

Human resources

Strategic workforce planning and performance

Workforce profile

	FTE	Headcount
Total paid staffing for QFES as at 2 July 2023	3,825.92	5,559

The increase of 160.24 FTE from 17 June 2022 (3,665.68) to 2 July 2023 was mainly attributed to the 2020 Government Commitment to recruit additional paid firefighters to strengthen Queensland's frontline emergency response for fire and emergency services and operational staff attrition. There has also been an uplift of staff to address critical gaps in support for operational service delivery initiatives.

Occupation Types by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Corporate	10.52
Frontline and Frontline Support	89.48
Appointment Type by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Permanent	89.54
Temporary	4.63
Casual	5.39
Contract	0.44
Employment status by Headcount	Percentage of total workforce based on Headcount
Full-time	64.54
Part-time	1.64
Casual	33.82

Notes:

1. The FTE figure is calculated using the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) aligned methodology.
2. FTE and headcount data is as at fortnight ending 2 July 2023 as per MOHRI reporting.
3. FTE and headcount includes active, paid employees only.
4. Due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters they are represented as 0.1 of an FTE.

Target group data

Workforce profile data	Number (headcount)	Target 2023–2026 (percentage)	Percentage of total workforce based on headcount unless otherwise indicated
Gender			
Woman	1,127	N/A	20.27
Man	4,429	N/A	79.67
Non-binary	3	N/A	0.05
Diversity groups			
Women	1,127	N/A	20.27
Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples	129	4.0	2.32
People with disability	80	12.0	1.44
CALD—Speak a language at home other than English including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Australian South Sea Islander languages	166	12.0	2.99
Women in leadership roles			
Senior Officers (Classified and s155 equivalent combined)	14	50.0	45.16 <i>Women as percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives (Classified and s155 equivalent combined)	3	50.0	10.71 <i>Women as percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>

Notes:

1. Headcount and percentage data is as at fortnight ending 2 July 2023 as per MOHRI reporting.
2. Headcount, percentage of total workforce and percentage of the leadership cohort is calculated on active, paid employees only.
3. Women in leadership roles are considered those positions that are Senior Officer and equivalent, and above. For QFES this includes Chief Executive Officer, Senior Executive Service, Senior Officer, Section 155 *Public Sector Act 2022* Senior Executive Service/Senior Officer equivalent, and Chief Superintendent classifications.
4. Target percentages are Public Sector Governance Council approved as at 17 April 2023.
5. N/A – not applicable.

Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

During the period, one employee received a redundancy package at a cost of \$57,627.18.

Workforce planning and performance

Strategic Workforce Planning Framework

The *QFES Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–2025*, approved by the BoM in August 2022, supports the Queensland Government’s *10-year human capital outlook*, the department’s strategic plan and *Strategy 2030*. The plan is the department’s commitment to addressing current and future workforce risks to ensure QFES people are best supported to deliver a connected and capable Queensland in the face of emergencies and disasters. The plan details the department’s:

- ✧ workforce future outlook
- ✧ workforce profile
- ✧ workforce challenges
- ✧ values
- ✧ strategic workforce activities.

The department utilises its Strategic Workforce Planning Framework to match its service delivery with organisational strategy. The framework outlines a number of objectives, steps and activities to improve planning, increase collaboration, better understand workforce reporting and invest in human resource data and analytics from a strategic workforce approach.

The department’s strategic workforce plan is reviewed annually to reflect the changing workforce environment and its impact on QFES’ strategic workforce demands and opportunities.

Equity and diversity

During 2022–23, QFES undertook an equity and diversity audit to fulfil the Commissioner’s obligations to progress equity, diversity, respect and inclusion in accordance with the *Public Sector Act 2022*. The audit utilised analysis of the September 2022 MOHRI data and QFES’ WfQ results that identified several areas for improvement.

The data and information contained in the audit will be used to inform further analysis, inquiry and empirical research to inform the annual review of the strategic workforce plan and develop a QFES Equity and Diversity Plan.

The Gender Equity Advisory Group, established in 2021–22, 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, which meets every two months, achieves 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

- ✧ promoting initiatives that support diversity and inclusion.

During the reporting period, following a suggestion by the advisory group, a one-stop-shop page was released on the QFES Gateway providing information about pregnancy, birth, and babies in the workplace. The page is a resource for pregnant people and supervisors to access information about entitlements and obligations.

QFES resourcing

The QFES Establishment, Resource and Vacancy Management Committee continues to provide enhanced governance of vacancy and position management for the department’s resource allocations to meet whole-of-government requirements. The committee ensures there is a strategic and evidence-based view across the department, so that resources are directed to priority areas. The committee processes are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure enhanced alignment with the Strategy and Budget Committee, with the committee providing the resourcing requirements to implement the Strategy and Budget Committee’s strategic decisions.

