

Our performance

This section reports on the objectives and strategies of the QFES strategic plan 2021–2025 and is a sample of the department’s performance highlights from 2021–22. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.

2025 Objective

1. A strong, collaborative and sustainable QFES recognised for contemporary and adaptable fire, emergency and disaster management service delivery.

2021–2025 Strategies

- » Lead and support locally trusted networks to prioritise risk reduction, preparedness and information sharing.
- » Deliver public value and service optimisation through contemporary and sustainable resource management.
- » Lead the development and implementation of future-focused legislation and policy.
- » Connect evidence-based decision-making to operationalise strategy, enhance performance and realise efficiencies.
- » Maintain a commitment to ensure the health and safety of our staff and volunteers.

QFES has worked on many fronts to build a strong, collaborative and sustainable department. Delivering public value is paramount, whilst at the same time ensuring the capabilities of the department, service delivery partner agencies and the community remain strong. Effort during 2021–22 has resulted in good progress in achieving fiscal sustainability, with continued focus on building a stronger fiscally responsible culture. This comes as investment in ICT, fleet and our people continues to ensure QFES staff, volunteers and partners are supported to do what they do best in what has been a challenging year due to natural disasters and other challenges.

The annual QFES Community Insights Survey found a two-percentage point increase in the number of clients who have had a positive interaction with QFES. Volunteers also rated their satisfaction with volunteering for QFES, through the annual Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) survey with a two-percentage point improvement in satisfaction with an average result of 76 per cent.

The annual VFQ and the Working for Queensland (WfQ) surveys also provide insight into the extent to which staff and volunteers recognise a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery. This measure found that 86 per cent of staff and 86 per cent of volunteers recognised a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery at QFES.

QFES operationalises its strategic plan through an annual organisational plan. Through 2021–22, the majority of activities that helped progress this strategic objective were completed or on schedule. Activities not completed or on schedule had corrective strategies identified and implemented.

Fiscal sustainability

The QFES *Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2019–2023* is a five-year blueprint to support a fiscally responsible culture across the department. The fundamental principles of the strategy include good governance; leadership; stewardship; efficiency; accountability; transparency; integrity; public defensibility; and performance.

During 2021–22, QFES continued activities which align with the strategy’s principles with incorporation of outcomes from the Implementation Roadmap into business-as-usual activities, including financial reporting and training products as well as enhanced governance and asset management mechanisms.

A review of the strategy has commenced and is expected to be completed by December 2022. Fiscal sustainability is an ongoing focus for the department.

Volunteerism Strategy

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of fire and emergency services in Queensland and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience.

QFES has approximately 34,500 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers and Peer Support Officers.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy, launched in October 2018, aims to support a robust and flexible contemporary volunteer model which reflects best practice, innovation and social trends across volunteerism and embed these models in the QFES culture and ethos.

The Volunteerism Strategy's implementation program contains nine key themes with 27 initiatives that align with the strategy's strategic priorities and guiding principles. The key themes are:

- Recruitment and Onboarding
- Leadership Development
- Honours and Awards
- Training
- Engagement
- Sustainability
- Identity and Communication
- Wellbeing
- Consultation.

The implementation program has been developed to realise the intention of the Volunteerism Strategy through tangible projects that will strategically and sequentially facilitate the improvements that have been identified as priorities for volunteers, volunteering and volunteerism within the department and the Queensland community. The department will undertake an evaluation in 2023 post the implementation program to inform the pathway forward that recognises the dynamic environment in which emergency response volunteers operate and a contemporary volunteerism culture.

During the reporting period, the department:

- Continued the development and implementation of the foundation programs that underpin the QFES Leadership Framework with Leading-Self fully implemented and the first Leading-Others pilot program completed. Volunteers were included in the pilot program as well as involved in content development workshops for the Leading-Leaders Program (refer to page 79 for further information).

- Launched Mindarma in May 2022 during National Volunteer Week. Mindarma as in 'mind armour' is one of the largest proactive psychological wellbeing program rollouts in Australia. Mindarma is an online evidence-based learning program that supports the psychological wellbeing of QFES' volunteers and is proven to enhance psychological resilience. The program teaches mindfulness and a range of cognitive strategies to help learners manage any stressors they may encounter while volunteering and during daily life. The program has been customised for volunteers from FRS, RFS and SES and Peer Support Officers, ensuring the message resonates with each participant and identifies service specific scenarios.
- Developed the Volunteer Onboarding Project to achieve shorter timeframes for onboarding completion for volunteers in each of the services (FRS, RFS and SES) and increase consistency and reliability in onboarding systems and processes. New streamlined volunteer application forms with standardised questions have been developed and scoping of a digital solution has been completed.
- Continued to support delivery of the Emergency Service Volunteer Pin launched in 2019.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy is available at: www.qfes.qld.gov.au

Information and Communication Technology Investment Plan

The QFES ICT Investment Plan plays an important role in supporting and enabling operational and business requirements in the mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery of fires, emergencies and disasters.

Following the PSBA disestablishment effective 1 July 2021, ICT support functions for QFES were transitioned to QPS. Since that time, QFES has been in the process of stabilising internal ICT capacity and capability in preparation for functions to transition from QPS to QFES.

The investment plan process has matured significantly during the reporting period to build a program of work and future ICT investment roadmap which aligns to the department's strategic direction and Queensland Government priorities. The activities in the program of work represent a balance of managing ICT risk, expanding existing business and operational capabilities and driving new capabilities in support of frontline service delivery.

The program of work was prioritised based on a QFES assessment of risk and capability growth and in alignment with the Office of Assurance and Investment criteria.

As at 30 June 2022, ICT projects underway include:

- Information and Technology Directorate Transition Project
- Nexus Continuous Improvement Project
- Field Mobility Emergency Services
- Digital Breathing Apparatus Control Board
- State Radio Upgrade Project (business case only)
- Alarm Signaling Equipment Replacement Project.

Computer Aided Dispatch

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) is a mission and safety critical system that supports contact (Triple Zero 000), dispatching, mobilisation, operations and coordination capabilities by enabling rapid deployment of resources to emergency incidents and situations.

The CAD Upgrade project successfully delivered the upgrade of QFES Inform CAD (v5.7.28) to CAD Enterprise (v21.1.2.2) on 24 November 2021. The CAD Upgrade project delivered an enhanced CAD system coupled with a change management strategy that has produced clear benefits to the department's service delivery including guaranteed vendor support.

Information Management Framework

The QFES Information Management Framework underpins information management practices across the department. The framework ensures that information and data resources are managed as a strategic asset, are trusted and accurate, support service delivery, are managed securely, meet compliance requirements, support decision-making, provide predictive insights and help measure the department's performance.

During 2021–22, QFES continued to leverage the Information Management Framework to guide information management practices across the department, including embedding information governance, identifying and registering information assets and assigning information asset custodians, data management, information security and facilitating information access and use. The framework undergoes periodic reviews to ensure that the policies and supporting doctrine remain contemporary and aligned to whole-of-government policy compliance requirements.

QFES also continued to progress the Queensland Disaster Management Data Coordination Framework. The framework is a QFES-led initiative to improve disaster management data coordination activities across all disaster management groups, including all levels of government, non-government organisations and private entities, with the aim of improving Queenslanders' ability to better plan, manage and respond to disaster events. To operationalise the data sharing initiative, QFES developed a framework to facilitate information sharing. The framework is aligned to the Queensland Government *Information sharing authorising framework* and the *Information security classification framework*.

To support disaster information sharing, QFES maintains the Queensland Disaster Management Portal as the platform to deliver on the data coordination and sharing activities across disaster management stakeholders.

As part of the department's goal of building organisational information management capabilities, QFES is progressing an assessment to determine implementation options for a solution to support the department with managing its documents and records. An enterprise-wide electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS) will enable QFES to maximise the value of documents and records with consistent and timely capture and compliance management. The department anticipates several benefits from the new system including improving accessibility, reduction in duplication and promoting information sharing across the department. The eDRMS solution will also enhance life-cycle management of records by automating controls governing information security and disposal.

QFES is committed to embedding strategic, consistent and structured enterprise-wide information security practices that align with the Queensland Government *Information security policy (IS18:2018)*. The policy requires that all agencies must implement an Information Security Management System (ISMS) based on ISO 27001 Information Security Management. The function of an ISMS is to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information.

Throughout 2021–22, QFES focused on maturing its ISMS and building on the progress achieved in previous years. Furthermore, the QFES ISMS was independently audited against the requirements of ISO 27001 Information Security Management. The findings provide the basis for the department to further mature the operation of the ISMS and enhance QFES information security practices. The audit findings will be addressed through the QFES ISMS Corrective Action and Improvements Register.

Additionally, the QFES ISMS complements the Frontline and Digital Division, QPS ISMS. Information communication technology and cyber security services are provided to QFES by the QPS Frontline and Digital Division under a shared services arrangement. The Frontline and Digital Division is operating a certified ISMS and the scope includes critical assets both physical, information and data.

In line with policy requirements, during the mandatory annual information security reporting process, the Commissioner attested to the appropriateness of the information security risk management within QFES. Formal notification will be provided to the Queensland Government Chief Information Security Officer by 30 September 2022 in accordance with IS18:2018, noting that appropriate assurance activities have been undertaken to inform this opinion and the department's information security risk position.

Capital program

Significant capital works initiatives were delivered or progressed during 2021–22 including:

- **completion** of the:
 - replacement QFES complex at Maleny
 - replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
 - Gracemere
 - Rainbow Beach
 - Rosewood
 - replacement composite fire and rescue station at Charter Towers
- **commencing (includes planning) or continuing** the:
 - new permanent fire and rescue stations at:
 - Caloundra South
 - Mount Cotton (known as the Mount Cotton Road Fire and Rescue Station)
 - Springfield and Narangba (known as the Moreton Bay Central Fire and Rescue Station)
 - replacement regional QFES headquarters and auxiliary fire and rescue station at Maryborough
 - replacement auxiliary fire and rescue station at Loganlea
 - relocation and upgrade of the Mossman auxiliary fire and rescue station
 - replacement QFES mechanical workshop in South East Queensland (Pinkenba).

The QFES asset investment framework underwent significant reform during the reporting period for 2022–23. This reform brings greater alignment to the

department's capability framework, integrated resource management and better links capital investment to the achievement of strategic capability objectives.

Fleet management

The department's 2021–22 fleet budget provided \$30.5 million, almost double the 2020–21 investment. This included \$18 million for the delivery of FRS appliances and \$12.5 million for the delivery of RFS appliances in 2021–22. From this budget, QFES delivered a total of 50 fit-for-purpose appliances (12 FRS appliances and 38 RFS appliances).

QFES, like all organisations that operate large fleets, has been significantly impacted by global supply chain challenges. These supply challenges have impacted the delivery of vehicle chassis to QFES as well as the body build industry that completes fit-out of FRS and RFS appliances. These supply challenges are ongoing. As a result, a total of 57 appliances (29 FRS and 28 RFS appliances) will be carried over for delivery from 2021–22 into 2022–23.

QFES is undertaking ongoing research and analysis into an alternative fuels fleet transition strategy which will align with a future delivery procurement strategy. This will assist the department to support the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030* (QCAP) and inform the identification of opportunities to consider lower carbon emission vehicle options where appropriate across the QFES fleet (pool cars, Emergency Response Vehicles and light, medium and heavy appliances—FRS and RFS).

Lower carbon emission vehicles are being introduced into the department's leased fleet, which includes seven hybrid vehicles and three electric vehicles. QFES continues to assess replacement options on a case-by-case basis with one of the new electric vehicles undergoing significant engineering to convert it into the department's first electric Emergency Response Vehicle to be trialled by RFS.

In preparation for the introduction of an expanded electric vehicle fleet, the department installed five charging bays at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron in late 2021. This charging infrastructure is solely for the use of QFES' electric vehicles and is in addition to the Queensland Electric Superhighway which includes fast-charging sites from Coolangatta to Port Douglas and Brisbane to Toowoomba. The superhighway will extend to link with regional and rural locations, connecting electric vehicle drivers from Brisbane to Mount Isa, Goondiwindi to Emerald and Longreach to Cairns with location planning underway.

Aerial firefighting capability

During 2020–21 a Large Air Tanker (LAT) aircraft was introduced to boost the department's aerial firefighting capability for the first year of a five-year contract for use throughout the bushfire season. In addition, a contract through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) was established for the following four-year period (commencing 2021–22) with Field Air for the Bombardier Dash-8 Q400AT LAT and AgAir for the Air Attack Supervision platform.

