

RESPONSE

RESILIENT AND READY FOR THE PEOPLE OF QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND'S OFFICIAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MAGAZINE EDITION 19



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Rural Fire Service conducting Operation Cool Burn activities.

Photo: QFES Multi Media Producer Sarah Ebsworth.

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

Recent months have seen a showcase of significant events with the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Prevention Month and National Volunteers Week.

Firstly, congratulations to all of those involved in the Commonwealth Games. With 817 QFES staff and volunteers from the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) deployed to the Games in April, we saw a total of 3,421 shifts completed across 13 operational and event support tasks around the Gold Coast. The Games provided an opportunity to display QFES as a professional and diverse organisation and leaves a legacy that will assist QFES in providing consistent service delivery in future events. Read more about this legacy on page 12.

As darkness fell on 2 May, many of us gathered to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives to DFV. I was joined by QFES staff and volunteers at a candle lighting vigil, which also marked the beginning of DFV Prevention Month. The recent Darkness to Daylight Challenge saw more than 70 staff and volunteers take part in running/walking events to raise awareness, with QFES members covering an incredible distance of over 700 kilometres. You can read more on page 10.

It was also an honour to recognise our fantastic volunteers in May when we celebrated National Volunteer's Week. Often risking their own lives to help keep our communities safe, their dedication and commitment never ceases to amaze me. It is fitting that Wear Orange Wednesday, a national day of recognition and appreciation for SES, also fell during National Volunteer's Week. Soon to follow was RFS Week which provided an opportunity to recognise our RFS volunteers. With around 42 000 volunteers in QFES, it good to know that in times of disaster and emergency, we have an excellent response and recovery plan in place. You can learn more about some of our volunteers on page 18.

As always, I would like to add how proud I am of the efforts made by all members of this organisation and extend a very sincere thank you to you all.

Katarina Carroll
Commissioner
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services



MIKE WASSING
Deputy Commissioner
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, VOLUNTEERISM & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

I recently visited beautiful Thursday Island and joined more than 50 people in celebrating the official launch of the Torres Shire Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Emergency Services Cadets.

This program is offered to youths aged 12 to 17 and provides important personal development and leadership opportunities for young people. The program highlights the value of contributing to the community through volunteering, with the potential to inspire young people to become emergency services personnel or volunteers. The program is funded by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and is delivered under the guidance of volunteer adult leaders in partnership with QFES Thursday Island.

The launch was held on 30 April and was strongly supported by emergency service agencies, as well as the Mayor of Torres Shire Council Ms Vonda Malone. During the launch, the cadets demonstrated the wearing of breathing apparatus, entering a smoking building and retrieving a patient. Station Officer Conor Maguire deserves a special mention for his dedication, commitment and leadership in the establishment of the program.

Recently, 423 State Emergency Service (SES) and Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers were involved in the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Our volunteers performed a variety of roles and assisted in events such as a cycling time trial and road race, a mountain bike race and the marathon. Dedicated Waterways Operations were established and managed by local SES teams, providing alternative transport options to assist with moving crews and resources around the Gold Coast. The biggest contingent was at the marathon event, where 220 SES and RFS volunteers supported GOLDOC and the Queensland Police Service to maintain the integrity of the field of play. Positioned along the course, our teams had front row seats to this exciting competition, watching Aussies Kurt Fearnley and Madison de Rozario take home the T54 marathon gold medals. Once again, thank you to all those staff and volunteers who were involved in planning and operations, your contribution of time and effort helped make the Games a great success.

Mike Wassing
Deputy Commissioner
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services



HON CRAIG CRAWFORD
Minister
MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

As my meet-and-greet with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel around the state continues, I'd like to give a big shout out to all the hardworking people I've had the pleasure of meeting so far. I was especially privileged to meet QFES staff and volunteers in the Mackay Whitsunday Region who I caught up with during our government's recent Governing from the Regions.

Each person makes a difference – to tirelessly prevent, prepare for, respond to and help communities recover from fire and emergency events. It was also an honor to be opening fire and rescue stations and handing over new firefighting vehicles during my week in the region, remembering it is just over a year since the wide-spread devastation of Tropical Cyclone Debbie.

We live in the most disaster-prone state in Australia, which means we need to be prepared for whatever may come. Earlier this week the government announced a record 2018-19 State Budget spend of \$702 million on QFES which will deliver more jobs and upgraded frontline services, facilities and equipment.

Some key budget highlights include budgeted staffing for more than 3300 full-time equivalent personnel, new auxiliary Fire and Rescue stations, upgraded Fire and Rescue stations, new urban and rural fire appliances and three joint Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) facilities.

As the community grows, it's important that QFES can continue to deliver world-class service to those they serve and have access to the right equipment and infrastructure along the way. I am confident that this year's budget will go a long way in bolstering QFES' response efforts and enhance operational capability.

Not only do fire and emergency workers protect Queenslanders during natural disasters and emergencies, they also work with residents to build community resilience. Nothing is more important to us than the safety of Queenslanders, and the safety of our frontline emergency services who protect them.

Hon Craig Crawford
Minister for Fire and Emergency Services



QFES Digital Transformation

As communities are changing across Queensland and Australia, QFES will be increasingly faced with new challenges in providing world-class service to our communities.

The world around us is becoming increasingly more complex. While technology is making our lives easier, it's also creating higher expectations within the community about the way Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) delivers services.

In response to these challenges, QFES is undertaking strategic planning through Strategy 2030 activities to help QFES position itself to keep pace with rapid change. As we look forward, it is also important that we understand the role of information and communications technology (ICT) in enabling future QFES service delivery to our communities.

QFES Digital Transformation aims to do just this, and has recently commenced planning and consultation to create a better ICT

future for QFES. This will include enabling of appropriate “command and control” practices in times of emergency and disaster. Over time it will also allow QFES to introduce more cutting-edge solutions and devices to our frontline.

Why change?

Many of you will be aware of the current challenges involved in using ICT in your roles across QFES. Some of you will also be aware of the increasing difference between using QFES systems and the ease with which new “digital” technology and associated services are used in your private life.

