safer workplaces

As part of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) commitment to creating safer workplaces, domestic and family violence workplace education is now available to all members of QFES.

Recognise, Respond and Refer (RRR) online training is available for all staff and volunteers, and only takes 30 to 40 minutes to complete. It will help you recognise signs that a colleague, family member or friend may be experiencing violence, show you how to respond and give you access to resources and services so you can refer people appropriately.

Face-to-face training will soon be rolled out across the state to staff who hold supervisory responsibilities. These three-hour sessions are a valuable opportunity to develop more in-depth awareness around the dynamics of domestic and family violence, the warning signs and managing safety, privacy and confidentiality.

QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll said the statistics show domestic and family violence is a widespread problem and there is a high likelihood you will need to assist someone experiencing violence at some point in time.

"It is important to upskill our workforce in recognising, responding and referring staff, volunteers and colleagues who are affected by domestic and family violence," Ms Carroll said.

"The training packages form part of QFES' work to become a White Ribbon accredited workplace. White Ribbon encourages us to stand up and speak out to prevent violence against women and this includes domestic and family violence.

"Members of QFES are well respected across Queensland communities. We must model ethical behaviour and a commitment to creating safer communities as people look up to us and respect the work that we do.

"It is our role to stand up and speak out about domestic and family violence as community leaders and representatives of the Queensland Government."

Family, domestic and sexual violence is a major health and welfare issue for all Queenslanders. It occurs across all ages, and all socioeconomic and demographic groups, but predominantly affects women and children.

Workplace education can make a difference. One in six women and one in 16 men have experienced violence by a current or former partner since age 15. Two-thirds of women experiencing violence are employed. One in five women who are affected say the violence continues at work through abusive emails, phone calls, messages and visits in the workplace from the person using violence. Men experiencing domestic and family violence face the same issues.

"Domestic and family violence is a workplace issue because it can affect the attendance, performance, productivity, wellbeing and safety of the person experiencing violence, as well as their work colleagues.

"We have strong policies and support services in place to help our staff and volunteers affected by violence and I won't rest easy until every single member of QFES is trained and ready to support and refer a colleague experiencing violence or abuse," Ms Carroll said.



Listing possible warning signs.



Commissioner Carroll brainstorming with other members of the ELT.

Domestic and family violence can affect people of all cultures, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, education backgrounds and income levels.

Violence and abuse can take many forms ranging from physical, emotional and sexual assault, through to financial control, isolation from family and friends, threats of self-harm or harm to pets or loved ones, checking on whereabouts or stalking.

If you are experiencing domestic and family violence and are in immediate danger and need emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000).

All QFES staff and volunteers can access support by calling Fire and Emergency Services Support Network on 1300 309 508. Alternatively, DVConnect provides 24-hour state-wide domestic violence support to women and men experiencing domestic and family violence.

Womensline - 1800 811 811 | Mensline - 1800 600 636





QFES Regional Challenge

For the next three months Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) regions will battle it out against each other to see who can raise the most funds for life saving equipment.

QFES is in the second year of a three-year partnership with the Children's Hospital Foundation (CHF) encouraging QFES staff and volunteers to fundraise.

The CHF has emphasised the need for Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) pumps, which are light-weight life support machines. The ECMO pumps assist with transporting critically ill children by ambulance and air from regional areas to Lady Cilento Hospital, and are also used within the hospital itself. Four of these pumps are needed at a cost of \$132,000 per pump.

In 2017 QFES raised \$30,000 and this year we want to do better by fundraising the full amount of the ECMO pump through the regional challenge. Fundraising efforts will be cheered on by the 2018 ambassadors Jaymon (Chinchilla), Indiana (Murrumba Downs) and William (Toowoomba). William, or Billy, who is the littlest of our ambassadors met the Commissioner at the opening of our 2018 Challenge in July, where his parents shared his touching story.

As soon as William was born in Toowoomba, doctors had serious concerns

for his health. A prompt decision was made to transport William via helicopter from Toowoomba to Brisbane, as this was his only hope for surviving the night. William's parents, Brianna and Shayne, had a few precious minutes to hold their newborn baby boy before he was airlifted away. A few hours later, Brianna was discharged from hospital where she and Shayne made the heart-wrenching trip to Brisbane to be by William's side. Luckily for William, there was an ECMO pump available and thanks to the machine Brianna and Shayne are enjoying life with their active and healthy one-year-old.

Together, we have the chance to create more positive outcomes like William's by supporting the QFES Regional Challenge 2018.

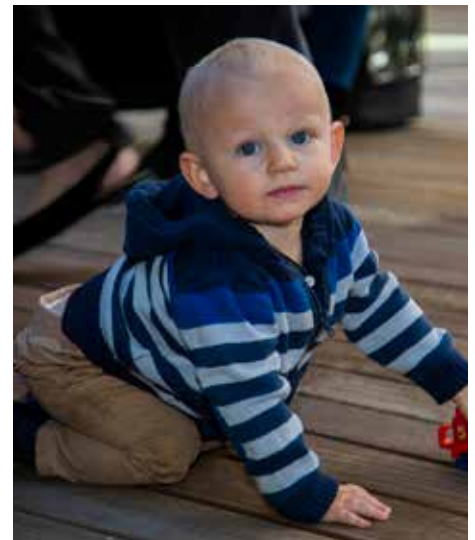
We've pitched region against region, with State Office being included as a 'region', to see which region can dig the deepest and be named top fundraiser in our QFES Regional Challenge.

Everyday Hero has come on board and created a website to track the regional fundraising. You can visit <http://qfes-challenge.everydayhero.do/> for

fundraising ideas, to keep track of your region's tally and to read about the stories of the amazing child ambassadors who have used these valuable machines.

Fundraising is open now and continues until the end of October 2018, so get those fundraising ideas flowing. Regional pride is on the line!

Good luck and let the challenge begin.



Healthy, happy little William.



QFES reaches new heights for Climb for Cancer

Every May Brisbane's Waterfront Place transforms into a vertical battle ground as Brisbane Region firefighters take on fellow emergency services personnel in the race up 37 floors for the Mater Hospital Climb for Cancer.