During the 2021–22 bushfire season, the LAT returned from Canada and began its contract on 1 September 2021. The four-year contract is a collaboration between the Queensland and Victorian governments with the follow-on contracted period in Victoria referred to as a 'dovetail' service. The aircraft remains in Australia for the entire four-year period reducing the mobilisation and demobilisation costs.

The Q400AT aircraft is one of the most innovative emergency response air tankers in the world. The aircraft can drop 10,000 litres of firefighting gel or fire retardant to reinforce fire break activities and protect structural or economic assets. The LAT flies at up to 670 kilometres an hour with a maximum range of approximately 1,800 kilometres. The LAT drops water mixed with fire retardant or gel depending on the situation. The LAT is supported by a LAT Lead Plane contracted service that performs the Air Attack Supervision duties to ensure safety of the LAT operations. Both aircraft are based in Bundaberg.

During the 2021–22 bushfire season, there were eight aircraft engaged on the penultimate year of a NAFC contract for service, with the 2022–23 bushfire season being the final year of the contract. The eight aircraft comprised fixed wing and rotary wing, with capability for air attack and observation. These aircraft are located at Toowoomba and Bundaberg air bases. NAFC and QFES will undertake a procurement process at the end of 2022 for the 2023–24 bushfire season contracted aircraft.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (drones)

QFES has a fleet of more than 85 Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) available for operations across Queensland. Within QFES, approximately 50 RPAS pilots have completed approved pilot training courses and 12 Senior Remote pilots are working towards being authorised to approve flights.

Operating pilots have also undertaken specialised operations training in night operations, dropping and discharging items, indoor capability and operations in controlled airspace.

During the reporting period, RPAS were predominantly utilised in searches, fire investigations, flood response and investigation, hazard reduction burns and hazard investigations.

Other key achievements include:

- Delivered the first *QFES Strategic Workforce Plan 2021–2024* (refer page 77). The plan details the department's workforce future outlook; workforce profile; values; workforce environment; and strategic workforce activities.
- Finalised the Safe Crewing Task Force final report in October 2021. The task force was created to advise on safety and wellbeing matters for employees covered by *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Certified Agreement 2019*, including FRS personnel, QFES Communications Centre officers and RFS employees. The report is an important benchmark to underpin planning across QFES, such as the new FRS Station Crewing Model. It will help ensure the services the department delivers provide the best outcomes for the Queensland community and the safety of the workforce.
- Recruited 145 additional firefighters at 30 June 2022 under the 2020 Government Commitment to provide an additional 357 frontline firefighters over five years (commencing 2020–21), with 97 firefighters appointed in 2021–22. The additional firefighters will enhance crewing numbers in some existing locations and provide the additional resources to implement a new FRS Station Crewing Model. It is proposed to recruit a further 97 firefighters in 2022–23 to continue delivery of this commitment.
- Launched the 2023 Firefighter Recruitment Campaign to fulfill 2023–24 requirements.
- Produced the Recruit Course 113 documentary which showcases a rare behind the scenes view into the firefighter recruit training course at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy in Brisbane. The documentary is designed to increase exposure to the reality of the recruit course and increase attraction to the firefighter role, aligned with the ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. attraction strategy (refer page 77).
- Continued review of portfolio legislation and progression of legislative amendments to support government outcomes.

- Progressed the *Fire and Emergency Services (Annual Contributions) Amendment Regulation 2022* and the *Building Fire Safety (Fee Unit Conversion) Amendment Regulation 2022* to commence on 1 July 2022 to apply annual indexation of fees and charges in accordance with the Queensland Government indexation policy to the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* and *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*.
- Promoted and encouraged workers to pursue workplace health initiatives through the delivery of online information sessions from the Heart Foundation, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, QSuper, My health for life and Wellbeing Australia.
- Promoted and raised awareness to reduce stigma towards mental illness through activities such as R U OK? Day (9 September 2021) and Mental Health Week (9–15 May 2022).
- Introduced a new fit-for-purpose station wear uniform which is progressively being rolled out to all permanent and auxiliary firefighters.
- Delivered an additional five Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft bringing the total to 31 across the state including five at the State Deployment Centre in Brisbane for training and deployment as required.
- Trained an additional 17 Swiftwater Rescue Technicians across the state, providing a total of 448 trained personnel within FRS.
- Provided six floodboats and eight trailers to support 14 SES groups across Queensland. SES floodboats are purchased and registered by QFES and owned by local governments. SES trailers are purchased by QFES and owned by local governments with the majority registered by SES.
- Finalised the QFES Capability Map and Matrix with approval from BoM in December 2021. The map and matrix identify the department's capabilities and associated activities, while also identifying the roles and responsibilities for the development and delivery of the department's capabilities. The next step is to baseline capability, creating greater alignment between the department's risks, capability and strategic objectives.
- Input into the fire safety related provisions of the National Construction Code 2022 via engagement with key stakeholders such as the Department of Energy and Public Works; AFAC's Built Environment and Planning Technical Group; who in turn engage with the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) Building Codes Committee, which is the ABCB's primary technical committee for building code matters. Specialist input related to future-proofing new buildings for electric vehicles and battery energy storage systems; fire safety requirements for childcare centres and primary schools in multi-storey buildings; non-combustibility requirements for external walls/cladding; and bushfire provisions for certain Class 9 buildings such as schools, aged-care and health-care buildings.
- Continued membership of the Safer Buildings Taskforce (Department of Energy and Public Works) providing specialist input into building fire safety strategies, subject matter expertise in fire behaviour and risk mitigation, and fire brigade intervention for buildings that have non-conforming cladding.
- Continued participation in fire safety research activities with various external stakeholders aimed at increasing the department's knowledge and understanding of innovative and emerging building products, technologies, and methods of construction. This included collaboration, research and policy development relating to electric vehicles and battery energy storage systems, and fire safety principles.
- Renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Environment and Science surrounding the management of potential fire risk from waste stockpiles.
- Commenced planning for three RFS Volunteer Summits to be held in 2022–23. The summits are a biennial event that bring together staff and volunteers from across the state to discuss a range of topics within QFES including RFS. The event provides volunteers with the opportunity to hear from key stakeholders on a range of topics relevant to the work of rural fire brigades. Offering three events with a more regional approach will allow for greater attendance by volunteers who live in rural and remote Queensland communities and assist RFS to appeal to the broader volunteer workforce providing an opportunity to increase overall attendance.
- Conducted the 2022 SES Leadership Conference from 27–29 May 2022 in Brisbane with more than 130 delegates from around the state including Local Controllers, volunteer emerging leaders and SES staff. The theme of the conference was *Leading together through challenge*.
- Released the first issues of the monthly Branch newsletters—*Fire and Rescue Service Branch Burning Issues Update*, *RFS ON Fire*, and *SES State Coordination Branch Newsletter*. The newsletters aim to streamline and enhance the communication between regional, area and state offices by providing information on policy and procedure updates and reviews, equipment enhancements, and information on new and ongoing initiatives and activities.

- Implemented and progressed 19 initiatives from the RFS Blueprint into business-as-usual activities including the development of a multi-agency firefighting capability with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and implementation of bushfire specific digital interfaces to improve sharing of field intelligence. An additional eight initiatives are progressing. The RFS Blueprint defines RFS's future destination and what its objectives for success in 2030 will look like.
- Commenced work on the Online Permit to Light Fire System project which will increase automation of permit systems and processes and reduce the amount of paperwork and timeframe required for applicants and fire wardens. It is envisaged that this process will also improve the oversight for the Chief Fire Warden and provide opportunities to diagnose training requirements and opportunities to provide better support to volunteer fire wardens.
- Completed the Fire Mapping Tablet rollout to all eligible brigades through a partnership with the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc through the Rural Fire Brigade Appliance Technology Grant. The tablets will assist with brigade mapping during preparation and response activities. QFES continues to work with regions and area offices to roll out new initiatives and interfaces to improve field intelligence.
- Approved the QFES Human Rights Information Awareness Strategy on 16 December 2021. The strategy has delivered multiple activities to increase awareness of and build a culture of human rights within the department including launching an e-learning product in March 2022. The e-learning product explores human rights from the perspective of the responsibilities of staff and volunteers to respect, promote and protect the human rights of all Queenslanders.
- Continued to maintain the currency of fire investigation training with a cohort of 12 candidates from around the state undertaking the nationally recognised qualification of Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Fire Investigation) offered by the Canberra Institute of Technology. A further 12 candidates will commence the course in July 2022.

Celebrating our volunteers

QFES and the community recognise and celebrate the contribution of the approximately 34,500 volunteers that are critical to the delivery of frontline services and who support the people and communities we live in, enhancing community resilience and community safety. QFES volunteers include RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers and Peer Support Officers.

During 2021–22, QFES celebrated:

- SES WOW Day on 18 May 2022 (Wear Orange Wednesday) during National Volunteer Week with regional events held across the state such as barbeques and shared stories. WOW day is the national day to celebrate and thank SES volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the community. SES Principal Community Partner, Suncorp, also supported celebrations through its network. The SES has been an integral part of Queensland’s emergency response for more than 47 years.
- Peer Support Week (14–20 March 2022) which provided an opportunity to promote the QFES Peer Support Program and recognise the valuable contribution made by Peer Support Officers to the wellbeing of QFES and its members.
- SES Week (9–17 October 2021) which honoured the hard work and celebrated the outstanding efforts of SES volunteers and staff across the state. SES Week events included regional events and award presentations for volunteers, groups and units who provided outstanding service to their community in times of need. SES Week 2021 also included an inaugural Partners Breakfast which returns in 2022.
- Yellow Ribbon Day on 14 September 2021 in support of RFS volunteers committed to keeping their local communities safe. RFS volunteers provide a range of services from frontline firefighting to behind-the-scenes community education and support.
- RFS Week (1–7 August 2021) which recognised and acknowledged the dedication of RFS volunteers and their commitment to helping keep Queensland communities safe. In 2021, RFS introduced the State Young Volunteer of the Year Award and Regional Young Volunteer of the Year Awards with one state level award and seven regional awards presented to RFS volunteers across the state. These awards will continue in 2022 and are open to volunteers aged between 16 and 25 years of age and acknowledge the achievements and contribution of young people.

Climate change

The changing climate is a major challenge for the emergency and disaster management sector. An appreciation of climate science and the lived experience of staff, volunteers and the communities QFES serves motivates the department's commitment to being a contemporary and adaptable fire, emergency and disaster management service provider that regularly examines its service offerings to ensure they meet current and future needs, and to reduce the department's carbon footprint.

Effective governance to enhance climate-related decision-making

QFES has enhanced its governance arrangements to ensure climate-related considerations are factored into its decision-making. The QFES Climate Change Advisory Group began as a working group in 2018, delivering the QFES Climate Change Position Paper and QFES' first climate-focused action plan in 2020. The advisory group provides advice and support to assist decision-making in relation to climate change transition and adaptation and in consideration of the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030* (QCAP) in 2021.

QFES Climate Action Plan 2022–26

The QCAP was released in July 2021 as an online plan outlining Queensland's roadmap to meet its emissions and renewables targets. The release of the QCAP was an impetus to renew the department's climate-related work plan and ensure that it aligned to the climate change transition and adaptation actions outlined in the QCAP (www.des.qld.gov.au)

The *QFES Climate Action Plan 2022–26* was released in April 2022. The plan articulates the department's approach to aligning its climate change transition and adaptation actions with the QCAP and contains 13 actions.

The department's action plan is available at www.qfes.qld.gov.au

Preparing QFES for operations in a climate-challenged world

The *QFES Climate Action Plan 2022–26* includes actions that prepare the department for operations in a climate-challenged world. A discrete action completed in May 2022 was the application of climate and socio-economic scenarios to long term strategy. *Strategy 2030* is QFES' long-term strategy designed to define and unite QFES through articulating a vision for a preferred future. The efficacy of *Strategy 2030* as a strategy for beyond 2030 is being reviewed in the aftermath of significant local and global events that have occurred since its release in 2018. In partnership with NHRA, the impact of four transformative scenarios on *Strategy 2030* in a climate-challenged world was considered. This research utilisation project applied a wind tunnelling approach using transformative scenarios developed over the last 18 months through a partnership between NHRA, AFAC and fire and emergency services agencies across Australia and New Zealand. The transformative scenarios were themselves co-designed to help agencies better understand the driving forces in the world that interact to shape the future in unpredictable and volatile ways. The application of the transformative scenarios proved an engaging method of exploring strategy implications of a climate-challenged world beyond 2030 and provides early indications of scenarios that may test emergency and disaster management sector strategy.