QFES recognises that ageing systems, access problems, and difficulty in sharing the right information within a work or

volunteering context hinder us in our ability to meet community expectations. An ICT environment that lacks clear user responsibilities and system processes will move the organisation away from, rather than towards, better ways of delivering our work. More broadly, QFES must also operate within the strategic context of Queensland Public Safety Agencies and align with Queensland Government directions.

QFES Digital Transformation aims to move QFES past existing ICT challenges and into a current and future-ready “digital” state where users, technology, and information are better aligned, and where QFES is empowered and equipped to do new things, in new ways, to meet evolving demands and expectations.



What does this mean for me?

Changes to QFES systems won't happen overnight. The Digital and Information Branch is currently conducting engagement throughout all regions to understand the pain points and opportunities for ICT across QFES. Activities currently underway include:

- documenting current system and information alignment to business needs
- understanding user and stakeholder groups
- gathering requirements for renewing existing services contracts (e.g. Geospatial Information Services)
- exploring market offerings of adaptable, future-state "digital" ICT services and platforms
- understanding data exchange and terminology challenges across QFES and with outside partners
- examining potential mobilisation solutions for suitability across QFES.

This work is part of building the right foundations for change, and involves a mix of short-term priority focus and longer-term planning. Office 365 and Nexus have also recently been delivered by QFES, and will contribute to improved management of information for QFES users.

Listening to frontline and office-based personnel and volunteers is essential to identifying solutions that are fit for purpose.

- Matthias Dorfstaetter

Towards "digital"

Over time, changes to QFES ICT systems, tools, and management of information will create opportunities to undertake QFES work in flexible new ways, making life easier through:

- a "simple, smart, streamlined" user experience
- better and more timely access to information from anywhere, and across different systems
- better predictive capabilities and decision-making support
- improved reporting and management of people and equipment, in both operational and corporate contexts.

While changes to systems and user training will represent a significant part of the Digital Transformation journey, it is ultimately the way we use technology within QFES that will define success. The ability of QFES staff and volunteers to embrace new ways enabled by technology, and to work together to translate this flexibility into adaptable and resilient services for our communities, will set us up for future success.

Where can I find out more?

A Foundations brochure will be available soon, and a Digital Transformation Strategy is scheduled for release in September. The strategy will outline activities and projects planned for the next one to two years.

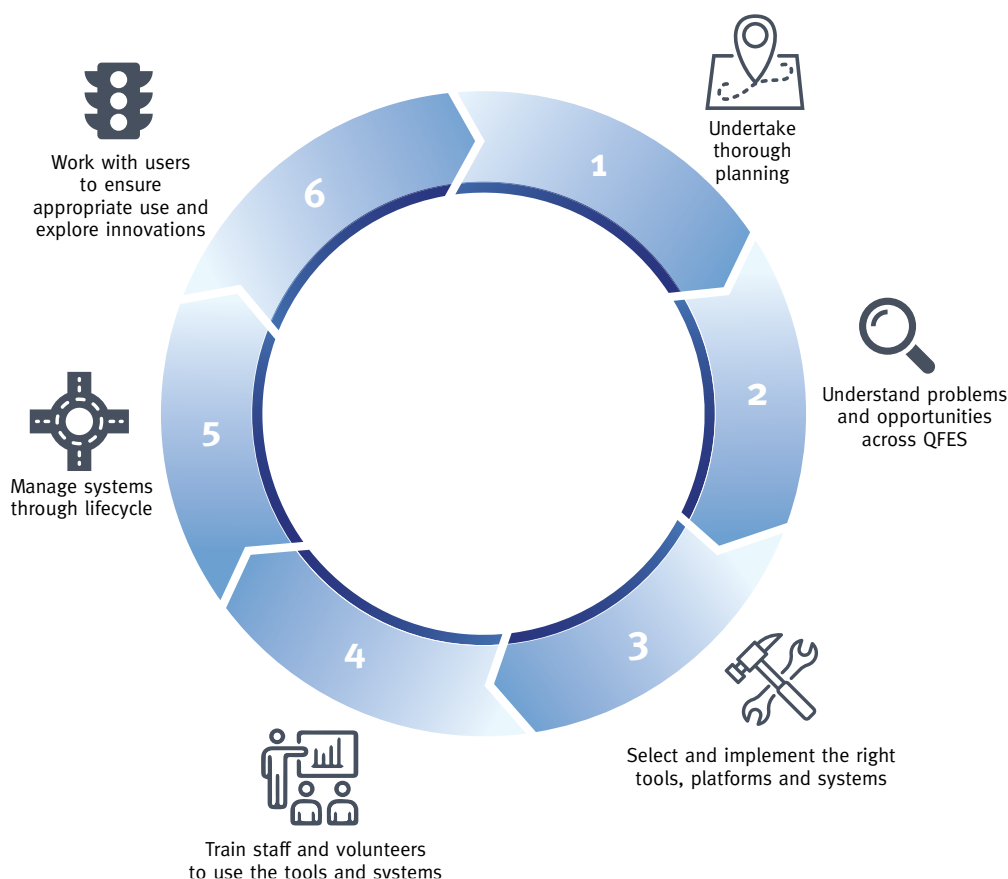
Consultation and engagement with users and stakeholder groups will also continue throughout 2018. The Digital and Information Branch will be travelling to all regions to meet with staff and volunteers from the frontline and across all QFES services to ensure we can work together towards a better, digitally enabled QFES.

For more information contact the Digital and Information Branch at Digital.Transformation@qfes.qld.gov.au.

The key driver for Digital Transformation is to make our people's jobs easier.

- Matthias Dorfstaetter

Keys to success





Operation Cool Burn tracks ahead using new tools and tech

Operation Cool Burn has officially commenced with Queensland fire managers having access to the latest tools and technology to better predict fire behaviour.

The annual bushfire hazard mitigation operation will see the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) work with land management agencies and the public to ensure communities are better prepared in the lead up to the bushfire season.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Predictive Services Unit Manager Andrew Sturgess said this year there are a number of new products and services available to better support Operation Cool Burn activities throughout the state.

“These include an online Snap Report which provides rapid and essential information to crews for fuel/hazard reduction burn planning,” Mr Sturgess said.