This year saw a new player on the field, with Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) joining Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and Queensland Police Service (QPS) for the first time – making it a three-way battle for the trophy.

But the battleground wasn't confined to just the stairs, it also involved fundraising and with the score sitting at 4-1 to QFES, pride was on the line.

It was a year for record-making for QFES who took home the title of most team participants, most auxiliary and interstate firefighter participation, most funds raised and five consecutive wins.

The team of 42 included permanent and auxiliary firefighters, station officers and inspectors. Everyone was inspired by QFES' very own Senior Fire Fighter Brad Mitchell. For Brad the climb was especially significant as he is currently fighting cancer.

Not focusing on the clock, Brad made a determined effort to complete the 37 floors. This was undoubtedly the rallying point for the QFES team and rally they did.

Not only did the QFES team take out the emergency services challenge, they were the fastest team overall coming in at 24:08 mins. In addition, everyone who started the event, completed the event. They raised more than \$14,000 for the Mater Hospital, which proudly gave the QFES team the highest fundraiser's title.

"It was a year for record-making for QFES"

Keeping the team pulling in the right direction took coordination and motivation. A huge part of the team's success was

thanks to team coordinators Senior Fire Fighter Catherine Duchock and Station Officer Marc O'Brien. Great help was rendered by Breathing Apparatus Hazmat in supporting the event and Michelle Sheedy and Station Officer Cam Corneal for the loan of their stair climber – which was used for training purposes in the lead up to the event.

With another successful fundraiser behind QFES, the team at Roma Street are now busy preparing themselves for the Bridge to Brisbane on Sunday 26 August. All QFES staff and volunteers are invited to participate in the five-kilometre run and in next year's Mater Hospital Climb for Cancer challenge.

Fraud alert, be alert

Recent fraud attempts in the Queensland public sector highlight the need for departments to implement effective fraud control measures.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) has zero tolerance towards corrupt conduct and fraudulent behaviour. The department is committed to preventing and controlling any fraud and corruption initiated internally.

Recently, the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) was advised of a fraud attempt involving Queensland public sector agencies that could occur in our department.

What happened?

In this fraud attempt, a fraudster compromised an email account at one agency through a phishing attempt. This account was then accessed from overseas, and an email was sent to a different agency requesting a vendor bank account change. The agency that received the request to change their vendor bank account details contacted the vendor using an independent source. This confirmed the fraudulent nature of the request, and as a result, the agency did not incur a loss.

This attempt showed similarities to fraud perpetrated against another Queensland public sector agency earlier this year. Both fraud attempts highlight the need for strong internal controls.

What can I do?

Management is responsible for internal control systems, which are designed to prevent and detect fraud within agencies. QAO recommends that agencies exercise increased vigilance over new requests to change supplier bank account details.

Cyber security

In both cases, the fraudster had access to a valid email account and customer information due to a cyber security breach. This meant they could avert suspicion when requesting changes to bank details, for example invoice details including due dates.

- It is important not to click on links in emails from unknown sources, and to treat requests for bank account changes with caution. Best practice includes asking vendors to confirm the last three digits of the previous bank account, or for a justice of the peace to verify the change request.

Treat all changes with suspicion until proven legitimate

The fraudsters sent follow-up requests for payment to the new bank account via email and hearing impaired interpreter service.

- Vendors should be reminded of the process for requesting bank account changes, and that no changes will be made unless they are confirmed independently with appropriate verification.

Check the location of the bank account

In one case the fraudster requesting the bank account change was in a different location to the supplier. The supplier was based in Brisbane, whereas the requesting officer was based in remote Western Australia.

- Vendors should check to see if the bank account's location is unusual and conduct further research, if the requesting officer is in a different location to the bank.

Train staff continually

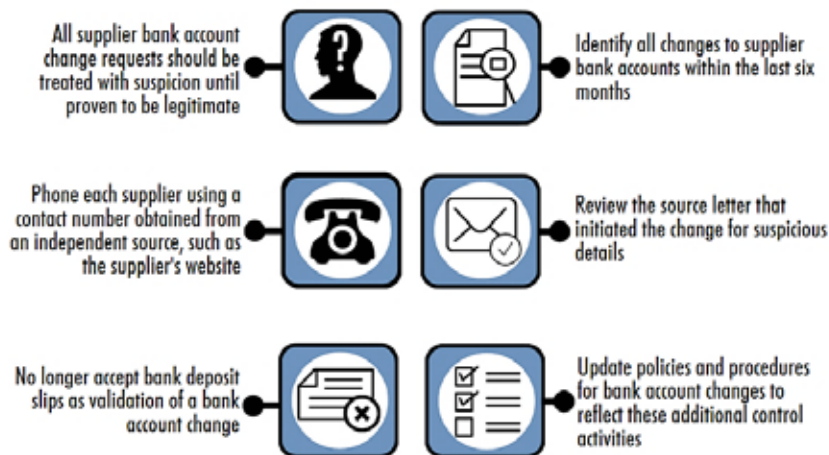
The reason the recent attempt was unsuccessful was because an established accounts payable team, who appreciated the importance of this internal control, took swift action.

- Remain alert for fraudulent schemes and ensure proper interrogation of documents requesting changes to bank account details.
- Don't click on a link you don't know.

Where can I find more information?

QFES Corporate Governance, Public Safety Business Agency Business Services Division or QAO can provide more information upon request.

With thanks to the State of Queensland (Queensland Audit Office) Insights Winter 2018, available under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 Australia.





Emergency services personnel swap fields to support young people

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and Queensland Police Service (QPS) swap the frontline field for the footy field to help strengthen relationships between emergency services and young people.

It is not often that you will see QFES and QPS sporting the same uniform.

Recently, QFES staff from Logan and Ipswich commands rallied together with QPS officers to take on students from Queensland Pathways State College (QPSC) in a game of touch football at Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane.

Emergency services personnel started off strong, but it was not long until the students warmed to the task and the competition intensified.

The game was tough, but the determination was tougher, resulting in the emergency services team taking home the win.

It is important to recognise our role as emergency services workers and the impact we can have in our communities and especially with young people.