Disaster and emergency risk management

QFES is responsible for statewide disaster risk assessments which factor in the impacts of climate change. The Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) is Queensland's endorsed approach to disaster and emergency risk management. Through QERMF, QFES upholds international best practice as championed by the:

- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The QERMF tangibly supports local and district disaster management planning by providing scientifically underpinned, lead agency risk information that can be rationalised to each local government area. For further information regarding the QERMF refer to page 46.

Providing disaster management training to the sector

Disaster management training is an especially important activity undertaken to maintain and enhance the QDMA and is a capability enabler as the department prepares for operations in a climate-challenged world. QFES provides disaster management training to QDMA stakeholders under the Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework (QDMTF) (refer to page 57 for further information).

Bushfire season 2021–22—Operation Paratus

QFES' response to the 2021–22 Queensland bushfire season was known as Operation Paratus, meaning being prepared and equipped. The bushfire season ran from 1 August 2021 to 4 January 2022.

The mission for Operation Paratus was to minimise the impacts and consequences of bushfires upon Queensland communities during the 2021–22 bushfire season in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 2021–22 bushfire season, QFES undertook more than 7,400 responses to over 2,800 bushfire incidents contributing to at least 18,000 vehicle hours, with 280 bushfire warnings issued.

During Operation Paratus, 1.9 million litres of water were dropped from aircraft attacking the fires.

Operation Paratus saw a return to a more benign bushfire season compared with the previous three bushfire seasons. To put this into context, between 1 August and 30 September 2021, QFES had 62 aircraft dispatches however, in the same period in 2020, there were 123 aircraft dispatches.

The LAT was utilised twice during Operation Paratus—once at Shannon Creek (Central Region) and once at Carnarvon Gorge (South Western Region)—dropping a total of 40,000 litres of fire retardant.

During the operational period, there was no loss of life and no loss of dwellings reported.

Severe weather season—Operation Kurrabana

QFES' response to the 2021–22 Queensland severe weather season (1 October 2021 to 30 April 2022) was known as Operation Kurrabana (pronounced Gurrabana). Kurrabana is an Indigenous term from Yirrganydji language. The Yirrganydji traditional lands and waters extend along the coastal plains from Cairns to Port Douglas in Far North Queensland. The Yirrganydji seasonal calendar shows two major seasons, with one being the Kurrabana (wet season) spanning November to May. The severe weather season occurred concurrently with COVID-19 operations (Operation Exigent—refer page 40) and within COVID-19 restrictions.

QFES' approach facilitated preparation, rapid planning, mobilisation, response during events and the reduction of impacts to communities post event.

QFES planned for the severe weather season by facilitating high-level initiatives focused on preparation which included connecting with key disaster management stakeholders across Queensland and ensuring they were adequately informed and prepared to help protect Queenslanders. This included the annual jurisdictional High Risk Weather Season preparedness briefing in September 2021 in partnership with Emergency Management Australia. The briefing provided disaster management stakeholders with information on jurisdictional activities over the previous 12 months and highlighted important changes in the QDMA and strategic direction of the Australian Government.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (financial assistance and relief provided to disaster affected communities) were activated for nine natural disaster events in Queensland during 2021–22:

- Southern Queensland Flooding (6–20 May 2022)
- Northern and Central Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding (21 April – 12 May 2022)
- South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding (22 February – 5 April 2022)
- Cape York Tropical Low and Rainfall (22–28 February 2022)
- Far North Queensland Low Pressure Trough (1–7 February 2022)
- Western Queensland Low Pressure Trough (19 January – 4 February 2022)
- Tropical Cyclone Tiffany (10–11 January 2022)
- Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth (29 December 2021–10 January 2022)
- Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding (10 November–3 December 2021).

Queensland's disaster management arrangements were activated for a number of these events, including at local, district and state levels.

During the severe weather season, the SES received approximately 18,650 tasks and approximately 1,200 requests for assistance through TAMS (Task and Management System).

FRS swiftwater rescue personnel responded to approximately 900 swiftwater rescue and water rescue events to support the community. Several of these high intensity rescues were credited with lifesaving interventions. Additional resource surge capacity was implemented in multiple regions to increase service delivery capacity for swiftwater rescue operations over the Operation Kurrabana period.

During the weather events, RFS volunteers and rural fire brigades provided assistance within their local communities with various tasks including sandbagging and aiding other response agencies. In the days and weeks following the events, RFS volunteers supported recovery activities including removal of damaged items from homes and businesses, and conducting washouts.

QFES worked with Neighbourhood Centres Queensland to supply *Get your kit together* materials to centres across the state, including household emergency plans, emergency checklist fridge magnets, pocket torches and stickers with *SES assist 132 500*, for distribution to community members, aged-care centres and local community groups. The resources are supplied as part of the SES Principal Community Partnership with Suncorp.

QFES regional staff and volunteers also worked closely in supporting local governments to deliver disaster awareness and preparedness messages through various community activities and events.

QFES continues to support the *Get Ready Queensland* program in partnership with local governments to build the state's resilience to dealing with natural disasters and to encourage local community participation in preparedness and resilience building (www.getready.qld.gov.au).

South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding: 22 February 2022–7 March 2022

From 22 February to 7 March 2022, a strong La Niña weather pattern caused a low-pressure system over Queensland's southern coast, resulting in South East Queensland and parts of New South Wales (NSW) experiencing unprecedented rainfall and subsequent flooding. Large areas of South East Queensland, including the Brisbane, Maryborough, Gympie, Sunshine Coast, Caboolture, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Logan and Gold Coast areas experienced major flash and riverine flooding. Tragically the 2022 rainfall and flood event resulted in the loss of 13 lives, including the life of SES volunteer Merryl Dray.

The event evolved rapidly and placed considerable and complex demands on emergency services over a sustained period. Rainfall totals for the six days ending on 28 February were at least two and a half times the February average rainfall across parts of South East Queensland, with some parts of Queensland receiving more than five times their monthly average rainfall.

During the event, a total of 23 Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMGs) and nine District Disaster Management Groups (DDMGs) were activated, with QFES Regional Operations Centres activated in each of the four impacted regions. The intensity and extended duration of the event resulted in approximately 1,600 SES volunteers delivering and supporting emergency services activities which totalled over 36,200 hours of effort. FRS swiftwater crews were also heavily involved in the event. In total approximately 8,100 tasks including temporary repairs, sandbagging, debris clean-up, floodboat operations and water rescues were completed by QFES staff and volunteers. In addition, 16,485 damage assessments were carried out during the period 22 February to 7 March 2022, with many more conducted in the days after.

Historically, this type of geographically isolating event hampers attendance to certain locations and some communities become increasingly isolated during the event. Consequently, QFES adopted a multi-model approach to emergency communications through the utilisation of social media including Facebook, Twitter, websites and Instagram, that supported the use of Emergency Alerts. During the event, 94 Emergency Alert campaigns were issued (the first alert was issued on 23 February and the final alert was issued on 3 March 2022), and a total of 530 posts to the various social media platforms, with a reach of

over 27 million and an engagement of approximately 300,000.

A coordinated effort across the disaster management arrangements was maintained with effective online and in-person communications via online updates and daily briefings and debriefings. The inclusion of QFES Emergency Management Coordinators and Liaison Officers was critical in supporting the coordinated effort from LDMGs and DDMGs to QFES incident command, and the situational awareness and ability to extend communication supported an efficient and coordinated response. Once the intense rain across the state ceased, riverine flooding remained a concern for several days as the water slowly receded and water continued to be released from the dams. Over 170 suburbs in the greater Brisbane region were impacted; almost double the impact of the 2011 floods¹.

The Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services declared disasters in the Disaster District of Gympie on 26 February 2022, and the Brisbane Local Government Area and Disaster District of Maryborough on 27 February 2022.

On 15 March 2022, the Premier and Minister for the Olympics announced that the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM) would undertake a review of Queensland's response to the rainfall and flood event and assess the effectiveness of preparedness activities. The IGEM's Review Report will be finalised by 31 August 2022.

¹ *Brisbane City Council 2022 Flood Review* www/brisbane.qld.gov.au

The following table demonstrates the scale of the event:

Event Scale—22 February – 7 March 2022	
13 lives lost	5,664 QFES staff and volunteer shifts conducted 15 fire and rescue personnel deployed from Victoria
Multiple agencies—local, district and state level 23 LDMGs, nine DDMGs, one SOC, four Regional Operations Centres and nine Incident Control Centres	16,485 damage assessments completed
94 Emergency Alert campaigns (first alert issued on 23 February 2022 and final alert issued on 3 March 2022) More than 9.5 million text messages delivered successfully	FRS 655 tasks completed SES 7,529 tasks completed and 428 Agency Support Requests received
Three Disaster Declarations—Brisbane, Gympie and Maryborough	331 people evacuated

COVID-19—planning and response—Operation Exigent

QFES' planning and response to COVID-19, known as Operation Exigent, recognised the requirement for urgent and immediate action to address the demanding, evolving and significant impacts of the pandemic.

During the pandemic, QFES played a significant role in supporting the strategic planning and operational response through leading state planning and logistics functions including quarantine hotel contract management, the operation of the SDCC capability, providing frontline support to the QPS with border control operations and to Queensland Health at vaccination and testing sites as well as issuing COVID-19 related Emergency Alerts.

During the reporting period, QFES also coordinated the reception of evacuees from Afghanistan to Queensland, as the lead agency under the State Reception Plan. This included a quarantine period of 14 days for the evacuees oversighted by QPS and Queensland Health.

QFES concluded Operation Exigent with the coordination of the quarantine hotel management being transferred to the Quarantine Taskforce within the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) on 1 April 2022.

The SDCC was continuously activated from 2 February 2020 to 29 April 2022, totalling 817 days, in support of Queensland Health's State Health Emergency Coordination Centre.

In addition to supporting the Queensland response to COVID-19, QFES implemented a range of internal response strategies to maintain continuity of service to the Queensland community and ensured the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and volunteers. This included working with key internal and external stakeholders to ensure prompt communication and implementation of advice issued by Queensland Health.

Exercises

QFES personnel participate in exercises to increase their competency levels in major, joint agency and small routine incidents through hands-on training.

Exercises enable testing of factors including:

- interoperability across QFES services
- ability to liaise with external agencies
- appropriate response and operational procedures
- communication plans
- response times
- suitability and effectiveness of equipment and personal protective equipment
- operational preparedness.

Exercises conducted by QFES or that QFES participated in include:

- Exercise Aurruncus—an interagency exercise held in June 2022 aimed at exploring the preparation for, response to, and initial recovery from a simulated South-East Queensland tropical cyclone. The scenario focused primarily on the impacts to the community, residential buildings and critical infrastructure resulting from severe winds, storm surge and riverine flooding. The objective of the exercise was to understand the capability gaps in collective risk management strategies, identify significant challenges for the emergency management sector and challenges which may not currently have a solution. The exercise was attended by approximately 120 stakeholders and supported by several subject matter experts relating to hazard, evacuation management, the built environment, and critical infrastructure, including the Australian Defence Force, Geoscience Australia, James Cook University Cyclone Testing Station, Department of Environment and Science, Department of Health and local governments.
- Exercise Arras Sprint—a joint exercise involving local and federal defence military bases, Queensland Ambulance Service, QPS, QFES and Toowoomba Regional Council LDMG. This exercise, held 16–19 May 2022, tested interagency interactions including communications in multiple media formats. The Regional Operations Centre in the South Western Region was utilised as the central coordination centre with several other locations as control points, including Oakey RAAF Base, QPS Regional Headquarters and Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport. Local FRS crews were involved in local scenarios outside of the coordination centre.
- Mackay Ready—a multi-agency functional exercise held in November 2021 on a private property near Eton (west of Mackay). QFES helped plan and facilitate the exercise and engaged the LDMGs, DDMG, local emergency services and the community. The aim of the exercise was to test multi-agency interoperability between the Australian Defence Force and DDMG stakeholders during a severe weather event including communication, command structures and deployment of resources. As part of the exercise, QFES members formed the incident management team, land search operations, swiftwater rescue, exercise control and safety functions.
- Operation Thanos—a joint-agency exercise held in November 2021 at Wharf 10 (a liquid product berth for petroleum products and gas) in Cairns to practise the interoperability between QFES, Ports North, Atom, Origin Energy and other agencies to effectively control an incident involving a large diesel spill and a fire on the wharf with a liquid petroleum gas tanker alongside.
- the Asia–Pacific Regional Earthquake Response Exercise conducted in November 2021 with participation of the QFES AUS-1 DART in this multi-national rescue exercise. This exercise was conducted over three days using an online format. The exercise tested the interoperability and coordination capability of AUS-1 DART when working with international teams.
- a multi-agency training exercise held at the Gold Coast Airport in October 2021. Crews from Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting, Fire and Rescue NSW and QFES shared their knowledge and experience for responding to emergencies at the facility. The purpose of the training was to better understand the resource capabilities available in emergencies and to continue building the relationship between the three fire services. Current and future communications capabilities were also discussed.