“This new tool can be customised by the user with filters for locality, fuel type/load, slope and a choice of wildfire or hazard reduction burn guidance.

“Daily state-wide prescribed burning guidance now includes a relative humidity, peak wind speed, drought factor and curing maps.

“Another area providing improved guidance is the grass fuel map. This data underpins fire behaviour models and tools for this vegetation type and the plan is to use this same approach for woodlands with grassy understories.

“Grasslands are the most widespread vegetation type in Queensland and this seasonal product provides significant improvement for our prediction methods.

“These advancements not only benefit QFES but also allow community members to further understand and prepare for bushfire season,” Mr Sturgess said.

Executive Manager Bushfire Mitigation Superintendent James Haig said bushfire

preparedness is a shared responsibility to ensure properties, homes, businesses and families are ready for bushfire season.

“Operation Cool Burn not only focuses on hazard reduction burns in bushfire prone areas, but also on improved fire lines and community education,” Mr Haig said.

“Protecting Queensland communities is our priority and we need to take advantage of the lower fire danger risk in the cooler months.

“While we work particularly closely with key partners such as land management agencies we encourage everyone to get involved in Operation Cool Burn by preparing a Bushfire Survival Plan,” Mr Haig said.



Queensland Fire and Rescue Station Officer
Brian Lemke – photo courtesy of Warren Lynam.

Everyday hero recognised for his brave actions

A Petrie station officer who recently received a Commendation for Brave Conduct says he was just doing his job.

Queensland Fire and Rescue Station Officer Brian Lemke, who saved a woman's life, has been presented with a Commendation for Brave Conduct as part of the Australian Bravery Awards.

In the early hours of 6 February 2015, Mr Lemke was called to an incident in North Lakes where a young woman was in harm's way.

Upon arrival, Mr Lemke spoke with other emergency services personnel and it was established the young woman was reluctant to speak with police officers.

You do it because it's your job.
– Brian Lemke

However, the woman agreed to talk with Mr Lemke.

That morning, Mr Lemke who has been a firefighter for the past 29 years, put his own life on the line to save the woman's life.

His bravery could have cost him dearly, but with no hesitation Mr Lemke acted professionally, calmly and decisively at a critical instant.

It is Mr Lemke's brave and selfless actions on that morning that earned him a Bravery Award.

"It was just one of those moments, it was a natural reaction," Mr Lemke said.

"You really don't go to work to receive awards, you do it because it's your job."

He puts his courageous actions on that day down to a combination of life experience and training.

"Each day when I arrive to work, I have no idea what emergency incident myself and my crew might be faced with," Mr Lemke said.

"What I do know, is that I want to help protect my community and make sure my colleagues and I go home safe at the end of the day.

"I also know, nothing beats the feeling of knowing that you've saved a life – there's nothing better," Mr Lemke said.

Many situations emergency services workers face are often confronting and complex. If you or someone you know requires help, the Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN) can be contacted on 1800 805 980.

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Firefighters vie for gold at outriggering world titles

Four firefighters from central Queensland will head over to Tahiti in July for the World Outrigging Sprint Titles.

A group of four central Queensland firefighters and a swift water rescuer travelled down to the Sunshine Coast in February to compete against 600 other teams in the Australian National Outrigging Sprint Titles.

They came home a little heavier around the neck, achieving gold in the V12 500m sprint and bronze in the V6 500m sprint.

Their success means they will be heading to Tahiti later this year to test the waters in the World Sprint Titles, representing outrigger teams from across Australia.

Members from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) were Team Captain Nick Bellinger from Mackay and Coach Blair Mitchell, Blake Broadwood and Shaun Mulvena from Airlie Beach.

For Nick and Blair, this will be their second time at a world championship event, as they paddled with each other representing Australia in 2016.

Team Captain Nick Bellinger said many skills from their time as operational firefighters were crucial in their success, and they have their eyes set on the podium.

“Diversity was important – everyone brought something to the team and we

had the ability to adapt within a team environment,” Nick said.

“Being firefighters helped us respond to the ever-changing conditions that we experienced on the water, and the ability to perform under pressure.

“Outrigging helps us mentally too, by getting out on the water and clearing the head, which ultimately helps us remain in good condition both physically and mentally for work.

“There are many outriggering clubs, particularly in the southeast corner, and I would encourage all emergency service employees to get out there and give it a go,” Nick said.

An outrigger canoe is a traditional Hawaiian canoe measuring about 14 metres in length, with a smaller outrigger for stability. The canoe accommodates six paddlers, each with a single-bladed paddle.

The World Outrigging Sprint Titles will be held in Tahiti from 16-26 July 2018.



Left to right: Shaun Mulvena, Blair Mitchell, Cody Wright, Blake Broadwood, Zack Cobbing and Nick Bellinger.



Left to right: Blake Broadwood, Blair Mitchell, Nick Bellinger and Shaun Mulvena.



Blair Mitchell (seat 1) and Nick Bellinger (seat 3) representing Australia at the 2016 World Sprint Titles in the 1500m Even (with buoy turns).



A/Station Officer Jason Burnham and Senior Firefighter Drew Oberle.

QFES shines light on domestic and family violence

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff and volunteers have continued their commitment to help shine a light on violence by participating in several events across the state.

As darkness fell across Brisbane on the first Wednesday in May, a group of people gathered to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives to domestic and family violence (DFV). QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll and Deputy Commissioner Mark Roche were joined by QFES staff at the candle lighting vigil, which also marked the beginning of DFV Prevention Month.

“It was very humbling listening to the speakers, particularly the two ladies whose daughters were murdered in acts of domestic violence,” Station Officer Tony Shipp said.

“I thought drawing a comparison between calling Triple Zero (000) if your neighbour’s house was on fire and calling Triple Zero

(000) if you hear your neighbours having a domestic was a really important point to make.

“We shouldn’t hesitate to act if we feel anyone is in danger yet many of us are hesitant to act in a domestic dispute.

“Radio personality Terry Hansen inspired me as he spoke about what men can do to make a difference. It has made me think about the White Ribbon movement – about how men and boys can work together to end men’s violence against women,” Tony said.