– Robert Bloss

Logan Area Commander Inspector Robert Bloss said it was a great opportunity to break down some of the cultural and educational barriers between emergency services and young people in the community.

“QPSC offers a senior transitions program for disengaged young people in Grades 10 to 12 who face significant barriers accessing mainstream education,” Mr Bloss said.

“As members of QFES and QPS we have a lot to offer them. It is important to recognise our role as emergency services workers and the impact we can have in

our communities and especially with young people.

“It was great to join forces with QPS who also assisted greatly in breaking down those perceived barriers.

“I would like to extend a special thanks to our Senior Fire Fighter Kristian Leach for being the driver behind such a fantastic event.

“I think from all reports, the Logan command look forward to taking on round two in the future,” Mr Bloss said.



Battling it out on the field.



It has evolved into the foundation of operational readiness and response for the QFES SDCC.

– Pauline Evans

The Watch Desk turns 10

Ten years ago, a group of dedicated individuals formed the Watch Desk. Since then the unit has been responsible for monitoring, coordinating and distributing a wide range of emergency management information.

At 6.30am on 7 July 2018 the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) Watch Desk officially celebrated ten years of operation.

Originally established by Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ), the Watch Desk provided the Queensland Government with a dedicated 24/7 capability focused on emerging emergency management issues across Queensland. The capability was then staffed by six people who provided an adapt and overcome ethos to successfully resolve emerging issues.

Over the next three years the Watch Desk coordinated responses and provided alerts to Queensland government executives for a wide range of disaster events including tsunami warnings, space debris re-entry,

resupply operations, floods, severe thunderstorms and severe tropical cyclones.

In late 2010, the Watch Desk played a significant role in the response to major flooding caused by rainfall following Tropical Cyclone (TC) Tasha on Christmas Day. This ended in catastrophic flooding across much of Queensland including, Brisbane and the Lockyer Valley, in early 2011. Not long after this TC Yasi caused devastation in the far north, testing the Watch Desk's ability to manage major events in several locations simultaneously.

State Duty Officer Pauline Evans said over the years the Watch Desk has become more than just a function for situational awareness.

“Since its humble beginnings in 2008, the Watch Desk has become responsible

for ensuring all State Emergency Service (SES) requests are coordinated and actioned, assisting with SDCC staff training and exercises, and contributing to policy and planning, as well as forming a core part of the Operations Cell during SDCC activations,” Ms Evans said.

“It informs, supports and liaises with many emergency management stakeholders such as local governments, state agencies and disaster management groups to provide alerts and assists with prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

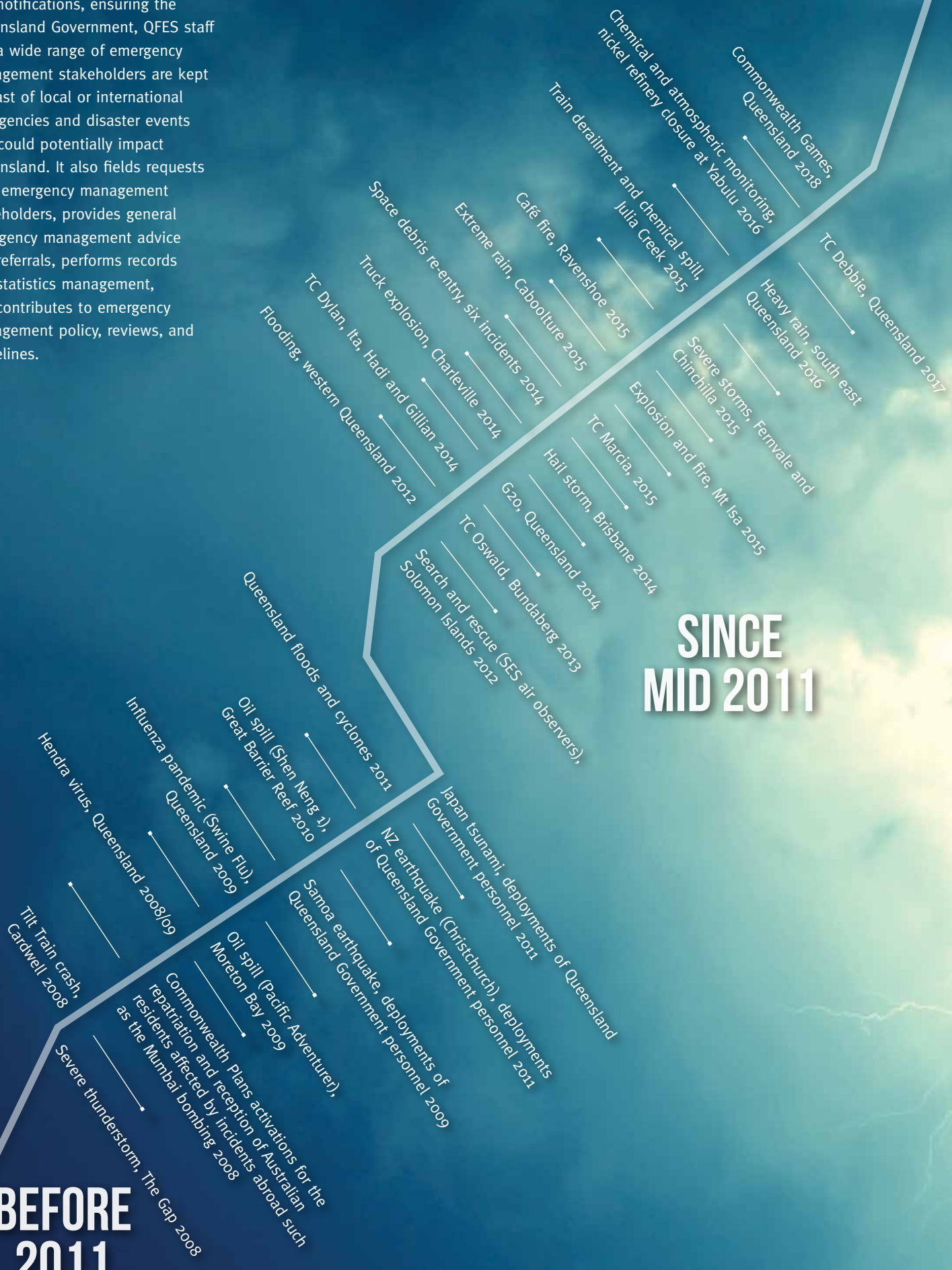
“The operation of the Emergency Alert system in Queensland, a community messaging tool used during times of imminent threat from disasters and emergencies, has been a significant

function of the SDCC Watch Desk since 2009,” Ms Evans said.