Major deployments

Deployments can be an opportunity to gain personal and professional development including learnings around fire management and resourcing systems, as they often involve an integration of QFES permanent, auxiliary, civilian and volunteer staff and resources. International deployments provide an opportunity to share knowledge with fire service professionals and dedicated USAR teams from across the globe.

Due to protracted or complex national and international operations, QFES may be requested to deploy officers through the National Resource Sharing Centre to participate in interstate or international deployments as a member of a QFES Strike Team or taskforce for the purpose of an emergency.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, an inter-agency response may also be required.

During 2021–22, more than 1,000 QFES members including FRS swiftwater crews and RFS and SES staff and volunteers were deployed across Queensland and into NSW to provide support to flood response. Duties undertaken by QFES members included addressing storm damage, SES floodboat rescues and water rescues using FRS Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft, as well as undertaking damage assessments.

QFES also helped to move 59 motorhomes over two days to support the flood recovery efforts within Northern NSW. The motorhomes supported families who had been affected by the flooding event.

The QFES SOC has been continuously activated since 5 August 2019 in response to COVID-19 and ongoing significant events. In addition, the SOC facilitated requests for assistance from QFES' counterparts in NSW for flood response in March and early April 2022 following impacts from NSW flooding in February 2022.

Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys

QFES is committed to positive workforce experiences and conducts annual workforce experience surveys, such as the Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey and the Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) survey to measure and monitor staff and volunteer experiences.

The annual surveys are a confidential forum enabling QFES to gauge its performance collectively and in each division and region and down to the work unit level.

QFES considers the survey an opportunity to hear the views of the workforce and understand their lived experiences. The results are taken seriously and are used as a key evidence base for decision-making at all levels in the department.

The results are considered and progressed to key actions (both strategically and tactically) designed to focus on positive work environments and experiences that are centred around shared values.

Approximately 4,600 staff and volunteers responded to the surveys conducted in September 2021.

The results of the WfQ and VfQ surveys revealed 95 per cent of staff and 93 per cent of the department's volunteers understand the importance of behaviours aligned to QFES' values. The results showed that QFES continued to be focused on positive experiences for its people with 82 per cent of staff and 86 per cent of volunteers proud to tell others they work for QFES.

The following key areas were identified for continued development and require further attention:

- Leadership
- Health and Wellbeing
- Learning and Development
- Workplace Behaviour
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

As well as developing action plans in response to survey feedback, Values in Action activities were conducted across QFES. The Values in Action chart displays a team's overall experience score along with the scores received for each of QFES' values. The chart acts as a conversation starter about what is working well and what can be improved.

The surveys enable the department to continuously strengthen and improve as an organisation. Forums continue to involve staff and volunteers in developing actions to respond to the survey results.

Our most favourable responses

Working for Queensland



Volunteering for Queensland



Response scale

FAVOURABLE	NEUTRAL	UNFAVOURABLE
POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE
Agree Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree Strongly disagree

Supporting inclusion and diversity

Queensland has an increasingly diverse population which QFES seeks to consider in the development and delivery of its programs and services to build safe and resilient communities and ensure community preparedness for disaster events. QFES values the inclusion of individuals who contribute to the department through their diverse skills, knowledge and experience. During the reporting period, initiatives and activities included:

- Development of the QFES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2022–2025 which is expected to be published by 31 August 2022. The plan supports the implementation and delivery of the Queensland Government Cultural Capability Framework, ensuring First Nations perspectives are an inherent part of core business.
- Appointment of four of eight new First Nations Bushfire Safety Officers, recognising the cultural and ecological importance of Indigenous land and fire management practices and ensuring traditional learnings are embedded into QFES into the future.
- Commencement of a two-year trial of a Volunteer Cultural Engagement Officer (Identified) role within RFS, Far Northern Region, with the view to enhancing traditional fire management practices in the region through stronger engagement with Traditional Owners during bushfire PPRR phases within rural and remote communities in the Far Northern Region.
- Participation by QFES staff and volunteers in several cultural burns with QFES officers engaging with and learning from Traditional Owners about cultural fire management practices.
- Continued delivery of the *Starting the Journey* learning program providing insight into interpreting people's own culture as well as the lived experiences of First Nations peoples.
- Adopted the practice of recognising the Traditional Owners into the plaque naming of QFES newly constructed facilities to recognise and increase knowledge and understanding of First Nations cultures, such as the replacement Maleny QFES complex recognising the Jinibara People, replacement Rainbow Beach auxiliary fire and rescue station recognising the Butchulla People, and Rosewood replacement auxiliary fire and rescue station recognising the Yuggera Ugarapul People.
- Continued QFES' partnership with CareerTrackers. CareerTrackers is a national not-for-profit charitable organisation that supports First Nations university students by connecting them with employers for internship opportunities. This partnership continues to have meaningful outcomes for the department and the student interns by building cultural capability and networks within the workforce and providing accelerated career opportunities in the interns' chosen field. For the 2021–22 CareerTrackers Summer program, QFES supported two CareerTrackers Interns within the department and continues to engage with the QFES CareerTrackers Alumni as mentors for new interns and to build on the connections which have resulted from the program.
- Established the Gender Equity Advisory Group. The advisory group, which meets every two months, supports the empowerment, development and retention of women and others within the paid and volunteer workforce who are from under-represented groups. The advisory group will achieve this by encouraging and connecting the QFES workforce to support women, providing training and development in relation to gender equity, advocating and advising on issues affecting women and gender equity, and promoting initiatives that support diversity and inclusion. The advisory group has received presentations from a number of guests including the Special Commissioner Equity and Diversity, Public Service Commission and is working closely with the department's ELT. The advisory group has identified key areas to review with research underway to inform matters for consideration in 2022–23.
- Participation in the development of the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2022–27*, launched on 31 March 2022. This is the next iteration of the government's policy approach to address equity and gender imbalance in Queensland.
- Commenced a partnership with *Job Access*; a disability employment service provider, to work with QFES to ensure all recruitment processes are being driven through a disability employment lens.
- The successful completion of a pilot program of an adapted Fire Ed Program targeted at learning facilities working with autistic children. The program was developed in collaboration with the AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism and is planned to be rolled out across Queensland in late 2022. The Fire Ed Program is delivered by operational firefighters and teachers to year one students to develop an understanding of the dangers of fire and the appropriate response.

- Continued delivery and expansion of the RAAP program throughout Queensland and into more diverse areas and education settings, with delivery of the program into a number of First Nations led youth intervention initiatives including Kurbingui Youth and Family Development as well as in youth detention centres and in conjunction with youth justice programs such as Transition 2 Success. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers, facilitated by operational firefighters.
- Celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March 2022 with events across the state. QFES hosted a live stream event from Brisbane with special guests including a representative from Small Steps 4 Hannah and the Special Commissioner Equity and Diversity, Public Service Commission. The event included the Women in Fire and Emergency awards which are presented to staff and volunteers for their contributions to embracing gender equality and promoting the rights and wellbeing of women in QFES. There were eight awards with recipients from state, South Western, Central, Northern and South Eastern Regions.
- Establishment of a partnership between SES and Girl Guides Australia Queensland to encourage young women to improve general life skills around severe weather preparedness and to consider volunteering with SES.
- Delivering resources for SES volunteers within the *Get your kit together* range including a visual preparedness guide aimed at supporting culturally and linguistically diverse communities and those with limited language.
- The provision of assistance to members of the deaf community and people who have a hearing impairment to install specialised smoke alarms through the Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme managed by Deaf Services Queensland. In 2021–22, a total of 198 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms were provided.
- Provided Auslan interpreters when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information.
- Participated in the Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction focused discussion groups within the North Coast Region for the implementation of Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP). The P-CEP implementation has commenced across the disability sector on the Sunshine Coast, Noosa and Gympie, where QFES partnered with local government in presenting P-CEP to varied audiences, including service providers and people with disability.
- The development and delivery of a presentation to Asia–Pacific representatives on Diversity and Child Protection in earthquake and disaster events.
- Continued delivery of QFES Allies of Inclusion program that builds an internal network of staff and volunteers committed to their workplaces being safe, healthy and inclusive of everyone. The network has grown by 21 per cent since 30 June 2021.
- The development of a cultural awareness video presentation for AUS-1 DART to raise awareness of cultural considerations and social norms in discrete or international settings. This presentation was shared with the AUS-2 DART team, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as part of the department's ongoing engagement for international rescue deployments.
- Celebrated NAIDOC week 4–11 July 2021 with the theme *Heal Country!*—calling for stronger measures to recognise, protect and maintain First Nations culture and heritage.
- Participated in an LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training session delivered by Lifeline Darling Downs and South West Queensland Ltd in June 2022. The workshops, attended by QFES officers from the South Western Region, explored inclusive, non-oppressive language and highlighted best practice for those working with and supporting LGBTQIA+ people.
- Participation by staff and volunteers in the Brisbane Pride March in August 2021 to show support for LGBTIQ+ people and communities.
- Celebrated Multicultural Queensland Month in August 2021 with the theme of *Inclusion in action*. QFES held events to engage with Queensland's diverse communities including the department's collaboration with the Rockhampton Regional Council to hold educational sessions with the Rockhampton Chinese community. Presentations included home fire safety, smoke alarm legislation, bushfire safety and severe weather preparations.
- Hosted, in partnership with QPS, Multicultural Australia, the Queensland Human Rights Commission and Rockhampton Regional Council, the fifth annual Multi-Faith Dinner on 17 June 2022. The event supported existing community relationships through dialogue and partnership and centred around community and religious leaders standing together and promoting the shared values of all faiths. Sixteen cultures and six named religions represented by 95 guests attended the event.

Target group data is available on page 76.

2025 Objective

2. Collaboration occurs with communities and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters.

2021–2025 Strategic initiatives

- » Work collaboratively with communities and our partners to plan and deliver efficient and effective emergency services across the PPRR phases of all types of fires, emergencies and disasters.
- » Harness the knowledge, diversity, ability and experience of all our staff and volunteers to enhance the scope and quality of the services we deliver.

Activations of the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) through 2021–22 have exercised QFES' relationships with our service delivery partners and communities in the face of natural disasters. The ongoing activities associated with COVID-19 were added to by remarkable flooding events. The rapid accumulations of rainfall across many river, stream and creek catchments provide an insight into conditions that may impact populated areas more frequently in the future as a function of climate change and demography. In building our emergency and disaster management capability, we have collaborated with experts from scientific fields, our partners and the community to think beyond what we have seen, to imagine plausible scenarios.

QFES stepped up its collaboration throughout 2021–22, especially in relation to understanding, preparing for and responding to current and future disasters and emergencies. As always, our partners, staff and volunteers are vital to effective PPRR. Progress was made in improving the management of disaster risk, in the provision of information before, during and after events, and in the support provided to our workforce. The natural disasters of 2021–22 reiterated how key collaboration is to effective disaster management, with further support to volunteer emergency services to occur in subsequent years.

Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework

The *Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework* (QERMF) was endorsed by the Queensland Disaster Management Committee in 2017 as Queensland's approach to current and future disaster and emergency risk management.

The framework allows disaster management stakeholders to identify, assess, manage, and if required, communicate their disaster risks to the state and federal levels of government.

QFES continued to provide advice and support the implementation of the QERMF across Queensland's disaster management arrangements including the First Nations communities within Woorabinda, Cook, Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale.