Attraction and recruitment

The QFES recruitment attraction campaign ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. is designed to attract new members to the workforce and promote QFES as an employer of choice. The department’s website contains detailed information on a variety of career and volunteer roles, a tool to help members of the public find a role that suits their skills and experience, and a range of videos featuring QFES members.

The department offers a diverse range of careers and roles across numerous disciplines including firefighting personnel, emergency management experts, scientists, building fire safety engineers and communication officers through to personnel in finance, information and technology, staff welfare and building design. Attraction techniques and activities for employment are focused on increasing diversity and attracting and engaging the best candidates possible.

Through ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. the department showcases the many roles and careers available for both paid and volunteer positions. QFES’ goal is to highlight the many roles within the department as rewarding and attractive careers to entice a larger number of candidates.

QFES continued its 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. QFES aims to build a diverse workforce that is reflective of the community it serves, and increase capacity and capability for current and future workforce needs through contemporary and innovative recruitment practices and enterprise workforce planning. QFES engages with a variety of providers such as Work180 and UNIQ You, the Department of Veterans Affairs and RSL Queensland to promote careers in QFES.

QFES employs a blind selection methodology in the firefighter recruitment process, whereby all personal and identifiable information such as name, age and gender are redacted ensuring all applicants are selected for offer of employment purely based on suitability for the role. Candidates successful in a recruitment process where all entry standards and requirements are the same for everyone; regardless of gender, age or background; ensures future recruit firefighters possess and are acknowledged by their peers as having the requisite skills and ability to completely perform the role of a QFES firefighter. The current requirements of the firefighter recruitment assessments reflect the minimum standards required of all operational firefighters on entry, regardless of gender, age or background.

QFES' forthcoming Equity and Diversity Plan will outline key measures to further support candidates in a recruitment process who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, people with CALD backgrounds, or women applying for leadership positions.

ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. can be accessed at www.qfes.qld.gov.au/join-our-team

Employee performance management framework

Personal achievement and development plans ensure regular informal and formal reviews that promote constructive communication, reflecting positive performance management principles to assist the employee to meet and exceed work performance expectations.

QFES has a wide range of flexible work options to encourage staff to have a balance between their work and personal life including job-sharing, telecommuting and flexible leave options. The department continues to review the arrangements for flexible work practices to ensure QFES continues to improve as a contemporary workplace.

QFES values, supports and promotes the recognition of its workforce, paid and volunteer, across the department for their bravery, dedication and outstanding service above and beyond what is expected of their role. The QFES Honours, Rewards and Recognition suite continues to provide an extensive range of reward and recognition offerings to highlight and celebrate the achievements and successes of the department's workforce. As well as the suite of awards available, the Commissioner's Awards for Excellence are held each year to recognise outstanding achievements or significant contributions that further QFES' values and goals. The QFES Honours, Rewards and Recognition booklet is available on the QFES Gateway and website to ensure accessibility to all QFES personnel and includes links to nomination forms.

Industrial and employee relations framework

QFES appoints employees pursuant to either the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* or the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

As a State of Queensland employer, QFES' industrial and employee relations framework is established to comply with the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (IR Act) which includes the Queensland Employment Standards. Modern Awards and a range of directives also apply. Negotiation of employment conditions for QFES employees is subject to the collective good faith bargaining provisions within the IR Act.

In compliance with IR Act provisions, consultative arrangements for QFES employees and their respective unions are outlined in Certified Agreement provisions (in either the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Service Certified Agreement 2022* or in the *State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2019*). These arrangements provide for regularity of consultative committee meetings (bi-monthly or quarterly with each union) and terms of reference outline the nature of matters which can be tabled for discussion.

The six unions, that are registered industrial organisations under the IR Act, representing the various employment streams within QFES are:

- ✦ Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union
- ✦ Queensland Fire and Rescue Senior Officers' Union of Employees
- ✦ Rural Fire Service Branch of Together Queensland
- ✦ Together Union
- ✦ United Firefighters Union Queensland
- ✦ United Workers Union.

Generally, agency consultative committees deal with matters of collective importance to groups of workers.

Where employees are unable to resolve individual complaints or grievances with their supervisor at the local level (including using alternative dispute resolution options), grievances and industrial disputes may be accessed in the manner set out in the Awards, Agreements or Directives within the scope of Industrial Matters as described in the IR Act.

The employee complaints process and fair treatment appeals heard in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission may be accessed for other matters.