Day-to-day, the SDCC Watch Desk issues a series of reports and notifications, ensuring the Queensland Government, QFES staff and a wide range of emergency management stakeholders are kept abreast of local or international emergencies and disaster events that could potentially impact Queensland. It also fields requests from emergency management stakeholders, provides general emergency management advice and referrals, performs records and statistics management, and contributes to emergency management policy, reviews, and guidelines.

SINCE MID 2011

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The 2017 Chant West Performance Report concluded that our investment strategy gives members "strong long-term performance with more stable returns than other funds."

Welcome to the QSuper feeling

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QSuper

SES training, it's kind of a big deal

With its endless bushland, treacherous roads, ruthless rivers and gorges, it's no surprise that far north Queensland's volunteers understand the importance of training and personal development.

State Emergency Service (SES) Senior Operational Capability Officer Joanne Thomson said organising the perfect combination of real-life training scenarios for more than 1 000 volunteers across the region was crucial in teaching people how to respond to various emergency events.

"The types of incidents we attend are always evolving, so it's important we continue offering a range of training opportunities," Ms Thomson said.

"Each training session is integral for gaining practical hands-on experience, whether that means practising how to use a chainsaw safely, completing a mock road crash rescue, or executing a vertical rescue off the side of a cliff.

"We want to keep our training as interesting as possible and are regularly thinking of new and exciting ways to engage our volunteers."

Ms Thomson said it was important volunteers continued honing their skills, especially given far north Queensland continues to take the brunt of Mother Nature's full force.

"Volunteers are the most important resource that a community has and consistent engagement and empowerment helps bring in volunteers from all walks of life.

"There's a role for everybody in the SES and it's encouraging to see so many young adults show up wanting to volunteer.

"The role given will depend on what the individual wants to get out of it and how much they want to give back to the community.

"We're pretty proud of what we're achieving up here," Ms Thomson said.



Tiano (Machans Beach SES) posing during a break in vertical rescue training.



Sophie, Lucas, Neil and Luke, (with Mark as the 'patient') refine their patient handling techniques with the assistance of Grant from Queensland Ambulance Service.



SES volunteer Sophie (Edmonton SES Group) hanging out at vertical rescue training.



SES volunteers are responsible for Road Crash Rescue in remote locations across Queensland. Pez from Wujal Wujal SES and Loche from Alexandra Bay.



SES volunteer David (Herberton Group) learning the right way to chainsaw a fallen tree.



SES volunteers scaling the cliffs during vertical rescue training.



QFES working smarter with Office 365

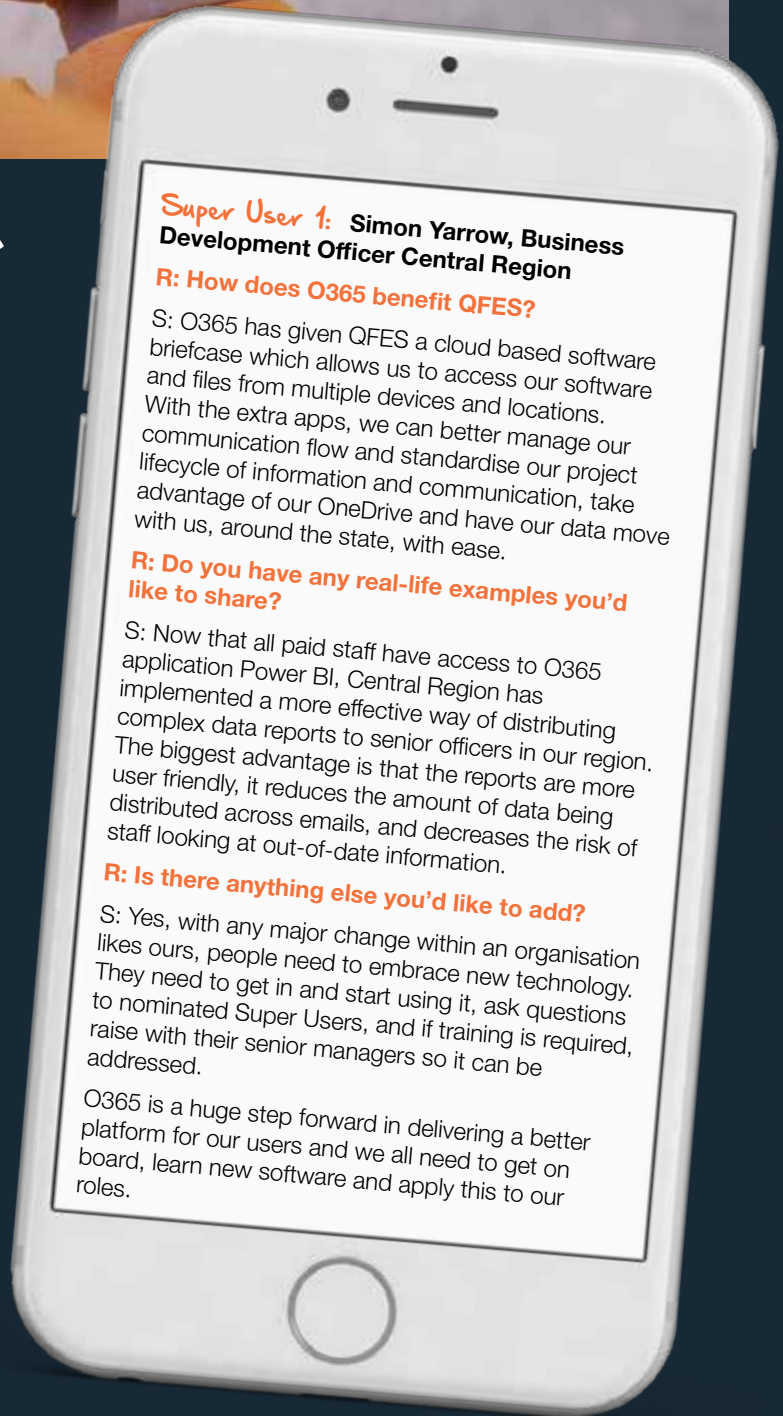
With the successful rollout of Office 365 (O365), Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) now joins more than 120 million users globally.