An independent review of the QERMF was commissioned by QFES in 2020–21. The review included an online survey and detailed stakeholder interviews with local and DDMGs and state government agencies to obtain detailed views on the design and implementation of the framework. As a result, a QERMF Review Action Plan Working Group, formed under the State Disaster Coordination Group, was established in June 2021 to address the 15 findings and 12 recommendations from the review.

The action plan aims to deliver on the review findings and recommendations and improve the way that the current disaster risk management framework enables the prevention of new disaster risks, reduction of existing risks and management of residual risks. This includes the development of a Queensland Risk Information Portal (Q-RIP) to replace current risk assessment tools, spreadsheets and workflows with a database and online web application/s to provide a clear conduit for risk information and reporting across Queensland's disaster management arrangements.

During 2021–22, the working group met on five occasions and pilot workshops for the updated QERMF methodology were held across multiple locations within Queensland between March and June 2022. These locations included Mackay District, Moreton Bay, Longreach District, and Far North Queensland across 18 local governments and North Queensland across eight local governments.

Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) will enhance public safety and reduce the impacts of bushfires by improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions and improving how fire danger is communicated. The AFDRS is a first of its

kind nationally consistent system for communicating fire danger ratings to the community and forecasting fire behaviour for decision-makers. The AFDRS will deliver on recommendation 13.1 of the RCNDA Report, which called for state and territory governments to expedite the development and implementation of the AFDRS.

The AFDRS Implementation Team was established in February 2022 to oversee the introduction of the AFDRS into Queensland which includes community education programs and upgrading of systems and functions for frontline response activities.

At 30 June 2022, a series of community events have been held, supported by the roll-out of a suite of community engagement products including information sheets. The removal of outdated roadside fire danger rating signage is underway with completion expected in August 2022. Queensland is opting to install the latest technology electronic signage which includes a function to automatically update daily, increasing the effectiveness of the signage and ensuring higher community safety standards and awareness of fire danger ratings.

A suite of decision-support tools are also under development to improve QFES' ability to respond to and manage large scale bushfire events including fire behaviour quick guides and the introduction of the Fire Danger Viewer, an interactive mapping toolset to support decision-makers in making timely and accurate decisions on potential fire behaviour and risk areas on days of increased fire behaviour.

The implementation of AFDRS will continue into 2022–23 with the national program scheduled to go live on 1 September 2022.

Community safety advertising campaigns

Community safety advertising campaigns continued to be developed and promoted statewide to build resilience in the community and enable members of the public to better prevent, prepare for, and respond to fire and emergency events. These campaigns included:

- *If It's Flooded, Forget It*: this campaign targeted drivers who could be tempted to drive on flooded roads, putting themselves and potentially their rescuers at risk. The campaign launched in late October 2021 and ran throughout the extended summer wet season, ending in late May 2022. Extra placement of advertising occurred during major flood events from February to May 2022

which impacted large areas of the state. The campaign featured the *Back it Up* tagline and used television, radio, social and digital advertising (www.qfes.qld.gov.au)

- **Bushfire Safety campaign**: this campaign ran from mid-July 2021 to late October 2021 and began again in late June 2022 to align with the latter part of the mitigation season, prompting residents to prepare themselves and their properties for bushfire season. Advertisements linked to a bushfire risk postcode checker to raise awareness of widespread potential for fire and motivate residents to prepare (www.qfes.qld.gov.au)
- **Home Fire Safety**: this campaign was delivered in winter when Queensland typically records a peak in the number of house fires. The campaign encouraged residents to prepare their home for a quick escape, create an escape plan and practise it, and check and maintain their smoke alarms. The 2021 campaign ran from late May to late August and the 2022 campaign started in mid-June, with advertising on social media and digital channels. Advertising linked to the Home Fire Safety website features specific tips for parents of young children as well as older Queenslanders and their carers (www.qfes.qld.gov.au).

Social media

QFES continues to engage with the community and disseminate important safety messages through its social media channels. Across 2021–22, the department's Facebook page reached more than 16.5 million people. People visited QFES' Twitter account more than 8.2 million times, while QFES' Instagram posts and stories reached more than one million unique users.

The community continues to use QFES' social media as a source of accurate information during times of heightened operational activity and severe weather events. Significant activity was recorded on QFES' social media platforms throughout the severe weather season. More than 270 preparedness posts were published to the QFES Facebook page between October 2021 and May 2022, these posts were collectively viewed more than 34 million times.

The number of people choosing to engage with QFES through its social media channels continues to grow. Followers of the QFES Facebook page increased to more than 500,000 followers, and followers of the QFES Instagram account increased to approximately 43,200 followers. QFES' Twitter account also experienced a steady increase to approximately 86,300 followers.

Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum

The Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum (EVAF) met on four occasions during 2021–22. The aim of the forum is to strengthen the Queensland Government’s commitment to engaging with emergency services volunteers and enables representatives to provide advice on issues impacting and emerging on the sector to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services.

Membership of the forum consists of emergency service organisations across government and the not-for-profit sector. In 2021–22, the forum welcomed new members—St John Ambulance Queensland (October 2021) and The Salvation Army Queensland (May 2022).

Topics explored by the forum included:

- a review of the forum’s strategic alignment and identification of ways to strengthen the collaborative solutions that emerge from the EVAF to ensure innovation and sustainability
- discussion on the *State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report* which highlights the immense fiscal and social contributions that Queenslanders bring through their volunteering
- a focus on consultation for the National Blueprint for Sustainable Volunteering, which QFES has input into as the department seeks to advocate for strategic, national-level collaborative action to support sustainable volunteering to 2040
- a proposal to establish a volunteer training subgroup to share and explore best practice in the emergency services volunteer sector
- consultation on the National Strategy for Volunteering
- impacts of COVID-19 and associated vaccinations on the emergency volunteer workforce and services
- impacts and responses to severe weather events.

Bushfire resilient communities

QFES continued to deliver bushfire prone area mapping and development advice to meet the department’s responsibilities for the bushfire state interest (Natural hazards, risk and resilience—Bushfire) under the *State Planning Policy* (July 2017). This is enabled by implementation of the QFES *Bushfire Resilient Communities* technical document (October 2019) used by local governments, state agencies and land use planning practitioners.

QFES is leading a four-year program of work (commenced June 2022) with partners from the State Bushfire Committee, to improve the reliability of Bushfire Prone Areas mapping and the implementation and alignment of state planning policies and building design standards to mitigate or avoid bushfire risk. Particular consideration will be given to the effects of climate change and vegetation hazard as they affect vulnerable developments.

Grants—FRS

QFES continued a collaboration arrangement with DFAT during 2021–22 for the availability of internationally deployable DART personnel and equipment if required for international deployment assistance. An annual grant of \$475,000 to QFES provides assistance for the development and maintenance of AUS-1 DART capability, along with international engagement activities.

QFES maintains a residual component of an initial grant of \$87,000 from DFAT for the provision of assistance to the Papua New Guinea Fire Service (PNGFS). This grant was used during 2021–22 to provide ongoing assistance to three PNGFS candidates who are completing external educational study through the Canberra Institute of Technology in Fire Investigation and to support the training of two PNGFS personnel as Safety Assessment Officers in Brisbane.

Grants—RFS and SES

QFES continued to provide support to rural fire brigades and SES groups and units to identify, plan, apply for and complete grant applications.

During the reporting period:

- Through the annual RFS Grant Program, RFS presented 43 grants to rural fire brigades totalling \$768,025. This funding provides for the installation of toilets and washing facilities, new station builds and extensions, improvements to training facilities and the installation of solar systems to reduce emissions and alleviate expenses in utilities.
- QFES sponsored 16 successful external grant applications for SES groups and units with successful applicants jointly awarded more than \$200,000. Grants projects include facility upgrades, computer equipment, vehicles, trailers, vehicle shelters, air conditioners, whitegoods, generators and equipment for training and emergency activations.

Refer to Local governments and the SES (page 49) for information regarding the SES Support Grant Program.

Local governments and the SES

QFES works with local governments across the state to ensure and enable SES unit and group capability. As the SES plays an integral role in supporting local governments' disaster response capability, the development of a MoU between QFES and each local government is a way to clarify the relationship.

The MoUs, developed in collaboration with several local government Disaster Management Officers and the IGEM, establish the collaborative approach between QFES and local governments for the management and support of the SES and detail responsibilities for funding and support arrangements. This ensures the delivery of an effective emergency service that contributes to a safer more resilient community.

The SES Support Grant Program is an annual QFES funded program offered to local governments to receive grant funding towards SES facilities and vehicles. Facility grants are 75 per cent of the total project cost and up to \$75,000, with vehicle grants offered at a dollar-for-dollar basis up to \$30,000.

During the reporting period:

- Twenty local government applications were successful under the 2021–22 round of the SES Support Grant Program which contributed more than \$586,000 towards local government projects in support of SES facility upgrades and vehicles.
- Twenty-three local government applications were awarded grants under the subsequent 2022–23 round of the SES Support Grant Program. This funding will provide approximately \$840,000 towards future local government projects for SES facility upgrades and vehicles. Projects for the 2022–23 round will commence from 1 July 2022.
- QFES distributed \$1.65 million across 75 local governments with active SES units or groups as part of the SES annual Local Government Subsidy Program. Funding is provided to assist local governments in defraying administrative and operational costs as a result of supporting their local SES.

The SES Gift Fund received two significant bequests totalling approximately \$227,000 in 2020–21. These bequests enabled the establishment of a bursary for professional development opportunities for SES volunteers with \$100,000 added from the 2022 flood donations. The bursary is expected to be launched in September 2022. The February 2022 severe weather resulted in a significant increase in donations to the SES Gift Fund with more than \$1.3 million received from community members, small businesses and corporate organisations. A total of \$500,000 from flood donations will be spent on first-aid resources

and an all-terrain vehicle for regional use with the balance of the flood donations directed to a program that enables SES groups to apply for communications and technology equipment to improve their training and communications capabilities.

National and international engagement—AUS-1 DART team

QFES continues to develop and maintain an internationally recognised Disaster Assistance Response capability through the AUS-1 DART team. This team is managed through FRS and is made up of full-time and volunteer members, to provide an internationally deployable disaster assistance team that is classified under the United Nations. The responsibility to maintain this capability is a shared initiative by QFES and DFAT.

QFES also continues to provide personnel for international working groups, team leader engagements and mentor activities for the development of global rescue capability that directly increases the capabilities of the Queensland DART for response activities in Australia and abroad.

AUS-1 DART representatives participated in multiple international engagement opportunities throughout the reporting period including:

- The Los Angeles County Fire Department international annual USAR team training exercise as mentor and lead instructor providing instruction, mentoring, review and critique of the team's capability prior to the team's reclassification exercise in 2023.
- The Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks event held in Geneva in May 2022 to engage with global disaster and humanitarian leadership and build United Nations relationships.
- A regional earthquake simulation exercise to test a new Incident Coordination and Management System for international disaster response to earthquakes conducted online in November 2021.
- A three-day Asia–Pacific regional Earthquake Exercise in November 2021, conducted online, to test and practise coordination and control of major international disaster events and earthquakes.
- The 2021 Asia–Pacific regional meeting in September 2021 with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). This two-day meeting, conducted online and in hybrid mode, included presentations by QFES DART personnel to international participants on working group outcomes, the development of international standards for USAR, and input to the five-year work plan for INSARAG.

- A two-day annual Team Leaders' meeting in February 2021, conducted online, to maintain engagement with international USAR leadership and international team engagement.

In addition, AUS-1 DART personnel led the development and delivery of a presentation to Asia-Pacific representatives on Diversity and Child Protection in earthquake and disaster events. The presentation, conducted in December 2021, provided awareness to Asia-Pacific USAR teams regarding the international standards for rescue teams, under the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs guidelines.

State disaster risk assessments

The Queensland 2021/22 State Disaster Risk Report and Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland (SWHAQ) will be published in August 2022. The report and assessment will be accessible at www.disaster.qld.gov.au

The State Disaster Risk Report is an update to the *QUEENSLAND State Natural Hazard Risk Assessment 2017*. It builds on the previous report by assessing a broader range of natural and human-induced hazards at the state and regional planning levels and includes more comprehensive information on climate change for the relevant hazards. The report was a collaborative effort led by QFES that involved 54 disaster management entities including 30 local governments and 24 other government and non-government entities.

The SWHAQ provides a comprehensive assessment of tropical cyclone risk for Queensland. The project involved consultation with eight local governments and 35 state, commonwealth and private sector entities.