Work is underway at QFES to improve awareness among staff and volunteers of the issues surrounding DFV and to provide

easier access to support services for men and women affected by violence, as well as men and women who may use violence.

QFES’ journey to White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation forms part of this work, and although the project is in its infancy, it has already inspired people across the organisation to stand up and speak out against DFV.

The recent Darkness to Daylight Challenge saw a group of more than 60 staff and volunteers run and walk, all through the night, to raise awareness and much needed funds for DFV workplace education.

“I stayed at the event right through the night and ran a total of 50kms,” Administration Officer Kaylene Holley said.

"I committed to being there all night as a thank you to the staff at QFES who supported me when I escaped a violent relationship.

"Without the support in my workplace, I really don't think I would have been able to leave. Financial independence is vital for people who want to escape DFV.

"I want to turn what happened to me into something positive so I have joined the QFES Domestic and Family Violence Subcommittee and I told my story to over 100 staff and volunteers on White Ribbon Day 2017.

"On International Women's Day this year I was awarded the 2018 QFES Women in Fire and Emergency Services Champion of Change Award. It was awarded for outstanding dedication to family and domestic violence prevention and support programs.

"I can't describe how much the award means to me. If speaking out and sharing my story helps even one person to have the courage to leave an abusive relationship then what I went through feels like it was somehow worth it," Kaylene said.

DFV affects everyone. People who have experienced DFV feel the impact at work, at home and in the community. One of the most important ways to raise awareness is to encourage conversations by speaking out against violence.

Last year, QFES staff and volunteers stemming from the South West to the Far North joined the weaving movement and together contributed 12 422 stars to the One Million Stars to End Violence Project.



Darkness to Daylight runners.



Members of the ELT and other QFES members up bright and early.

The project was initiated by Brisbane artist Maryann Talia Pau to encourage conversations surrounding ending all forms of violence.

The Queensland Government entered into a partnership with Maryann for the Gold Coast 2018 Arts and Cultural Program where one million stars were featured in a special installation for the duration of the Commonwealth Games as a peaceful statement against violence.

On 30 March the remarkable art installation of one million handwoven stars was unveiled in the heart of Brisbane city as part of Festival 2018.



One Million Stars To End Violence installation.



Members of the ELT with Fire and Rescue personnel at the candle light vigil.

Domestic and family violence doesn't discriminate and can affect people of all ages, genders, religions, cultures, income levels, educational backgrounds or sexual orientation. All QFES staff and volunteers can access support by calling FESSN on 1300 309 508 or visiting the QFES Gateway or volunteer portals.





QFES helps to build a lasting legacy

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff and volunteers may not have walked away from the Commonwealth Games with a gold medal but the legacy of this event will be felt for years to come.

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) were held across Queensland from 4 to 15 April 2018. Athletes wowed spectators with fantastic performances, while QFES' Operation Paratus personnel worked hard to help deliver a successful Games.

The Games showcased QFES as a professional and diverse organisation and included 817 personnel from Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), State Emergency Service (SES), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and the Public Service, working alongside key government and partner agencies to achieve the Games' mission of a 'safe and friendly games'. A total of 3 421 shifts were worked across 18 Games venues on the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville.

FRS personnel attended to 34 incidents impacting Games venues and conducted 859 building fire safety checks at Games venues during GC2018.

Our QFES volunteers supported 13 different areas of operations including the Cycling Time Trial and Road Race, Mountain Bikes, Marathon and support roles at mobilisation and coordination centres.

The big legacy winner for QFES is upskilling of staff in major event project planning.

The QFES Commonwealth Games Office (CGO) commenced their planning in 2015 and will leave a great legacy for future major or planned events within QFES. Specialist equipment procured for the Games included All-Terrain vehicles, command and decontamination trailers and hazard prediction software, which will continue to support regions and special operations into the future.

The QFES CGO developed innovated systems and apps to further support QFES

operations at GC2018. These include the Beacon Dashboard, which highlighted venue readiness across Games venues and showed any issues in real-time to command centres across QFES operations.

The Deploy app was also developed to assist deployed personnel and provided essential information including individual rosters, accommodation, travel and transport plans on personal mobile devices. Both solutions received positive feedback from users and QFES GCO is currently investigating where they can be used in normal operations.

The big legacy winner for QFES is upskilling of staff in major event project planning and the development of the Planned Event Management Doctrine within QFES Doctrine. This will assist QFES in providing consistent service delivery when responding to major and planned events in the future and aligns QFES to other agencies in major event planning.



SES and RFS with Commissioner Katarina Carroll and Minister Craig Crawford.



In the spirit.



ELT with athletes.



Aliza Ault-Connell T54 Australian athlete photographed with Charlie deployment.



RFS, QPS and QAS working together GC18 team.



FRS, RFS and SES unite.



Air support crew all set to go.



Gold medallist triathlete Matt Hauser visiting the hub.



SES trackside.



Athletes visiting Southport Fire Station.



Cheering on the athletes.



Just a few of the many volunteers doing QFES proud at the Games.



Athletes watch QFES in action behind the scenes.



FRS help patrol the beach.



Annette Edmonson gold medallist in women's team pursuit and bronze medallist in individual's pursuit.



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Safehome for foster care providers program set to expand

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) partners with foster care providers to increase the safety of Queensland children and young people living in care.

During the past 18 months, QFES and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women have been working together to ensure increased fire safety and hazard reduction in homes where children live in care.

Through this partnership, the QFES Safehome for Foster Care Providers program was developed and has since formed an integral part of foster care programs in the North Coast Region (NCR).

Safehome is an initiative designed to assist in recognising fire and safety hazards and eliminating those hazards in and around the home.

North Coast Regional Community Engagement Officer Julie Bruynius said the Safehome program is a free service provided by QFES created in the interest of developing a safer community, especially for young children living in care.

“The visits undertaken so far have been well received,” Julie said.

“The foster carers and children love meeting the crew and learning more about home fire safety.”