July saw the completion of the O365 project to migrate all QFES paid staff onto O365 in a similar manner to the volunteers' migration. Following this, QFES now has a more effective and efficient platform to collaborate within the department via the cloud based platform, which provides easy access to email, calendar and documents anytime, anywhere.

O365 enables smarter meetings, better administration and greater engagement. It does this through productivity tools (such as OneNote), enhanced storage capacity in both Outlook and OneDrive and group collaboration assets including shared calendars, notebooks, libraries and project planning tools.

Put simply, O365 will allow QFES to develop greater capability and work mobility into the future.

This is what some of QFES' super users had to say about their real-life experiences working with O365.



Super User 1: Simon Yarrow, Business Development Officer Central Region

R: How does O365 benefit QFES?

S: O365 has given QFES a cloud based software briefcase which allows us to access our software and files from multiple devices and locations. With the extra apps, we can better manage our communication flow and standardise our project lifecycle of information and communication, take advantage of our OneDrive and have our data move with us, around the state, with ease.

R: Do you have any real-life examples you'd like to share?

S: Now that all paid staff have access to O365 application Power BI, Central Region has implemented a more effective way of distributing complex data reports to senior officers in our region. The biggest advantage is that the reports are more user friendly, it reduces the amount of data being distributed across emails, and decreases the risk of staff looking at out-of-date information.

R: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

S: Yes, with any major change within an organisation like ours, people need to embrace new technology. They need to get in and start using it, ask questions to nominated Super Users, and if training is required, raise with their senior managers so it can be addressed.

O365 is a huge step forward in delivering a better platform for our users and we all need to get on board, learn new software and apply this to our roles.

Super User 2: Anneke Dorgelo, State Emergency Service (SES) volunteer and Principal Officer, Communications Capability, GWN Unit

R: What has your experience been with O365?

A: I use O365 as a SES volunteer already, and I used it at my previous job, so it's great to be finally catching up. There's been a slight learning curve to get past, but I like the functionality of the applications and the way everything seems to plug together. I can see some great opportunities to start breaking down the firewall between paid staff and QFES volunteers with the move to O365.

R: How does O365 benefit QFES?

A: The QFES workforce is dispersed all over Queensland, and most of us don't work during office hours at desk-based computers. Across the world, industry is moving to adopt more flexible modes of working and O365 supports that; if you have connectivity, you have your office with you. The nature of our work in disaster management requires us to work in partnership with many different stakeholders, external to QFES. O365 applications are designed to facilitate easy collaboration and cooperation within and between organisations, and that's the key benefit that I see O365 bringing to QFES.

R: Do you have any real-life examples you'd like to share?

A: The feature I find useful in O365 is in the mobile Outlook application, which links to the corporate address book. I can look up colleagues from QFES, Public Safety Business Agency, Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service from my phone on the fly, which is incredibly handy sometimes.

Super User 3: David Puxty, Online Channel Specialist, Media, Communications and Engagement

R: What has your experience been with O365?

D: Mostly a positive one, as our team has a generic account there were some hiccups when the changeover happened, however, the O365 Project team helped us sort these out.

R: How does O365 benefit QFES?

D: O365 enables QFES to collaborate internally as well as with volunteers and other government departments. Once we start to use the available software, we should be able to automate some of our work.

For many years we only had 215MB of data per email account (my smart phone has 4GB of ram and data storage of 64GB!). O365 has now fixed this – we have unlimited online archive storage – meaning no more personal storage files for storing emails which were continually corrupted.

R: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

D: There are so many possibilities with O365 that we haven't even begun to understand. We can now access all the QFES O365 apps from anywhere in the world with SMS authentication. O365 will open a whole new range of possibilities for collaboration and automation of everyday work.





SOUTH WESTERN REGION

New Digs for South Western Regional HQ

The biggest news in the South Western Region has been the opening of the region's Tactical Training Facility and the announcement of funding for the development of a new Regional Headquarters and a Fire Communications Centre in Charlton. This investment in our future will bring all Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel in the Toowoomba area together under one roof. The new facility will vastly improve how we can support our people and the communities in the South West by enhancing QFES' operational capability. Funding was also announced for further development towards the master plan for an additional Fire and Rescue Station for Toowoomba and a new safety equipment facility for the region. The Toowoomba area was not the only beneficiary of the budget announcements with a series of projects across the region securing funding over the coming financial years for significant renovations and replacements.



Maryvale Emergency Services engagement event

On Saturday 7 July, emergency services and Southern Downs Regional Council joined together and held an information morning in the small community of Maryvale (outside Warwick) to talk to community members about the importance of preparing for disaster and emergency events. The community enjoyed the visit from the emergency services staff and

volunteers. Everyone walked away with valuable information about their local risks and many great ideas on how to build their own emergency kits. Southern Downs Regional Council are planning to host small pop-up engagement sessions with agencies who wish to be involved. These sessions are becoming popular with the locals, who love seeing their emergency service agencies visit their towns.



Multi-agency training scenario, Goombungee

It's great to see personnel from across QFES come together to undertake training that will allow them to serve the community during natural disasters and emergencies. On Saturday 9 June, auxiliary firefighters and State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers from Goombungee joined together for a road crash rescue awareness day. The day was beneficial for all attendees, especially the volunteers who have a better understanding of how they can support Fire and Rescue Service crews in the future.



FAR NORTHERN REGION

Road Crash Rescue team crowned the best in Australia

The Far Northern Region (FNR) combo Road Crash Rescue (RCR) team were recently crowned the best rescue team in the country.

Twenty teams from all over Australia, New Zealand and Asia completed in the Australasian Rescue Challenge in Warragul on 24-29 July.