If internal resolution cannot be achieved, disputes can be referred to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission for conciliation and if necessary, arbitration.

The QFES Gateway provides employees with ready access to policies and procedures pertaining to Human Resource Management and Employee Relations topics.

QFES Leadership Framework

The QFES Leadership Framework underpins the Leadership Foundation Programs. The Leading Self and Leading Others programs are fully implemented and continue to be delivered across the state. The Leading Leaders program is continuing to be developed, informed by contemporary leadership development methodology and trials of program components with the workforce.

The framework and foundation programs align to the themes of the Queensland Government *3-year Human Capital Strategic Roadmap 2022*. Through the utilisation of internal resources and existing whole-of-government programs, such as those provided by the Public Sector Commission through the Queensland University of Technology and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, current and emerging leaders have access to leading practice content and concepts.

Health, safety and wellbeing

The department continues to treat the health, safety and wellbeing of its workforce as a high priority with this commitment articulated in the *QFES Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2024* and department’s strategic plan which aligns with *Strategy 2030*.

The department has dedicated resources (state based and in each QFES region) to support the health, safety and wellbeing of its workforce via delivery of the following services:

- ✦ safety alerts and bulletins
- ✦ facilitation of work health and safety (WHS) risk assessments and task analyses
- ✦ subject matter input into WHS investigations, findings and reports

- ✦ workplace safety inspections and audits
- ✦ analysis of WHS-related data
- ✦ involvement in multi-disciplinary working groups or advisory groups related to WHS issues
- ✦ training related to WHS
- ✦ safety leadership and culture interventions
- ✦ health and wellbeing advice and programs
- ✦ injury and illness management advice, case management and support
- ✦ research related to WHS and wellbeing issues or concerns.

Achievements during the reporting period include:

- ✦ access to and communication of vaccination programs related to influenza and COVID-19 for staff and volunteers and hepatitis B for relevant staff
- ✦ increased focus on managing the plant and equipment lifecycle to ensure that risks are managed appropriately and effectively and embedded into all business processes consistent with legislated requirements
- ✦ progressed the development of the contemporary medical standards project for safety critical roles. SES standards are complete and RFS standards are in development. This project will ensure that QFES meets its legislative obligations to identify, assess and manage the risks associated with certain medical conditions related to QFES operational roles
- ✦ developed and implemented Hydration Safe Work Guidelines and Oral Hydration Solutions providing contemporary evidence-based hydration solutions for emergency workers.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing

QFES is committed to providing a broad range of support services for its workforce (paid staff and volunteers) to promote mental health and wellbeing.

The FESSN delivers support services to assist with personal or work-related challenges including:

- ✦ confidential professional counselling is available to all QFES staff and volunteers and their immediate families—delivered by a network of independent, external professional mental health practitioners in various locations across the state
- ✦ 24-hour telephone counselling—after hours telephone support is available to all QFES staff and volunteers and their immediate families. This is a pager service with calls returned within two hours
- ✦ Peer Support Program—a network of specially trained QFES PSOs who assist colleagues with personal or work-related difficulties

- ❖ critical incident and disaster support services promoting psychological first-aid for staff and volunteers exposed to emotionally challenging experiences
- ❖ systematic training and education sessions promoting mental health and resilience
- ❖ leadership advice services to inform and assist all leaders in managing the mental health of their people as they carry out the duty of care for QFES
- ❖ mental health awareness material, pathways and promotion of available support networks.

In addition, FESSN manages the Chaplaincy Service Support Network. The network provides personal support services to the department's staff and volunteers, current serving and retired, and their families on religious, spiritual, moral, ethical, cultural and welfare matters. The network provides pastoral care to staff and their communities and the Senior Chaplains provide supervision and advice to regional Chaplains and assist with the coordination of regional chaplaincy activities. QFES contracts chaplaincy services through The Salvation Army.

During 2022–23, five mental health professionals were appointed—Brisbane (two positions), Northern and South Eastern Regions along with a Manager, Disaster Response appointed to state office. Recruitment will continue in 2023–24 for a further five equipping each region with their own dedicated Manager, Mental Health Services.

The inaugural QFES Mental Health Strategy captures the risk and resilience profile of the department, providing a whole-of-career life approach and systems focus to ensure risk mitigation and long-term improved outcomes for QFES members' mental health. The strategy's objective is to improve the mental wellbeing of all QFES personnel (paid and volunteer). The strategy's four key principles are Prevent, Prepare, Respond and Recover. The strategy will be implemented in 2023–24.