A collaborative follow-on project, the Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for South-East Queensland, has been delivered in partnership with six local governments in South-East Queensland, other Queensland Government departments and the insurance sector, to build on the findings and better understand and address the risks from severe wind (including severe thunderstorms and tropical cyclones) for South-East Queensland. This project is expected to be finalised by 31 December 2022.

QFES is undertaking a Critical Infrastructure Disaster Risk Assessment to review and identify the key climate and disaster risks to critical infrastructure in Queensland. As well as identifying risks to critical infrastructure at a state level, the project will analyse the interconnectedness and interdependencies between different types of critical infrastructure through scenario analysis. The assessment is expected to be finalised in 2022–23.

Sponsorships

Queensland's emergency services are supported by sponsors whose continued generosity helps to make Queensland a safer place. During 2021–22:

- a new partnership was launched in October 2021 with National Australia Bank (NAB) to support the wellbeing of RFS volunteers with practical personal resilience tools and other supports. The partnership will deliver two new programs worth more than \$300,000 including the RFS Volunteer Wellbeing Project. The RFS Volunteer Wellbeing Project will provide online mindfulness and resilience tools to volunteers that will increase the likelihood of early intervention and encourage help-seeking initiatives. The partnership also supports the NAB Community Strategy Challenge with NAB employees working with the RFS to improve the onboarding process for new volunteers.
- in partnership with NAB and Suncorp, QFES launched Mindarma (as in mind armour) in May 2022. Mindarma is a new online learning program that supports the psychological wellbeing of volunteers from FRS, RFS and SES and Peer Support Officers.
- Suncorp, the Principal Community Partner of SES, supported a new volunteer-led severe weather preparedness initiative—*Get your kit together*. The initiative was launched providing community engagement resources, such as pocket torches, household emergency plans, magnets and visual guides, to support SES volunteers to engage with their communities and deliver emergency preparedness. During SES Week volunteers were provided with face masks and cool towels, and a supply of new deployment bags were delivered to volunteers who may be deployed to support communities throughout the state or interstate. Suncorp and SES collaborated on a range of topics including Severe Wind Hazard Assessment and SES volunteers helped support Suncorp's Resilience Road campaign as an extension of their award winning One House project to increase community flood, storm and cyclone resilience and education.
- Energy Queensland through the brands of Energex and Ergon Energy, renewed the partnership with RFS with three solar-powered, trailer-mounted repeaters delivered to the North Coast, Central and Northern Regions and renewed the partnership with SES with a range of significant small equipment items provided to SES groups throughout the state.

- Powerlink Queensland partnered with Energy Queensland to sponsor the SES equipment program providing items to SES groups such as battery-powered lighting and chainsaws, rescue items, thermal imagers, and CPR and water rescue training items.
- QSuper continued to sponsor the QFES Australia Day Achievement Awards which were delivered in each region throughout the state to recognise the outstanding achievements of QFES staff and volunteers.

Predictive services capabilities

QFES has an expanding Fire Behaviour Analysts (FBAN) capability. This role is crucial in the generation of simulation-based intelligence products to support small and large-scale campaign fires as well as prescribed burns. To assist with growing this capability, the Predictive Services Unit (PSU) is working with the QFES regions to establish the FBAN regional service delivery requirements and operating model. The service delivery model is focused on providing operational support at the three levels of operations (tactical, operations and strategic levels) and ongoing expansion of qualified FBANs across Queensland. To achieve this, PSU has commenced Project Uplift, which is a focused body of work to develop the training framework and commence delivery of a national program.

The Predictive Services Intelligence Coordinator, located within each region, is working with the QFES Regional Leadership Teams to build the FBAN capability across the state, whilst the PSU works to further enable and develop training and systems capabilities.

During the reporting period QFES:

- continued to work collaboratively to further develop the multi-hazard impact forecast modeling capabilities
- enhanced decision-making during cyclone and flood events with the development of predictive services capabilities
- engaged FloodMapp to provide historical, real time and forecast flood extents based on the Bureau of Meteorology flood gauge and rainfall data.

In addition, in partnership with Geoscience Australia and the Western Australia Department of Fire and Emergency Services, QFES developed the Tropical Cyclone Impact Model bringing together the forecasting capability of the Bureau of Meteorology with the impact modelling capability of Geoscience Australia to provide nationally consistent and near real-time quantitative guidance on the expected impacts of tropical cyclones on residential dwellings.

These capabilities support intelligence gathering and decision-making during cyclones and floods, such as evacuations, community messaging, resupply operations and positioning of resources to keep communities safe.

Rural Fire Development Framework

The Rural Fire Development Framework (RFDF) builds skills and knowledge to understand firefighting equipment, fire behaviour, strategies and tactics for bushfire suppression and prescribed burning principles.

Phase 1 of the RFDF, which includes QFES Foundation Skills and Firefighter Minimum Skills, was launched in April 2021 to regional Training and Support Officers.

Achievements during the reporting period included:

- Completion of the Firefighter Minimum Skills program by 125 staff and volunteers. Upon completion of this Minimum Skills component, participants are awarded the Certificate II in Public Safety (Firefighting Operations).
- The launch of phase 2 of the RFDF—Firefighter Advanced Skills in April 2022. This program develops skills and knowledge in hazard mitigation, scene preservation, operational mapping and operational driving principles. On completing the Firefighter Advanced Skills program, volunteers are eligible for appointment to the rank of Senior Firefighter, and the units of competency awarded go towards a Certificate III in Public Safety (Firefighting and Emergency Operations).

Other key achievements include:

- Extensive engagement with a range of partner agencies from across the state to inform Queensland's implementation of the new Australian Warning System (AWS). The multi-hazard AWS will deliver on recommendation 13.3 of the RCNDA Report to equip Queensland communities with the most accurate, timely and consistent action-based warnings to help keep communities safe during disasters and emergencies including bushfires, storms, cyclones, floods and severe heat. Queensland bushfire warnings are compliant with the AWS and implementation for other hazards will occur progressively over the coming years.
- Facilitated the live streaming of press conferences for QFES, QPS and in support of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet across the major incidents of floods to relay live public safety updates to Queenslanders and up-to-date disaster and recovery plans from a state level.

- Streamlined bushfire warnings dissemination and reduced administration with the use of a more user-friendly cloud-based Operational Coordination System (OCS). QFES staff use OCS to implement the AWS for bushfire warnings. The new warnings process includes built-in approvals and recordkeeping and ensures community bushfire warnings consistency. OCS enables QFES staff to simultaneously publish warnings via its website, social media, email, and other data feeds. Importantly, the new system enables QFES to create and issue bushfire warnings regionally in support of a regional resourcing model.
- Prepared for and supported major outback Queensland events such as the Birdsville Big Red Bash (July 2021) and Birdsville Races (April 2022). To minimise risk to the community, QFES deployed personnel from FRS and SES to create a surge capacity to manage the increased number of visitors to the community. QFES crews ensure the safety of the community and its visitors and take the opportunity to engage with local stakeholders, conduct recruitment drives, undertake training and conduct building fire safety inspections.
- Continued the Live Vision Capability trial, with 41 field content operator deployments gathering over 295 minutes of video, close to 1,400 photographs and capturing 22 gigabytes of data relevant to operational incidents and events. Six field content operators from RFS and SES delivered raw vision, edited stories, intelligence capability and newsworthy content using Axon and Dejero live devices and field content kits as part of the ongoing trial.
- Designed and delivered close to 300 unique commissions for clients across QFES, QPS and the Office of the IGEM by six specialist producers within the department's Strategic Content Services Branch. These consisted of campaign-oriented web series, social media content, breaking news, live news vision and live event coverage both external and internal.
- Responded to 75,320 incidents including FRS and RFS response (206 incidents per day on average):
 - 2,294 structure fires including 1,640 residential structure fires
 - 4,452 landscape fires
 - 14,985 mobile property crashes
 - 53,589 other incidents (includes other fires and explosions, rescues, hazardous conditions incidents, false alarms and good intent calls, storm and natural disaster response incidents and other situations).
- Continued to deliver timely response times to structure fires including call taking time with 8.3 minutes at the 50th percentile and 12.9 minutes at the 90th percentile.
- Received 21,252 SES tasks and 1,918 Agency Support Requests.
- SES volunteers performed approximately 159,400 operational hours and approximately 315,400 hours in preparation and training.
- Commenced a review of *Strategy 2030* to test its validity as a strategy for beyond 2030, considering Brisbane's successful campaign to host the Olympics in 2032. The review is expected to be finalised by November 2022.
- Continued to work collaboratively with all stakeholders including government agencies, industry providers and the public to provide information and education to ensure the highest level of fire safety is achieved in Queensland buildings.
- Appointed four of the eight new First Nations Bushfire Safety Officers to be located in regions and state office, recognising the cultural and ecological importance of Indigenous land and fire management practices and ensuring traditional learnings are embedded into QFES into the future. These officers will engage with rural fire brigades and other QFES staff and volunteers to support increased understanding and application of traditional cultural burning practices, including engagement with custodians of traditional knowledge. The creation of these roles is supported by recommendations from the RCNDA Report.
- Participation by QFES staff and volunteers in several cultural burns with QFES officers learning from Traditional Owners about cultural fire management practices. QFES' engagement with First Nations communities included training with Indigenous fire practitioners
- Continued to develop and evaluate the implementation of a remote area firefighting capability with additional capability being introduced into Central Region, adding to the teams already established in Brisbane and South West Regions. This capability enables appropriately trained and equipped QFES officers to undertake bushfire firefighting activities in locations where access via firefighting vehicles is restricted. The underpinning training course provides specialist firefighters instruction on how to operate in remote environments and includes remote camping, navigation, survival, communication and dry firefighting techniques.

- Continued to educate the community to raise awareness about the services provided by QFES and promote action on improving home and personal safety. Methods of education included attendance at displays, schools, presentations and workshops at local community events. QFES personnel provided information to help residents better prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events, to help foster a more resilient community by discussing smoke alarm legislation, home fire safety, bushfire safety and severe weather safety.
- Continued to work with local governments to provide customised community education and engagement resources to assist in targeted emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Amended Emergency Management Levy districts to commence on 1 July 2022 following service enhancement at Charters Towers changing from a five-day to seven-day, day-work station, the appointment of a Station Officer at the Tully auxiliary fire and rescue station and the auxiliary positions against Wallaville being permanently redesignated to best service other areas across QFES. As part of the change process, the department engaged with local Members of Parliament, local governments for the areas, rural fire brigades and other key stakeholders. Information mail outs advising of the changes to the Emergency Management Levy were undertaken for all affected property owners.
- Continued to deliver the FFF program supporting parents and guardians with their efforts to educate children and young people (three to 17 years), who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident, about fire safety. During the reporting period, 100 FFF cases were received with 23 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. At 30 June 2022, 42 FFF enquiries were completed, 35 were active, 20 enquiries were cancelled and three were in the enquiry phase. There were 44 trained FFF practitioners located throughout Queensland who receive ongoing, regular training and support to maintain effective education and engagement skills.
- Continued to deliver the RAAP program with the delivery of 289 program presentations to approximately 24,800 young persons across Queensland in mainstream and non-traditional schooling systems, restorative justice programs, and in partnership with the PCYC and community youth organisations. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers facilitated by operational firefighters. As of 30 June 2022, there are 161 trained RAAP presenters located throughout Queensland.
- Worked with Griffith University and key Australian Government stakeholders, to test the SurgeImpact (storm surge) model developed in 2014 with recent data and undertake a comprehensive end-user co-design approach to create a useful interface available to disaster managers across state government and local governments. The project will significantly extend the modelling capability across Queensland. Key agencies and community stakeholders will have access to evolving predictions and forecasts about local impacts from storm surge including the ability to visualise the extent of inundation, identify areas of risk and prioritise action plans.
- Continued to deliver the Safehome program with more than 200 Safehome visits where firefighters visit households to assist in recognising and eliminating fire and safety hazards in and around the home and provide information and tools to support people in increasing home fire and emergency preparedness measures. QFES also collaborated with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy to provide home fire safety information targeted towards Queensland social housing tenants.
- Continued the partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport to deliver the Shark Control Program, particularly the SharkSmart Campaign. The primary aim of the Shark Control Program is to protect people swimming and recreating at Queensland beaches from negative encounters with sharks. QFES is a member of the SharkSmart Working Group and SharkSmart Steering Committee and plays a role in linking the program up with key marine rescue organisations whilst also providing community engagement and communications input and support.
- Commenced the review and update of the *Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline* and Support Toolkit suite (the guideline), and the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan* in consultation with key stakeholders across Queensland's disaster management arrangements. The guideline and state plan are fundamental documents that provide guidance and direction, supporting the implementation of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and the associated disaster management policy, plans and standards. The review and update of the guideline and plan are expected to be finalised in 2023.