Rated against technical, medical and leadership skills and scored by judges from all over the world, the FNR RCR team proudly came fourth overall, and first in Australia.

The challenge was held over three days and included three 30-minute tests, where mock road crash scenarios were set up. The title was awarded to the team after releasing trapped occupants in the most systematic and safest ways possible.

The FNR team comprised six firefighters from across five stations including Port Douglas, Cairns and Mareeba areas. The team was chosen as one of only two crews in Queensland to compete.

The FNR team represented the 22 000 auxiliary firefighters across the state and were up against permanent fire crews.

Clayton Vladich said “there has always been a healthy rivalry between the crews and having the opportunity to perform amongst the best was a huge compliment.”

The members of the FNR combo RCR team are:

- Team leader - Clayton (Ditch) Vladich, Port Douglas Fire Station
- Technical - Nick Bloomfield, Gordonvale Fire Station and Adam Spinelli, Mareeba Fire Station
- Safety and Safety Medic - Michael Bryce, Mareeba Fire Station and Renae Price, Cairns Fire Station
- Medics - Shaun McGill, Cairns South Fire Station and Kate Heure, Mareeba Ambulance Station.



Going bush, a FNR trial

FNR is nearing the completion of a regional trial for a new community education product called Going Bush.

Going Bush is one of the latest additions to the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) community education catalogue and was created in collaboration with Rural Fire Service (RFS), State Community Engagement Unit, and RFS volunteer, Frances Pelgrave.

This new educational product promotes fire safety when travelling in Queensland.

FNR Community Engagement Officer Chris Wegger said “by trialing Going Bush we can refine our education and engagement methods, validate distribution quantities and value add through stakeholder and end user feedback.”

Over the past few years, an information pack specifically aimed at tourists containing an assortment of QFES educational products has been promoted through Tourist Visitor Information Centres, designated rest stops and targeted regional events.





NORTHERN REGION

NR sadly farewells Lozza

Friday 1 June was a sad day for the Northern Region Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) staff, who heard of the passing of retired firefighter Laurie Benham. However, they were comforted to know that Laurie passed away in Cairns Hospital surrounded by family members.

Laurie joined the Townsville Fire Board on 15 March 1971. Laurie – or Lozza – as he was affectionately known to his friends, was admired and respected by all. Being a work colleague of Laurie’s was a privilege, he was such a hard-working firefighter who always got stuck into the tough work when it was needed.

Laurie was a true gentleman whose character made the work environment enjoyable, and he was always up for a good laugh.

A funeral service was held at Holy Family Catholic Church, Gulliver. As a testament to Laurie’s standing in the FRS community his funeral was attended by every available on duty staff member, as well as many off duty staff, family and friends. An honour guard was provided at the Belgian Gardens Cemetery where Laurie was laid to rest.

Laurie, you are sorely missed. It was an honour to have known and worked with you.



Commissioner Carroll’s regional tour

QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll recently travelled to Northern Region for a regional review. It was a busy three days travelling across the region, meeting staff and volunteers.

On day one, Commissioner Carroll travelled out west, to meet with the Hughenden Emergency Service Cadets and a number of local government representatives of the western shires. The cadets were very excited to meet Commissioner Carroll.

Commissioner Carroll visited many Townsville stations on day two for a meet and greet before heading to Magnetic Island for a BBQ with the island’s staff and volunteers.

On day three the Commissioner was provided an opportunity to see the Ross River Dam up close, as part of a SES flood boat activity. Finally, before departing, the Commissioner attended a planned hazard reduction burn at High Range, which was coordinated by the Townsville Rural Fire Service Brigades.

As always, it was a pleasure hosting the Commissioner here in the Northern Region.



CENTRAL REGION

NAIDOC Week celebrations, Mackay and Rockhampton

State Emergency Services (SES) crews joined hundreds of NAIDOC Week Expo goers in Rockhampton in July to fly the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) banner and spread the word of preparedness. A great day was had by all, resulting in some great community engagement. In Mackay, Sarina firefighter Richard Tapim was awarded the Sarina Community NAIDOC Award for his outstanding contribution to the Sarina Indigenous community. Richard was acknowledged for his great work in the community that both enriches and inspires community members. Well done Richard!



Central Queensland residents Get Ready!

The tenth Get Ready Central Queensland Emergency Services Day was held at the Rockhampton Heritage Village on Sunday 29 July. More than 6 000 residents joined disaster management and emergency services to collaboratively build on the community's resilience in preparation for future emergencies and disasters. This year's theme was technology, diversity and inclusion.

Sarina auxiliary crews help to restore historic fire engine

Recently, Sarina auxiliary crews and other community members unveiled a restored 1937 fire engine at the Field of Dreams, Sarina. For the past four years, a group of Sarina locals have been working to restore the vehicle that was originally purchased in 1937 and remained in operation at Sarina Fire Station until 1972. It was then sold as a collector's item before being purchased by Sarina museum around 10 years ago. It now looks as pretty as a picture!





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NORTH COAST REGION

Gympie Show

The Gympie Show was a great success again, with all streams within Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) on display, as well as participation by 11 of the Police Citizens Youth Club emergency services cadets. There was great community interaction between the cadets, emergency services and the local school children and families. It was great to have the QFES services working together to make this a successful event.



Gympie Duck Ponds

On 5 July, The Gympie Station 'A shift' which included Station Officer Justin Groth, Senior Fire Fighter (SFF) Grant Nelson, SFF Matt Ginns and Fire Fighter Peter McKeivitt, conducted a training session. Held at the duck ponds in the school holidays, it was a popular event with many families enjoying the session, especially the chance to have a closer look at two appliances. The children also thoroughly enjoyed operating the big hoses. It was great to hear that many of the families were tourists driving through Gympie who took the opportunity to stop and take part.