Initially rolled out as a pilot program on the Sunshine Coast, a workshop was recently held in Caboolture to introduce and roll out the program to more foster care service providers in the wider region of Noosa, Moreton Bay and Gympie.

NCR Acting Manager of Community Safety Matthew Phillips, NCR Regional Community Engagement Officer Julie Bruynius, Manager of the State Community Engagement Unit Alan Musk and Senior

Community Education Officer Tom Simpson all attended the workshop.

During the workshop Matthew and Alan spoke about what the Safehome program involves and the QFES NCR experience with the pilot.

A letter was also received from the Director-General Child Safety, Youth and Women Michael Hogan thanking the region for their support and initiative with this project.

Planning has since commenced for a state-wide roll-out of the program.



The QFES staff who attended the workshop see many benefits in the program rolling out to foster care service providers.

The visits undertaken so far have been well received. The foster carers and children love meeting the crew and learning more about home fire safety.

Julie Bruynius

Give a little. Change a lot.

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, Response gains an insight into what it is like to be a Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) volunteer.

QFES is proud of the 42 000 volunteers in the workforce who each play a crucial role in helping QFES deliver services and build safer and more resilient communities.

Within the agency, there are approximately 36 000 Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers, 5 500 State Emergency Services (SES) volunteers, a volunteer Research and Scientific Branch network and Technical Rescue Unit volunteers.

Together, they help Queenslanders prepare for, respond to and recover from a range of disasters and emergencies.

To put it simply, our volunteers give a little and change a lot.

As part of National Volunteer Week celebrations, Response caught up with three QFES volunteers to hear about why volunteering is important to them.



« ROBERT HEYWOOD

• *Structural engineer on DART Taskforce since 2008/09*

What does your role as a volunteer engineer involve?

“Being an engineer on the task force involves helping wherever possible - whether that is erecting tents for the base of operations or joining the advanced reconnaissance team after a disaster. I help others remain safe while working among severely damaged and often unstable structures,” Mr Heywood said.

What do you love about your role?

“I really enjoy being part of a diverse, highly competent team of professionals and volunteers who serve our community with enthusiasm in often difficult circumstances.”

Tell us about your involvement following the Christchurch earthquake?

“The deployment to Christchurch following the earthquake was a lifechanging experience.

“Some of my most emotional moments were while working on the CTV building. I worked with a team to make the search and rescue operations safe by removing precarious elements of the building. The engineers worked with Urban Search and Rescue teams and the local police to collect samples that were considered likely to assist investigations into how the CTV building failed.

“I later returned to Christchurch to present a Brief of Evidence to the Royal Commissioner which was a daunting prospect. The families of those who lost their loved ones were incredibly supportive and appreciative of the work we undertook,” Mr Heywood said.



» RAELENE ROWLAND

- *Member of the Narangba Rural Fire Brigade for 11 years*
- *Currently a Second Officer, Secretary and the Treasurer of the Narangba Rural Fire Brigade*

Why did you join the Rural Fire Service?

“My husband and I were part of a small community and we wanted to actively join that community. We were living in a rural area and joining the Rural Fire Service was a very easy choice to make,” Ms Rowland said.

How do you feel about being part of the RFS community?

“People join the RFS for various reasons. Ours was a two-fold one. We wanted to learn about bushfire given that we were living in a rural area. But equally, we wanted to give back to the people of our community.”

What does being part of QFES mean to you?

“For me, it means we all have a job to do. Everybody has their different areas of expertise and together we can do our job and do it for the Queensland community,” Ms Rowland said.



» BRENDAN JONES

- *SES member for 34 years*
- *Peer Support Officer for nine years*
- *Regional Coordinator*
- *SES Cadet Leader and Trainer*

What do you love about your role?

“Currently, my key role is Peer Support Officer Coordinator for the North Coast Region. In this role, I really enjoy being able to see people who have worked with the peer support network move forward with their lives. I love knowing that we have been able to help them in some small way,” Mr Jones said.

Why do you think it's important for people to volunteer?

“Volunteering is important to me because it's overall a great learning experience. You can not only learn more about the people who make up your community, but you also learn new skills that may assist you in other areas of your life.”

What does community mean to you?

“Community means to me common unity as in people of all ages, gender and cultures working together for a common cause and that is to make life better and safer for everyone,” Mr Jones said.





FAR NORTHERN REGION

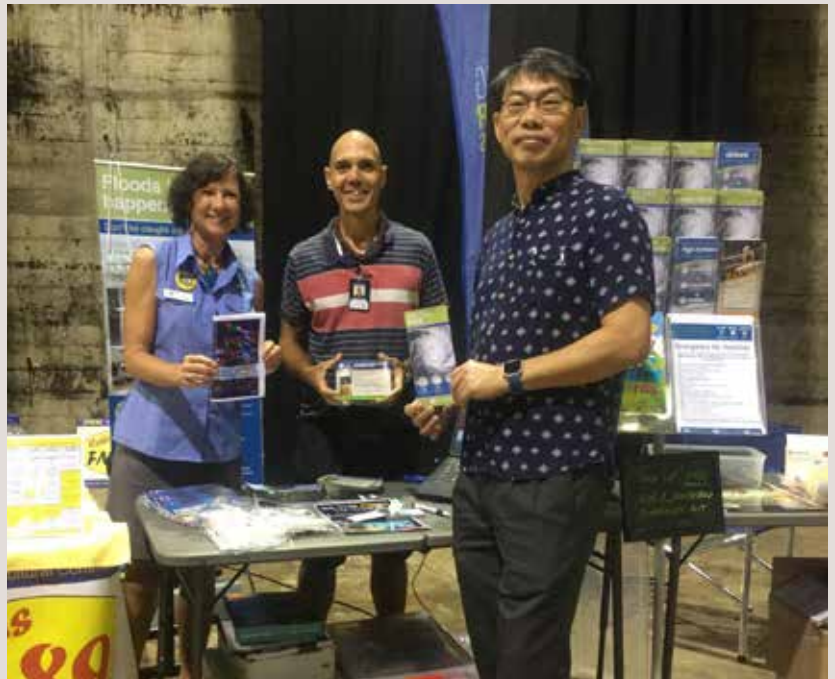
Cultures in Harmony

Last month Cairns hosted Cultures in Harmony, an event which saw many members of the Cairns region come together to celebrate dance, music, stories and costume.