During 2022–23, QFES continued participation in the *Are they Triple OK?* initiative by R U OK? which specifically recognises the mental health challenges faced by first responder agency members. R U OK? Day events included a livestream discussion on the importance of mental health for QFES members and how QFES can take further steps to encourage open conversations. In addition, more than \$67,000 was raised in support of Movember—QFES finished in first place amongst National First Responder agencies—raising funds and awareness for men's mental and physical health.

Proactive Resilience Services

QFES Active Resilience Engagement (QARE) is an individual wellbeing check-in with a QFES counsellor that can be provisioned preventatively, and is routinely scheduled for high-risk teams, or reactively (targeted for teams with recent high exposure). This program broadens the network of support and reduces stigma by providing check-ins to all teams identifying as needing support, rather than individuals. QARE sessions are particularly beneficial for providing escalated support options during significant operational events.

In 2022–23, FESSN provided more than 280 QARE sessions over 67 sites across the state. QARE sessions have resulted in an increase in uptake of counselling services and a breakdown of stigma associated with help seeking by those members receiving check-ins.

Peer Support Services

The Peer Support program consists of 180 active PSOs, at 30 June 2023, from a range of roles across the state, who volunteer to assist their colleagues with work or personal challenges. PSOs play a crucial role in practical and emotional support such as follow-up after critical incidents, providing information sessions on mental health and assisting colleagues with work or personal challenges.

During 2022–23, PSOs provided more than 5,200 hours of support to approximately 4,300 members.

Critical Incident Services

FESSN responds on average to 59 new critical incidents each month across Queensland. FESSN has been involved in reviewing the process and resources available to support continuous improvement of the department's support response.

To improve the way QFES manages incidents, during the reporting period, a live critical incident dashboard was piloted. The dashboard is designed to assist with monitoring cumulative exposure to incidents and implementation of localised proactive prevention and preparation strategies.

At 30 June 2023, there are 110 PSOs trained and approved for Peer Support Response activation following a critical incident including 18 who completed the additional training in 2022–23.

Training Services

FESSN provides tailored training services to meet the unique challenges experienced by QFES personnel.

FESSN Training Services provided in excess of 360 hours of training in 2022–23 through presentation of the following products:

- ✧ PSO Foundations Training and Upskilling
- ✧ Critical Incident Management Training
- ✧ Mental Health Awareness
- ✧ FESSN Services Awareness
- ✧ DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness and conscientiousness) Personality Profiling
- ✧ Suicide Awareness
- ✧ Resilience
- ✧ Mental Health Leadership.

Mental health awareness and trauma preparedness training was also provided to all permanent and auxiliary FRS recruits (12 intakes) and Fire Communications recruits (three intakes) during the reporting period.

Focused Mental Health Leadership training through the CarefulLeaders program resulted in the education of 659 leaders through 55 sessions conducted statewide. The CarefulLeaders program is a QFES designed program which develops mental health literacy including stigma reduction, and provides leaders with strategies, skills and tools for leading positive mental health culture in the workplace, leading effective mental health conversations, leading in times of crisis (including suicidality), and leading recovery.

FESSN training services also targeted recruit training sessions, role focused training sessions, inductions, conferences, summits and committees, to roll out mental health awareness in line with the QFES Mental Health Strategy.

Not Now, Not Ever to domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence (DFV) can affect people of all cultures, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, education backgrounds and income levels. DFV is a workplace issue as it can affect the attendance, performance, productivity, wellbeing and safety of the person experiencing violence as well as their work colleagues. QFES is dedicated to raising awareness of this important issue across its workforce and the wider community.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- ✧ implemented a department-wide mobile phone-donation policy to support those who experience DFV—the first Queensland Government agency to do so. The Domestic Violence Safe Phone initiative collects unused and replacement mobile phones and gives them to people who experience DFV and are in need of a mobile phone
- ✧ provided new lunchboxes and school supplies for disadvantaged school children, with Zephyr Education, with collection points around the state
- ✧ participated in DFV Prevention Month during May 2023, with the theme *Love≠Control*, to raise awareness amongst the QFES workforce through a number of initiatives including:
 - hosted a panel discussion themed *DFV awareness: why is it important?* Panellists provided an insight into the signs and impact of DFV and explored the behaviours that contribute to DFV in communities
 - participated in the 2023 Darkness to Daylight challenge throughout the month of May, for the tenth year with the Darkness to Daylight live event held on 31 May 2023. QFES members from across the state supported bringing an end to DFV and raising awareness of DFV and coercive control through building awareness and fundraising.
- ✧ recognised White Ribbon Day on 18 November 2022. The day aims to end violence against women—while both men and women experience DFV, women are over-represented in the DFV statistics.