- Representation at the INSARAG Steering Group meeting in Geneva between 7 and 15 May 2022 at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks event. The event included more than 300 sessions organised by 44 networks, which addressed several areas of common interest that contributed to Queensland and Australia's response to disaster and humanitarian events, with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region.
- Provided remote support via DFAT in June 2022, in association with Emergency Management Australia, to the Government of Pakistan in response to a bushfire natural disaster. This is the first time Queensland, under the AUS-1 Disaster Relief Arrangement Taskforce has provided this form of remote geo-strategic support to a foreign country. The support was in the form of a series of strategic and operational level documents that provided insight into Queensland's service delivery capabilities and the internal community safety operations. The remote support operation was successful with positive feedback received from the Government of Pakistan as well as DFAT regarding QFES' assistance and leadership of this operation.
- Donated eight portable pump kits and portable tanks to Tonga, in partnership with DFAT, following an undersea volcanic eruption in Tonga that caused widespread devastation. The pumps were delivered on the HMAS Adelaide II and were used to support washouts and cleaning of homes and businesses. The pumps and hoses can be re-purposed to provide additional firefighting capability to the island nation.
- Established a partnership, in December 2021, between SES and Girl Guides Australia Queensland that supports the development of girls now and into the future. The SES is supporting a badge program with Girl Guides Australia Queensland that provides an opportunity for Girl Guides around the state to learn more about volunteering for the SES. The girls complete a skills education program and undertake age-appropriate tasks relevant to SES volunteers. The badge the girls receive is added to their 'blanket badge' collection.
- Continued to support whole-of-government disaster management data sharing through the QDMA Data Sharing Group on ArcGIS Online. The group allows data across PPRR phases of disaster management to be shared amongst members. At 30 June 2022, there are more than 260 members from local, state and Australian Government bodies as well as non-government organisations, with more than 430 shared datasets. This data helps inform the SDCC Situational Awareness Platform which is made up of eight operational situational awareness web maps and dashboards. Governance for the QDMA Data Sharing Group is continually managed through the QFES Disaster Management Data Coordination Initiative.
- Celebrated the 20th anniversary of QCESA in October 2021. This multi-function campus at the Port of Brisbane is home to the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training (the school) and is the base for a variety of the Queensland Ambulance Service's skills training. The school facilitates a range of training capabilities across QFES including recruit firefighter education, developing RFS and SES training products and resources, and virtual and extended reality-based exercises. The Live Fire Campus provides firefighter recruits with realistic fire training in a safe and controlled environment.
- Introduced the Digital Resource Hub to host online learner guides to increase support and accessibility for volunteer trainers and learners.
- Launched aXcelerate in June 2022, an easy-to-use QFES student management system that ensures the department meets its obligations as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). aXcelerate reduces the administrative overhead for trainers and training administrators and significantly improves the experience of learners by providing a one-stop platform to access, deliver, assess and record training activities. aXcelerate is also accessible outside of the QFES ICT network, enabling and allowing the department's diverse workforce to learn from remote locations and stay engaged and connected.
- Finalised a joint initiative with Queensland Rail for the installation of a three-carriage suburban electric passenger train prop at QCESA—the first installation of a full-size train-on-track in Queensland. This initiative is the culmination of three years planning and collaboration between QFES and Queensland Rail with the installation taking approximately six months to be completed. The train prop was utilised for the first-time during Exercise Goldfish, a major multi-agency exercise conducted in October 2021 to test response and interagency cooperation between emergency services including QPS and Queensland Rail. The exercise utilised the services of approximately 80 defence force personnel who participated as passengers and casualties. The train prop will benefit QFES and other agencies, including Queensland Rail, as a facility to train and test operational response to a variety of train and rail-related incidents, increasing the effectiveness and safety of staff and volunteers.

- Embedded the QFES Methods of Instruction within the department improving the capability and capacity of appointed RTO Trainers. The product has assisted to build the department's regional capability of skills delivery through train the trainer, without the requirement to undertake further training external to the department. QFES Methods of Instruction was awarded in the Commissioner's Awards for Excellence in the Sustainable category.
- Developed a First Aid/CPR course under the QFES RTO which resulted in 150 RFS and SES trainers upskilled. The advanced skills will increase service delivery across the state and minimise the reliance upon external providers for this training.
- Configured and deployed the Disaster Management Portal, a repository where local governments and dam managers can submit Emergency Alerts for testing, emergency action plans for dams and other disaster management related material. This implementation provides a single stable location for QFES, state government agencies and local governments to access and share information.
- Configured and deployed the Pandemic module of the Emergency Management System for hotel quarantine tracking during COVID-19. This module was primarily used by the Pandemic Task Force (QFES and QPS, and later DSDILGP) as a point of truth for the tracking of hotel quarantine information (e.g. hotels used and individuals accommodated). DSDILGP is continuing to utilise the module following the transfer of the coordination of quarantine hotel management to that department on 1 April 2022.
- Developed and deployed an advanced fire behaviour ensemble modelling tool which allows FBANs to describe the probability of a fire impacting a point in the landscape by a given time. This is a capability developed over and above the use of traditional fire behaviour simulators which do not account for uncertainty or probability.
- Updated the SABRE (Simulation Analysis-Based Risk Evaluation) platform integrating updated data practices and permitting the ingestion of new data from the AFDRS. This capability will keep SABRE current for the near future, as further developments are made in AFDRS.

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements

The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (RCNDA) was established in February 2020 in response to the extreme bushfire season of 2019–20 which resulted in loss of life, property and wildlife, and environmental destruction.

The Royal Commission’s final report was tabled in the Parliament of Australia on 30 October 2020 following its examination of the coordination, preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters, improving resilience and adapting to changing climatic conditions and mitigating the impact of natural disasters. The legal framework for commonwealth involvement in responding to natural emergencies was also considered.

The report contains 80 recommendations directed at the commonwealth, state, territory and local governments and a number of other disaster support entities.

The Royal Commission’s final report can be accessed at www.royalcommission.gov.au

The Queensland Government’s response to the Royal Commission’s final report was tabled in the Queensland Parliament on 16 July 2021 and is available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au. The Queensland Government supports, or supports in-principle, the majority of the Royal Commission’s recommendations.

A Royal Commission Implementation Unit was established within QFES in September 2021 to guide and oversee implementation of the Royal Commission’s recommendations across the Queensland Government. At 30 June 2022, Queensland has delivered 14 of the 69 recommendations directed at state and territory governments—a 20 per cent completion rate.

During the reporting period, the Queensland Government continued to work with the commonwealth and other state and territory governments to progress implementation of recommendations prioritised by the National Federation Reform Council. These priority recommendations relate to:

- the Australian Warning System (AWS) (refer page 51)
- the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) (refer pages 46–47)
- disaster recovery funding arrangements
- a review of the path to expeditiously deliver Public Safety Mobile Broadband
- a reform of fundraising laws
- improvements to natural disaster risk information
- classification, recording and sharing of fuel load data
- national air quality forecasting.

QFES will receive funding of \$10.8 million over four years, commencing 2021–22, and \$1.27 million per annum ongoing to address Queensland’s response to recommendations to enhance hazard and risk management, the fire danger rating system and emergency warning activities to support the natural disaster preparedness capabilities of Queensland communities.

QFES will continue to work with state government agencies, the commonwealth and its local government and non-government agency partners, to deliver Queensland’s response to the Royal Commission’s final report and place Queensland in the best position to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters.

The Queensland Government’s implementation progress reports are available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au

Disaster management stakeholder capability development

Disaster management training, education and capability development is a key element of QFES' responsibility and commitment to Queensland disaster management stakeholders. Training for disaster management stakeholders is provided in accordance with the Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework (QDMTF). The QDMTF has been designed to meet the requirements of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (section 16A(c)) to ensure that those with a role in disaster operations are appropriately trained.

QFES delivered a total of 8,980 units of QDMTF training across 2021–22 demonstrating the commitment to ensuring continuity in training delivery to disaster management stakeholders despite the challenges of COVID-19.

COVID-19 restrictions required QFES to continue the availability of virtual, trainer led delivery options. The virtual delivery mode was offered in addition to traditional face-to-face and existing eLearning options. During 2021–22, there was a continued higher reliance on eLearning modules with 34 per cent of all training completions undertaken online by stakeholders through the Disaster Management Learning Management System.

Reflective of their key role in disaster management, 44 per cent of the total training in 2021–22 was delivered to local government stakeholders. Importantly, local governments have continued to engage in the department's trainer led delivery options with only 16 per cent of local government completions undertaken through eLearning.

The Operational Leadership and Crisis Management Masterclass series is a component of the QDMTF and forms a critical element of QFES' capability development program for key disaster management stakeholders. During 2021–22, QFES offered two Masterclass sessions:

- *Leadership in Disaster, Crisis and Adversity Masterclass*: focuses on enhancing disaster manager capability in managing power, teams and change to build and leverage networks and relationships through effective crisis communication and engagement.
- *Disaster Planning in Dynamic Environments Masterclass*: focuses on dynamic planning in an operational disaster management context including strategies to monitor and manage dynamic events to achieve enhanced community outcomes.

QFES presented the two Masterclass sessions face-to-face with 366 participants across 20 sessions conducted in Beenleigh, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gympie, Mackay, Rockhampton, Roma, Toowoomba and Townsville during May and June 2022.

Bushfire Mitigation

On 15 January 2022, QFES and its partners transitioned to a year-round mitigation program known as Operation Sesbania which replaced Operation Cool Burn (a period of heightened mitigation activity generally held from the beginning of April to the end of August each year).

Bushfire mitigation and preparedness continues to be a shared responsibility between many partners, especially land management agencies and local government. QFES continues to place a critical priority on maintaining and supporting these partnerships.

Operation Sesbania is a year-round mitigation program enabling greater flexibility for land managers and owners to conduct mitigation activities in a changing climate, which is leading to more protracted bushfire seasons and often limiting windows for hazard reduction burning. Operation Sesbania will empower mitigation to be undertaken in an informed, planned and coordinated manner.

A number of factors can influence the undertaking of planned activities. These include the requirement for ideal weather conditions if the activity involves burning an area of land. In 2021, a wetter than average autumn and winter across Queensland meant that in many instances hazard reduction burns were unable to be completed as the vegetation and soil remain too moist to burn.

On 2 May 2022, the Operation Sesbania Dashboard went live. The dashboard is designed as a mitigation, planning and activity management tool to support the prevention and preparation of bushfire safety and the response and recovery phase of operations through real-time situation awareness and hazard identification. The dashboard will synchronise and display one visual platform and provide up-to-date reports. The new Operation Sesbania dashboard is one initiative to support reporting and recording of community education and bushfire mitigation activities.

Operation Sesbania will run for the duration of Program Grass Tree or until advised otherwise. Program Grass Tree is a three-year bushfire mitigation program focused on creating a workable balance between establishing and sustaining a safe living environment for Queensland communities.

Marine rescue implementation

In 2020–21, QFES commenced work to establish an integrated and legislated marine rescue service in Queensland, in line with a 2020 Government Commitment, that will provide Marine Search and Rescue capability in support of the QPS and the Queensland boating community.

With more than 4,000 activations by Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ) occurring in a financial year, together with an increase in boat ownership and participation in recreational aquatic activities across Queensland, the demand on public safety services supports an ongoing investment by QFES in sustainability of marine rescue services and supporting proactive reform by the sector.

During the reporting period, QFES continued to engage with key stakeholders through the Marine Rescue Implementation Program (MRIP) to identify an implementation pathway for the service, including the development of a Concept of Operations.

In addition, work with respect to capability, engagement, operational and governance for the service progressed through the Marine Rescue Implementation Working Group (MRIWG).

On 31 May 2022, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services announced that the new service would be known as Marine Rescue Queensland (MRQ).