Farewell to our Emergency Management Coordinator Tim Steele

A farewell lunch, combined with the State Emergency Service week celebrations, was held to farewell Tim Steele who is moving to the Northern Territory and will be working in the emergency risk management area. Tim came to QFES with Emergency Management QLD and has been a great contributor to emergency management planning and training across the region. Tim has built strong relationships both internally and with external stakeholders. He will be greatly missed in the region. Good luck on your new adventures Tim.

www.qfes.qld.gov.au | 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

Noosa North Shore Community Disaster information session

A combined Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and Rural Fire Service (RFS) information night was held at the Noosa North Shore Station. The Noosa North Shore association members and community have been quite concerned since the loss of three houses last August. Response times and the issue of there being only one way in and out to some of the residential areas were topics of discussion. The night covered other topics including the need for all residents to have a Bushfire Survival Plan, explanations of Bushfire Warnings, a demonstration of how to put out a kitchen fire, along with hands-on fire extinguisher practice. This education workshop was a follow up to the initial Noosa North Shore Local Emergency Plan workshop with the local community. That plan is in draft and will be endorsed soon, before being presented to the community for final feedback.



Successful Western Challenge at Gayndah

The Western Challenge was held at Gayndah this year, with teams from Gayndah, Monto, Imbil, Hervey Bay, Gympie and Childers. The day-long event had five scenarios requiring different skills that the teams had to address. Monto took out first place, with Gayndah second and a combined Imbil/Hervey Bay team took out an encouragement award.





BRISBANE REGION

Queensland's Great Escape

On Friday 22 June state and regional community engagement staff joined forces with the local Petrie Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) crew to talk with Westfield North Lakes shoppers about fire safety.

The information booth, which had information on fire escape plans and smoke alarms, was well received by local community members who had lots of questions.

The Westfield team were very accommodating and we look forward to hosting many more engagement opportunities with the centre over the coming months.



Fire fighters turn lifeguards

Fire fighters Michael Hurlstone, Ian Hanlon, Eleanora Sponza and Acting Station Officer Christopher Butterworth from Sandgate Fire Station recently helped with the rescue of a kite surfer along Shorncliffe beach. The fire fighters were alerted by people on the beach that a person 200-300 metres off shore was tangled in lines and struggling to free himself. The fire fighters acted swiftly, resulting in the successful rescue of one exhausted kite surfer.



Supporting good causes

It was the year for smashing records and raising the bar at the 2018 Mater Hospital Climb for Cancer. With our largest team ever, biggest auxiliary participation, interstate fire fighters, highest funds raised and five straight wins – it certainly made for a great day and fantastic result.

With this year's Climb for Cancer challenge behind us, we now look forward to Bridge to Brisbane where we will be raising funds for the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital Burns Unit. We encourage QFES staff and volunteers to break out the joggers and join us for training with our old mate Station Officer Dave Galvin who will be helping our team prepare for the five-kilometre run. We hope to see you there.





SOUTH EASTERN REGION



SAVE event

On 22 June, Grade 12 students from Palm Beach Currumbin High School participated in SAVE – a one-day road safety event organised by the Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and other emergency and local support services.

Students witnessed the reality of a fatal car accident caused by a young driver distracted by a mobile phone in a mock scenario. Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) personnel responded to the simulated accident where students witnessed the impact this can have on family, friends, first responders and the wider community.

Students also learnt about the dangers of driving through flood waters through an interactive presentation by Coolangatta State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers.

Samoa Independence Day 56th Anniversary celebration

Jimboomba Station Auxiliary Fire Fighter Silia Lemalu and the crew from Woodridge Fire Station joined the 56th Samoa Independence celebration held at the Logan Gardens Park in Woodridge.

Together with emergency services and the Samoa Combined Associations Brisbane, Silia helped coordinate and set-up the anniversary event.

A marquee was set-up for the day where the SER crew engaged with the community distributing pamphlets, stickers and fire awareness resources. This was a great opportunity for QFES to answer questions about our roles and the different streams within the organisation. Children also had the opportunity to sit in the firefighting vehicle and flash big smiles to mum and dad as they took photos.

More than 4 000 people attended throughout the day, participating and enjoying a variety of traditional Samoan events, including lots of dancing and food tasting. A wonderful, family-orientated celebration was enjoyed by the whole community.



SeaFire 2018

On Saturday 2 June, staff and volunteers attended the SeaFire 2018 event at Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast. SeaFire is an international fireworks competition that delivers a community tribute each year.

This year's SeaFire event acknowledged the dedicated men and women of QFES and paid tribute to the work they do protecting and serving Queensland communities.

QFES provided a static display showcasing Rural Fire Service (RFS), FRS and SES resources with support from QFES Recruitment.

The event attracted around 80,000 people to the Surfers Paradise beachfront to witness the fireworks competition.

QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll was on hand to address the crowd and acknowledge the significant contributions made by our staff and volunteers.



SER welcomes new appliances

On 5 June, the Fire and Emergency Services Minister Craig Crawford handed over the keys to two new Lima firefighting appliances in consecutive ceremonies at Beenleigh and Nerang Fire and Rescue Stations. QFES Chaplain Neville Hall was on hand to bless the appliances and read the Firefighters Prayer.

An additional \$300,000 has been invested to fit the appliances with additional equipment including a thermal imaging camera, technical rescue equipment and an advanced Jaws of Life to further assist our frontline responders when disasters strike.

These appliances will enhance our capability to respond to fires, road accidents and water rescues and are a welcome addition to the region.



Making his mark

Aaron Sheehan, a young Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteer, is putting resilience front and centre in his local community and inspiring others along the way.

Just like any other 24-year-old Aaron Sheehan enjoys travel, seeing new places, listening to music and catching up with friends. However, unlike many others, Aaron has dedicated his youth to helping his local community build resilience through prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

When Aaron was five years old, he told his mum and dad that he wanted to be a fire fighter when he grew up. It's a career goal for many five-year-olds, but 11 years later, aged 16, Aaron joined the RFS to fulfil his lifelong dream. Fast-forward another eight years, Aaron is now First Officer of Murphy's Creek Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) and Deputy Group Officer and Group Mitigation Officer for the Lockyer Valley Group. From a young age Aaron knew he wanted to make a difference in his community and he is happy to be doing just that.

“To me, no community means no brigade, so I think it's important we each play our part in helping keep the community safe and resilient.”