This celebration was an opportunity for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel to meet new migrant families and hear about their experiences during recent severe weather events.

Community members were made aware of the local Cairns community radio services and Cairns Alerts, used to disperse information about local disasters, severe weather and emergency events.

The Cairns Community Engagement Officer regularly works in collaboration with the Cairns Disaster Management and Resilience Officer, and together they engage with cultural community members to help build and strengthen relationships between emergency services and the greater community.



Sharing knowledge

Far Northern Region has been reaching out to service providers who can assist vulnerable residents with building fire safety installations and fire safety advice.

The Community Safety Command has been working with community engagement officers so that together they can educate migrants on fire safety messages, the importance of smoke alarms and how to use and identify a fire extinguisher.

Safety Assessment Officers have been collaborating with Building Asset Services and a women's shelter to ensure fire safety installations are in working order and meet QFES' standard.

These combined efforts are helping those most at risk increase their safety and awareness.



Multi-agency swiftwater training course

Recently QFES personnel were joined by Queensland Police Service (QPS) officers to participate in a swiftwater training course in Coen.

The course had 16 participants, three of which were QPS members, and was well supported by the local community.

With recent rain events in the Far North, training courses like these are important to ensure crews can work together and understand different capabilities and limitations.





NORTHERN REGION



North Queensland Cowboys say thanks to emergency service workers

The NRL Round 7 saw the Cowboys take on the Bulldogs, but more importantly it also saw the Cowboys pay tribute and say thank you to emergency services workers in the north.

While unfortunately the Cowboys went down in what was a hard-fought match, the afternoon provided an opportunity for the Townsville community to acknowledge the hard work and

dedication of the emergency services and the recent work they had undertaken during the flooding of Townsville and Ingham as a result of Tropical Cyclones Nora and Iris.

Cowboys Centre Kyle Felt, a born and bred Townsville lad, said he has the upmost respect for our emergency services here in Townsville.

“They always do an outstanding job, I think if I hadn’t become a football player that I would have liked to become a firefighter,” Kyle said.



Commonwealth Games action in the North

A little slice of the 2018 Commonwealth Games came to the Northern Region with the basketball preliminary rounds being held at the Townsville Convention and Exhibition Centre 5-10 April.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff worked seamlessly alongside Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Corporation staff in the Emergency Command Room.

Northern Region QFES staff were privileged to be able to see all the dunks and dribbles, rebounds and three-pointers over four quarters of thrilling end-to-end indoor basketball action for six days.

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Northern Region farewells Owen

Northern Region farewelled its Head Mechanic Owen Zammit last month. Owen has been with Fire and Rescue for three years. During that time, Owen led the upgrade of the Northern Region Workshops and was successful in developing and managing these services.

Owen has been the mechanical backbone on Northern Region Fire and Rescue Operations. He ensured emergency services were always ready to respond to the community’s needs, 24/7. He has left big shoes to fill as he moves on to other career opportunities. Owen leaves a mark on QFES - his sense of humour, team ethics and mateship will be missed.

All the best in the future Owen.



CENTRAL REGION

Way out west

From flooding to festivals – the outback town of Winton can certainly put on a show and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services’ (QFES) flexibility shone with its ability to scale up and provide support when required.

March this year saw QFES providing emergency management support in both Winton and the Longreach District for a flood activation.

Again, in April QFES helped support the township’s increased population for the reopening of the Waltzing Matilda Centre and the Way Out West Festival. The festival drew a crowd of around 7 000 who were entertained at various venues across the town. A QFES event plan was used in conjunction with local government and event organisers, which highlighted our response capabilities and management of potential incidents.



Beef Week Rockhampton

Over 90 000 people joined in the Beef Week festivities at the Rockhampton Show Grounds in May.

QFES took the opportunity to talk with patrons and school groups about smoke alarm legislation, bushfire preparation and storm safety.

Blazer and Bushy enjoyed their time at the event spreading the word on safety.



Mirani Emergency Services Day

The second annual Mirani Emergency Services Day was held on 17 March in the Pioneer Valley. The Local Ambulance Committee in Finch Hatton started the event in Mirani after seeing other town’s Emergency Services Day events promoted on social media.

From small beginnings, this year’s event saw displays from QFES including Road Crash Rescue, bushfire safety with Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Services (SES) displaying water diversion and sandbagging. A multi-agency display was also included with Fire and Rescue and Qld Ambulance Service showcasing casualty handling.



Emergency Management Activations

The storm season was a busy one for Central Region with three activations in three months before Cyclone Iris.

Emergency management coordinators and QFES members supported Isaac Regional Council in Moranbah for severe storms.

Whitsunday Regional Council and Local Disaster Management Group members toured a temporary Local Disaster Coordination Centre in Proserpine. The centre was used one year on from Tropical Cyclone (TC) Debbie when the town was impacted by TC Iris.



Winton flooding looking at the road to Longreach, swollen Western River.



NORTH COAST REGION

Resilient Community Organisations Workshop

Community Engagement Officer Julie Bruynius is running workshops across the region to build resilience in community service organisations in the case of an emergency event. This will allow organisations to continue to provide their services, as well as adapt and recover from the impact of emergencies.

Workshops were also held in the South Burnett region on 10 May, in partnership with the South Burnett Regional Council, through Get Ready funding.

More workshops will take place in Noosa and Gympie over the next two months and then flow on to other North Coast Region local government areas during 2018.



QFES personnel receive a royal visit

His Royal Highness Prince Charles paid a visit to Bundaberg on 6 April, where he was met by a number of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) members.

State Emergency Services (SES) personnel took on a large role in the planning of his visit and coordinated with Queensland Police Service (QPS) to maintain eight sections of road blocks and three car parks.

Thanks to the outstanding planning and organisation for this event the visit went without incident. Everyone involved showcased a great deal of professionalism while taking part in this memorable occasion.

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QFES' assistance post recovery FV Dianne

On 20 February salvaged Fishing Vessel (FV) Dianne was raised from the sea bed and transported to Bundaberg.