During the reporting period:

- Twenty-five VMRAQ squadrons and 20 AVCGA flotillas applied and utilised the Direct Unit Support Grants to enhance support to the frontline, including the purchase of vital equipment to enhance search and rescue capability. This Direct Unit Support Grants program provided additional funding of up to \$10,000 for each of Queensland's VMRAQ squadrons and AVCGA flotillas.
- QFES progressed the vessel replacement program, resulting in tangible outcomes including the first vessel build initiated in May 2022, which when complete in 2022–23 will be delivered to Thursday Island. Branding and livery elements, including the logo for MRQ, have advanced with stakeholder engagement and consultation planned in 2022–23.
- The MRIWG met on six occasions providing key insights and advice to the MRIP.
- Six sub-working groups and one reference group were established to ensure volunteers, kindred emergency service agencies and the boating public are represented in the establishment of the new service. These stakeholder groups provide strategic direction and sector expertise, across the 14 projects within the program, including fleet, training, systems and capability, volunteerism, finance, legislation, policy and marketing.
- The Resource to Risk project for VMRAQ was completed. This project implemented a standard approach to risk evaluation across existing service capability and assessing future capability needs for each squadron across Queensland. The outputs of this assessment will act as a guideline for assessing future squadron needs, prioritising investment and developing capability. Assessments were completed through direct engagement with frontline marine rescue volunteers providing supporting information.
- A review was conducted of the current state and composition of available development and training for marine rescue volunteers, synthesising the information into options analysis for consideration for the new service.
- Development of components of the operating model and supporting procedures for the new service continued in consultation with volunteers.

The department also continued to provide support to the AVCGA and VMRAQ through Service Agreements that have been in effect since the 1990s (refer pages 62–63 for further information).

QFES acknowledges the support provided by QPS, Maritime Safety Queensland, the Queensland Ambulance Service, VMRAQ, the Queensland Recreational Boating Council and independent sector volunteers for their participation and commitment to the work program of advisory groups for the establishment of the new service.

The work ahead will continue to focus on the proposed establishment of MRQ to enhance services to the boating public and communities of Queensland.

Commissioner's visits

During the reporting period, Commissioner Greg Leach continued visiting regions and state directorates, taking time to speak with many staff and volunteers across all services. The Commissioner's visits provide the opportunity to share his vision for QFES from a service delivery and workforce experience perspective, as well as learn about the local challenges and initiatives occurring across the state. The visits also enable opportunities to meet with key QFES stakeholders, such as local governments and other volunteer-based organisations; as well as provide an opportunity to see the different facilities, equipment and capabilities.

The Commissioner's visits include question and answer (Q&A) sessions, with a live streamed Q&A session trialled in Central Region. The Q&A sessions provide the Commissioner with the opportunity to discuss concerns directly with staff and volunteers in a relaxed environment, with some of the most important conversations taking place over a cup of tea or barbeque. While in the regions, Commissioner Leach also acknowledged some of our hardworking staff and volunteers through the presentation of various medals and Australia Day Award certificates.

The sheer size and diversity of Queensland means the many smaller communities that make up our regions have a need for specific solutions to solve local problems. Being on the ground to listen to the experiences of our people—to discover what motivates them and where they need help—builds trust within our organisation and drives actions to continuously improve our services to communities.

The visits, coupled with the annual WfQ and VfQ surveys, help guide QFES' organisational direction. Significant outcomes from Commissioner visits have included an overhaul of the volunteer onboarding program where a working group was mobilised to complete a '100-day sprint' with the aim to make the process more efficient, consistent and reliable. The Commissioner also established the Gender Equity Advisory Group with the aim of improving the inclusion and representation of women and others within both the paid and volunteer workforce in QFES.

QFES is fortunate to be made up of paid staff and volunteers who are dedicated to serving their local communities. Commissioner Leach says, "One thing that stands out for me each time I visit our people on the ground is their collective commitment to delivering for Queenslanders and their pride in being able to serve."

The Commissioner says the questions and suggestions gathered during the visits help inform decision-making. "As an organisation we do a lot of great work, but there are always things we could be doing better. By engaging directly with the workforce, it helps to identify themes and areas for improvement to ensure we provide a service that is fit for the community."

These valuable visits are scheduled to continue throughout 2022–23, allowing the Commissioner the opportunity to visit all regions, state service directorates and meet more of the workforce.

2025 Objective

3. Communities are connected and capable in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters.

2021–2025 Strategic initiative

- » Use place-based, decentralised service delivery to inform, empower and support our communities, people and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters.

At the heart of our understanding of the impacts of emergencies and disasters on communities is an appreciation of the hazards communities face (how big and how often), what vital aspects of communities are exposed (including people, buildings and infrastructure) and vulnerability (how each exposed element responds to particular hazards). The richest understanding of these factors is created by working with community and our service delivery partners. Throughout 2021–22, QFES has striven to build up and build on extant capabilities across individuals, households, whole communities, and through our partners that operate within and across those communities. We have collaborated and cooperated with partners and communities to enhance disaster management arrangements that are effective and that work for those communities, exploring the strengths that can be levered off and weaknesses that can be lessened.

PCYC Queensland Emergency Services Cadets

QFES continued to support the Emergency Services Cadets Program (ESCP) aimed at building community resilience through the fostering of the next generation of emergency services personnel. As of 30 June 2022, the program has 458 young Queenslanders (aged 12 to 17 years) supported by 176 adult leaders and 102 active emergency services personnel in 24 cadet units.

During the reporting period:

- Three new cadet units were established in Emerald, Beaudesert and Woodford and one unit at Tara ceased operations.
 - Twenty cadets are undertaking the Certificate II in Public Safety (State Emergency Service) via a combination of online, virtual interactive and face-to-face learning experiences over 12 months.
 - The Brisbane Cadet Games were held in June 2022 with approximately 200 future emergency responders taking part. This is the largest games event ever held. The event included a QFES helicopter landing providing an opportunity for cadets to interact with the aircraft and personnel.
 - The annual Adult Leader Conference was held over two-days in Brisbane in November 2021. More than 40 volunteer adult leaders from across Queensland attended the conference which provided the opportunity to engage in peer-to-peer learning, interact with mentors, network, attend skill development workshops and celebrate their contribution and achievements.
- Seven teams of Emergency Services Cadets from across South-East Queensland came together at Cedar Creek Wolffdene Rural Fire Station to test their skills in The Rescue Games in November 2021. Teams competed in a range of life-like scenarios including burn-over technique, winching and turfing, and casualty handling, with 40 RFS and SES volunteers on hand to provide coaching and judging.
 - A total of 25 young people from the ESCP, RFS and SLSQ attended ESCape Week in October 2021 for a week-long adventure designed to be a ‘week in the life of an Emergency Services worker’. Cadets attended a different emergency service every day and gained once in a lifetime experiences and skills.
 - The Townsville Cadet Games were held in July 2021. Cadets competed from many different services including the RFS, ESCP, Australian Army, Australian Air Force, Military Cadets and SLSQ. The first all-female Emergency Services Cadets team joined the event from Thursday Island to participate in the games, with the RFS cadets celebrating their first ever victory.

A three-year Service Agreement between QFES and PCYC Queensland for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 remains in place to continue delivery of the ESCP. Funding totalling in excess of \$2 million for the term of the agreement is the largest single investment in the program since its establishment in 2014 (refer pages 62–63). For 2021–22, a total of \$685,409 (including GST) was provided to PCYC under the agreement.

Community Insights Survey

The Community Insights Survey undertaken annually with Queensland households explores a range of emergency and disaster events, preparedness activities and service expectations of QFES. In October 2021, more than 2,000 Queenslanders were surveyed across seven regions of Queensland.

The survey helps the department develop community education strategies including smoke alarm testing and legislation awareness, risk awareness and communication preferences.

Key results from the survey include:

- Storms (77 per cent), heatwaves (66 per cent) and pandemics (59 per cent) are perceived as the highest risk events (slightly or very likely). These are also the events that people feel the most prepared for.
- Six per cent of respondents had experienced a local emergency or disaster event in the past year, down from 2019 (nine per cent), with over half of these people feeling prepared for these events (65 per cent).
- Less than a third of Queenslanders have a home escape plan (31 per cent) or have prepared an emergency kit (29 per cent)—fewer than in 2019.
- While 98 per cent of Queenslanders have smoke alarms installed (consistent with the five-year average), only 76 per cent of these have been tested or maintained in the past 12 months—this is significantly fewer than previous years.
 - In relation to the interconnected smoke alarm legislation that commenced on 1 January 2017 and mandates that all Queensland domestic dwellings have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms installed in each bedroom, in hallways connecting bedrooms and in the exit pathway on every level of the dwelling, over a staged period:
 - a third (33 per cent) of Queenslanders have interconnected smoke alarms installed—an increase from previous years
 - fifty-nine per cent of those who do not have interconnected smoke alarms installed say they are likely to install them in the next 12 months—also an increase from previous years.

- Queenslanders prefer that QFES be available to respond to events (68 per cent) as compared to providing individuals the skills to improve self-reliance (32 per cent)—this gap has widened since 2019.
- When looking at allocation of resources, Queenslanders would like to move towards a more flexible service (59 per cent) compared to a permanent presence in their local community (41 per cent)—this gap has decreased since 2019.
- Those respondents who received a QFES service in the last year (39 per cent) indicated they were overall satisfied with the service provided (71 per cent overall satisfaction score).

For further information refer to www.data.qld.gov.au

Service Agreements

QFES supports other volunteer groups that provide emergency response to Queenslanders through Service Agreements including:

- The provision of \$30 million (GST exclusive) over four years through a Service Agreement with SLSQ commencing 2020–21 under a 2020 Government Commitment. A further Service Agreement was entered into with SLSQ for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024, aligned to the 2020 Government Commitment. Funding supports the operations of 57 surf lifesaving clubs, six branches and the state headquarters for the provision of beach safety services, white water safety programs and community education, and the SLSQ helicopter and RPAS (drones) capabilities.
- The provision of \$459,601 in 2021–22 as a part of RLSSQ Service Agreement 2019–2022 to support the operations of the Ithaca-Caloundra, Neptune (Palm Beach) and Airlie Beach clubs and the delivery of swim and survive programs, water safety programs and aquatic risk management. Support for RLSSQ will continue through funding of \$930,139 under a renewed Service Agreement for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024.
- A three-year Service Agreement is in place between QFES and PCYC Queensland for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 to continue delivery of the ESCP (refer to page 61 for further information).

- Marine Rescue Service Agreements with AVCGA and VMRAQ totalled \$4.33 million in 2021–22 (including Direct Relief Support Grants) directly supporting over 3,000 volunteers from 47 units (21 flotillas from AVCGA and 26 squadrons from VMRAQ) to conduct over 4,000 activations, serving the Queensland boating public across 11,000 kilometres of coastline and ocean waters. QFES remains committed to supporting the provision of frontline marine rescue services and volunteers of AVCGA and VMRAQ under Service Agreements in 2022–23 (refer to page 59 for further information).
- Continued to Chair the Smoke Alarm Implementation Interdepartmental Committee and maintain oversight of the phased implementation of the domestic smoke alarm requirements contained in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, which will make Queensland households the safest in Australia.
- Continued to promote the smoke alarm legislative changes introduced on 1 January 2017 that require dwellings to have interconnected, photoelectric smoke alarms installed in a phased implementation process, with all homes to comply by 1 January 2027. Activities included a targeted community education advertising campaign that focused on the second implementation phase of Queensland’s domestic smoke alarm legislation, requiring dwellings being tenanted or sold from 1 January 2022 to upgrade to the new requirements.
- Continued development of the department’s lessons management process. The lessons management process was connected to the department’s defined capabilities to enable insights gathered to be aligned to responsible capability owners for necessary consideration. Event debriefs were also conducted across QFES as necessary with support provided to disaster management stakeholders to conduct debriefs.

In addition, QFES has a Service Agreement with the Retired Firefighters Association of Queensland Inc (RFAQ), a non-profit association that provides wellbeing and related services to retired firefighters. The department provides an in-kind contribution to the RFAQ which supports the publication of its quarterly magazine *The Afterburners*. The RFAQ and QFES partnership provides retired QFES staff an avenue for social connectedness after their career with QFES.

Other key achievements include:

- Continued to implement recommendations from the *K’gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review Report 1: 2020–21*. The review undertaken by the IGEM and finalised in March 2021 focused on the effectiveness of preparedness and response to the K’gari bushfire event. Of the 38 recommendations provided to the Queensland Government for implementation, QFES has been engaged in the delivery of 20 recommendations either as a lead or co-lead in implementation.