For Aaron, day-to-day tasks include leading brigade operations, coordinating logistics, managing equipment and appliances, ensuring brigade members are appropriately trained for the tasks and continually striving to improve brigade operations.

Apart from running brigades and supporting the Lockyer Valley Group, Aaron enjoys his role in supporting brigade members to build their capabilities.

“With the experience I have gained and the skills I have learned from being mentored by several RFB members, I am now lucky enough to be passing my knowledge on to new brigade members,” Aaron said.

“As well as sharing my operational knowledge, I love meeting crews and having a good yarn with members of my local community.

“Here at Murphy's Creek, we have a great working relationship with the Lockyer Valley Group, spanning right out to the West Moreton Area office. Having such strong connections means together we can help build resilience in our communities.

“Knowing the work I do – along with my fellow brigade members – can make a difference gives me a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

“To me, no community means no brigade, so I think it's important we each play our part in helping keep the community safe and resilient.

“I hope by setting a good example I can inspire others to jump on board and make their mark too,” Aaron said.



Aaron and fellow RFS crew on the job.



Busy planning and coordinating logistics on scene.



Young, eager Aaron Sheehan.

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Building our knowledge of Indigenous land management

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) members have participated in a week-long course in the Gulf of Carpentaria to learn about traditional fire ecology and land management practices from local Indigenous rangers.

Recently, 30 QFES members took part in the Jigija Indigenous Fire Training Program – a wholly Indigenous owned business that provides fire management and mitigation training on the traditional country of the Ganggalidda people in the Gulf of Queensland.

Inspector Peta Miller-Rose, Manager Bushfire Safety, who helped drive the program and was lucky enough to be a course participant, said the program improved understanding of traditional land management practices.

“The program consisted of controlled burns and demonstrated planning for fire management across different landscapes,” Peta said.

“This provided traditional owners the unique opportunity to share their knowledge of fire, and showcase practical lessons relevant to contemporary fire management across Australia.

“It really demonstrated how traditional land management can be blended with contemporary approaches to achieve more sustainable outcomes for all. “This year, senior Ganggalidda traditional owners

conducted the course in combining contemporary and traditional Indigenous fire management practices.

“Participants received instructions on mosaic burning techniques, fauna and flora survey techniques and best practice guidelines for Aboriginal community engagement and adherence to cultural protocols.

“The opportunity to witness and experience traditional owner culture and the relationship with earth was truly incredible,” Peta said.

QFES members also received exclusive access to the remote traditional lands of the southern Gulf and had the opportunity to learn about the rich history and culture of the region.



Course participants explore the unique landscape.



Controlled burns and fire management demonstrations.

AIRBASE OPERATOR COURSE CENTRAL REGION

40 RFS, SES and FRS personnel recently completed their Airbase Operator qualification in Central Region.



QFES FINALISTS - QLD VOL AWARDS

Congratulations to QFES finalists at the Queensland Volunteering Awards. L to R – Marilyn King, Terrance Chapman, John Newley and Brittany Lea-Hewson.



RED NOSE DAY

Roma Street Fire and Rescue Station and Kemp Place Fire and Rescue Station sported giant red noses to show QFES' support for Red Nose Day.



REGIONAL TRAINING MEETING ROMA

South West Region Area Commanders and trainers met in Roma for the bi-annual meeting to discuss training activities in the South West.

WEAR WHITE TO WORK DAY

QFES celebrates Wear White to Work Day in style.



FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

Kedron staff and volunteers gather for a flag raising ceremony to kick off NAIDOC Week.



JACK FREY

Jack Frey, member of Doonan Rural Fire Brigade and son of Station Officer Rob Frey, recently presented a plaque to Ypres Volunteer Fire Brigade in Belgium on behalf of Queensland firefighters as part of the Premier's ANZAC Prize activities.



COORDINATION SAVES LIVES

QFES Specialist Response Section and Technical Rescue Unit recently conducted a United Nations sanctioned course at the State Deployment Centre. The Urban Search and Rescue Coordination Cell (USAR / UCC) training was the first of its type to be conducted in Queensland. The focus of this training was to build Asia Pacific Regional cooperation and capability for response to international USAR incidents.

RECONCILIATION MATS

Checking out the new reconciliation mats.





QFES is now **WORK** accredited



QFES recognised as an employer of choice

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is now formally recognised as an employer of choice after successfully completing the Work180 screening process.

Work180 is a global jobs platform which pre-screens employers to identify the level of support they provide employees through paid parental leave, flexible work arrangements, leadership programs and much more.

QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll is pleased that QFES has recently been recognised as a Work180 accredited workplace.

“It is integral to our department’s success that we attract and retain the best employees for the job of keeping

Queensland communities safe and resilient,” Commissioner Carroll said.

“By championing a culture of inclusion and taking steps to better support everyone at work, we are ensuring that we are positioned as an organisation that fosters an open, safe, supportive and healthy workplace.

“Whether you work on the front line or support those who are, we are all united by our shared values of respect, integrity, courage, loyalty and trust.

“We are proud to be a diverse organisation and I am delighted that our initiatives are recognised as they position us to attract the best talent,” Commissioner Carroll said.

For a full list of what the Work180 accreditation benefits are and what they mean for you, please visit the QFES website.

New way of ordering uniforms

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff should now be aware of recent changes to the process of ordering uniforms.

It is important to note that officers will no longer receive uniforms on a yearly basis – instead, uniforms will be allocated upon request.

The process of ordering uniforms has been streamlined and items can now be ordered by request via the Gateway. Once your order is placed, it will be reviewed and processed by QFES Uniforms and Logistics.

Volunteers will continue to be serviced through their existing arrangements.

If you have any enquiries they can be directed to (07) 3635 1568 or uniforms.logistics@qfes.qld.gov.au

Operation Knock Knock

Saturday 15 September will see Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) lead a multi-agency, state-wide community engagement operation to help Queenslanders understand their local risks, know how to prepare for them, and connect with fellow community members.

QFES will partner with local governments, Red Cross, Surf Lifesaving Queensland, Volunteer Marine Rescue and Queensland Reconstruction Authority and together knock on as many doors as possible across Queensland.

Information regarding regional plans will be available soon. For now please save the date.





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