Just two days later, QFES Scientific Officers and Fire and Rescue crews joined Queensland Police Service (QPS) at the start of investigations into the recovered fishing trawler.

Before police could begin conducting their investigations, QFES personnel needed to assess the vessel's accessibility and structural integrity.

The structural integrity was found to be satisfactory, however, initial atmospheric measurements showed high levels of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Draeger tubes were used to identify the type of VOCs and the vapours were found to be of hydro-carbon origin.

The Ram Fan from 412 Lima was setup and run to blow in fresh air below deck. By doing this, VOC readings stabilised and allowed QPS investigators to commence work.

While the atmospheric monitoring on this particular job was relatively straight-forward, it was great to see specialist scientific advice readily available from both on-call Scientific Officers in Brisbane and local volunteers.



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BRISBANE REGION

Golf day has a lifesaving spin-off for Redcliffe

Last month Kippa Ring Heritage Bank Manager Mrs Jenny Leonard presented an automatic external defibrillator to the Redcliffe State Emergency Services (SES) Group.

Redcliffe SES Group Leader Dean Welsh accepted the lifesaving device that is used to re-start the heart and thanked the bank for the gesture.

The \$2,000 used to pay for the device came from \$75,000 raised during a Heritage Bank charity golf day tournament held last December.



Operation Cool Burn planning in Brisbane Region

The Brisbane Region, along with others in the South East, implemented permit to light fire restrictions during the Commonwealth Games period. The intent of placing these restrictions during the Games was to avoid the affects from vegetation fires (such as smoke and ash) impacting on the Commonwealth Games venues, accommodation areas and transport corridors and the general region.

This didn't mean that mitigation was forgotten, indeed Operation Cool Burn planning has been underway for a number of months. Area Fire Management Groups (AFMGs) have held meetings in the Redlands, Brisbane and Moreton local government areas to identify agreed priority areas and activities. The draft plans are now being considered by our AFMG partners.



Medal presentations for Caboolture Area and official Brookfield appliance handover

Recently, Samford Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) hosted Caboolture Area medal presentations and an official appliance handover to Brookfield RFB at Samford Station.

Member for Pine Rivers Nikki Boyd MP represented the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, the Honourable Craig Crawford at the awards and presented Area Fire wardens and 22 volunteers from Samford, Pumicestone, Toorbul, and Rocksberg-Moorina brigades with medals and clasps.

Don Greenhalgh from the Samford Rural Fire Brigade was awarded a National Medal Third Clasp, representing 45 years of service. Congratulations Don!

The ceremony also included an official handover of a new Mitsubishi Fuso medium attack appliance, valued at \$185,400, to the Brookfield RFB.





SOUTH EASTERN REGION

Honouring ANZACS

April 25 saw many Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) members participate in ANZAC Day services throughout the state.

Among those were Beaudesert Auxiliary crews, Birnam and Woodhill Rural Fire Service crews and Beaudesert State Emergency Services crews who gathered to march together.

QFES crew members honoured and acknowledged the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women who fought to protect and defend our values and freedoms.



Contributions recognised

In late April a number of members were nominated for the Ipswich North Rotary Clubs State Emergency Service (SES) Member of the Year, as a part of the Police and Emergency Services Member of the Year Awards celebration.

This year, Chris Brandt of the Ipswich Group was the recipient of the SES Member of the Year Award. Chris was nominated as he displays a high level of commitment and standard in his work.

Chris always provides guidance and assistance to fellow SES members and shows a great deal of professionalism.





SOUTH WESTERN REGION



Local heroes

Children from Goodstart Early Learning Centre at Drayton were thrilled to get a visit from South Western Region firefighters in March.

The visit came after crews responded to a fire at the centre in February, when about 41 children and nine staff had to be evacuated.

Firefighters from the South West Region decided to return to the centre in case the children had been upset by the experience, and they presented the children with a trauma teddy for their courageous and brave efforts during the evacuation.

The children were very excited to receive the teddy bear and the firefighters took the time to show them inside the fire truck that was used to save their big play house.

Firefighters teach fire safety at the show

Children with disabilities were given an opportunity to visit the Toowoomba Show before the doors opened to the public, and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) staff from the South West Region were on hand to teach them about fire safety.

The event was held before the opening to allow the children to experience the show without becoming overwhelmed by the noise and activity of the crowds.

QFES showed the children through the fire trucks and taught them some basic home fire safety rules. It was a great opportunity to encourage local children's participation in community life in an environment that suited them.



Embracing change

On April 28 executives from across the South West Region (Toowoomba area) gathered to discuss ways to improve processes and enhance operations throughout the region.

Assistant Commissioner Stephen Smith provided an overview of what has been happening in the organisation, and spoke about the importance of embracing change.

South West Regional Manager Robert (Bob) Bundy spoke about a range of operational issues facing volunteers and sought feedback on what can be done to enhance operations throughout the region. He then presented equipment to the successful groups from the Energising Queensland State Emergency Services (SES) program.

During the gathering, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) 91 callsign vehicles were discussed. South Western Region RFS Regional Manager Superintendent Tim Chittenden gave a presentation on these command and control vehicles and Tim and Mal Stacey from Warwick RFS explained how they could be used to assist the SES during operations and how they could be activated. Some SES members are already familiar with these vehicles, having provided support to RFS volunteers during recent fires.

The valuable roles our two Volunteer Consultative Committee members Sharn and Kris play in representing the South West Region volunteers was also raised at the meeting. These representatives are a strong voice for change within the organisation.





Leah Hornibrook and Kate Eggar.

Small team, big results

The Albion office hosts a small, two-person team who have a big impact on Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES).

QFES is involved in many different partnerships and sponsorships.

Of course, the larger partnerships and sponsorships are usually well publicised and well-known within the company and public.

These include the Emergency Services Volunteers barbecues with Bunnings, fundraising for the Children’s Hospital Foundation Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Pumps and the 2018 International Women’s Day partnership with charity Zephyr.

What you may not know is the other cogs being turned in the background by the QFES Partnerships and Sponsorship Unit.

They work together to engage key corporate, community and government

stakeholders to establish and strengthen partnerships that deliver valued and sustainable benefit to QFES and foster community resilience.

A recent example was the delivery of 2,000 service designed Camelback hydration back packs for SES volunteers sponsored by NRMA Insurance and the interagency exercise on the Brisbane River for World Drones Congress.

Partnerships and Sponsorships Manager Leah Hornibrook, who started with QFES in 2006, said the team sat under Emergency Management and Community Capability.

“I develop, negotiate and manage partnership opportunities that identify and deliver positive community outcomes,” Leah said.

“I work with a diverse range of stakeholders including QFES staff and volunteers, Queensland Reconstruction Authority and other state government agencies, local government, QSuper, QBANK and community partners including Red Cross, Surf Lifesaving Queensland, Volunteering Queensland and Orange Sky Laundry to name a few,” Leah said.

Leah said she was looking forward to this year’s QFES Regional Fundraising Challenge to raise money for ECMO pumps.

“Last year we committed to a three-year agreement with Children’s Hospital Foundation to come together and raise money for the \$130,000 pumps, which are life support machines that transport kids from regional areas to Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital,” Leah said.



“Last year we handed over \$30,000 to the foundation and this year it would be amazing if we could raise the balance of \$100,000 for an ECMO pump.”

Relationships Officer Kate Eggar started in her role at the end of 2016, and said she focused on partnerships related to volunteers within the organisation.

We can make a difference and help build better communities through strategic grassroots activities that lead to positive outcomes.

– Kate Eggar

“These include partnerships with the State Emergency Service (SES) with NRMA Insurance, and a supporting partnership with Energy Queensland and Powerlink,” Kate said.

“I manage the Rural Fire Service (RFS) partnership with Energy Queensland and the informal community partnerships with Bunnings (SES and RFS), and Specsavers (SES).”

“Because of the connection between partnerships, sponsorships and donations I also manage the SES Gift Fund.”

Kate said one project which she remembered fondly was supporting donations received during and after Tropical Cyclone (TC) Debbie.

“Logan Krispy Kreme donated more than 5,600 donuts for SES volunteers after the effects of TC Debbie,” Kate said.

“They had to be delivered that day, so we drove and collected them and dropped them off at every SES shed we could access,” Kate said.

They both agreed one of the best parts of the job was having the opportunity to connect and contribute meaningfully to the community.

“We can make a difference and help build better communities through strategic grassroots activities that lead to positive outcomes,” Kate said.



QFES members working with partners Orange Sky Laundry.



Camelback hydration back packs for SES volunteers.



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QFES helping land owners better manage their properties

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), in partnership with South-East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium (SEQFBC) and local government, are helping educate private land owners on how to best maintain their properties.

Private land owners are now able to access important information to assist in vegetation management, wildfire planning and biodiversity thanks to workshops run by QFES, SEQFBC and local government.

During the workshops, landowners are provided with detailed maps of their property and are assisted in identifying buildings, fences and gates, water sources, access tracks, fire breaks and power easements.

The objective of the workshops is to allow landowners to identify biodiversity areas, fire exclusion zones and assist in developing Wildfire Management Plans.

The first follow up session with a workshop attendee recently occurred at a property in the Samford Valley area.

This property was purchased in 2008 with the intent to revegetate with native species and provide a land for wildlife reserve and conservation area. This included incorporating fire management zones with the vegetation zones. The property's location provides a significant corridor for fauna migration between two significant environmental areas in the D'Aguilar Ranges.

Land for wildlife provided advice and recommendations on weed removal and native vegetation replanting. This has also allowed the return of emerging native species into the property.

Significant activities on the property include access tracks between neighbours for fire management, vegetation zones, sacrificial zones for wildfire management, fire management planning and infrastructure improvements to the building and surrounds to support emergency service response.

Rural Fire Service Bushfire Safety Officer Wayne Ford said these workshops provide invaluable information for land owners.

"Thanks to these sorts of workshops, private land owners are now better-equipped with knowledge that will not only help them manage their land better, but will also benefit the community surrounding them," Wayne said.

If you would like to learn more about the workshops visit www.fireandbiodiversity.org.au



Follow up session with workshop attendee at a property in Samford.



SES volunteer David celebrates WOW day with his son.



Commissioner Katarina Carroll celebrates IDAHOT day.



Mackay SES celebrate WOW day.



Teaching them young at Petrie Emergency Services Expo.



Setting up for Darkness to Daylight.



Views from Horn Island.



Emergency services cadets demonstrating breathing apparatus on Thursday Island.



Firefighter brothers Garth and Craig Spencer celebrate Sibling Day.



Far Northern Region firefighters compete in The Great Wheelbarrow Race.



Members of ELT participating in RIPE program.



Thursday Island emergency services cadets.

Get ready for Queensland's Great Escape

Winter is the peak season for house fires in Queensland, and last year QFES attended 524 home fires during the winter months.

To address this issue, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) stages an annual public awareness campaign around Home Fire Safety.

This year, QFES has created a family-friendly event to get more people to plan, prepare and practise their fire escape plan at home.

Families are encouraged to take part in Queensland's Great Escape – an activity-based event where children and parents can come together to learn how to be fire safe at home, and have some fun while they do it.

The event asks families to complete the steps needed to discuss, plan and practise an escape in their own home.

The first Queensland's biggest ever fire drill event is being held on 22 June. But if you miss that date don't worry, you can take part at any time during the year by using the Great Escape web app.

With its fun and educational video game feel, the web app helps families learn about fire safety so they know exactly what to do if a fire breaks out.

There is even a cute fire-helmet character named Red, who gets involved to explain what families need to do and why it is important to practise a fire escape plan at home.

For those who do not have children at home, it is equally important to get

yourselves and your loved ones prepared in case a fire breaks out. Fire happens fast, and having an escape plan can mean the difference between life and death.

Whether you live by yourself, in a share house, or with your family, it is important to be prepared and practise your escape.

You can take part in Queensland's Great Escape and let your family and friends know how to be fire escape ready by searching Fire Escape Plan.

The Home Fire Safety campaign will run throughout winter on social media and radio.





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