

Queensland Multicultural Policy 'Our story, our future'  
 Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services  
 Annual Reporting for 2022-23

● **KEY ACTION 2: Recruitment and workplace culture**

Barriers to participation facing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities will be removed so they can join the Public Sector and Queensland Government boards, through **culturally inclusive recruitment practices and workplace cultures**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- Queensland gets the most benefit from our diversity and global connections
- Individuals are supported to participate in the economy.
- Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.
- Queenslanders celebrate our multicultural identity.
- Connected and resilient communities.
- A respectful and inclusive narrative about diversity.

QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 2	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
2.1	Capitalise on the skills and knowledge of existing bicultural and bilingual employees in the Queensland Government.	State Emergency Service	Explore feasibility of including additional information onto State Emergency Service (SES) identification cards to identify members who are bilingual.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b>	During 2022-23, the SES initiated the facilitation of including additional information onto SES identification cards to identify members who are bilingual. This work will continue into 2023-24.
		Media, Communications and Online	Celebrate and socialise the skills and knowledge of our CALD staff and volunteers in QFES.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)	During 2022-23, QFES continued to acknowledge the cultural diversity within the department through a number of forums including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an external facing social media post (during Multicultural Queensland Month August 2022)</li> <li>• an employee profile in the Response Magazine (Queensland's official Fire and Emergency Services magazine).</li> </ul>

**Case studies or good news stories to highlight achievements relevant to Key Action 2 - Recruitment and workplace culture**

During 2022-23, QFES commenced production of a series of recruitment videos and associated social and traditional media content, highlighting the unique qualities of a Fire and Rescue Service firefighter for the purposes of building greater diversity within the service.

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 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.



● **KEY ACTION 4: Cultural diversity data**

The Queensland Government will collect, analyse, and use **cultural diversity data** to improve service delivery and better meet customer needs. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*

QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 4	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
4.1	Introduce a new Australian South Sea Islander indicator across government datasets and client information forms.	Community Capability and Volunteerism	Introduce Australian South Sea Islander indicator for clients involved in key community engagement and safety programs delivered by QFES.	<b>Complete</b> <b>30 June 2023</b>	During 2022-23, QFES introduced a South Sea Islander indicator when enquires are made regarding the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fight Fire Fascination program. The FFF program supports 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.</li> <li>• Safehome program. The Safehome program is designed to assist all householders in recognising fire and safety hazards in and around the home.</li> </ul>
4.2	Identify potential opportunities to incorporate diversity data into organisational reporting to inform strategic planning.	QFES People	Explore feasibility of incorporating diversity data into organisational reporting to Executives and Board of Management to inform strategic priorities and decision-making.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b>	During 2022-23, QFES continued to provide diversity data via the quarterly Minimum Obligatory Human Resources Information (MOHRI) process for the Public Sector Commission (PSC). This information in turn contributes to the whole-of-sector PSC Quarterly MOHRI Benchmarks Dashboard.  During 2023-24, the QFES Human Resource Dashboard will be reviewed and updated to integrate the department's diversity data (including targets, trends and performance). This will enable greater visibility and reporting to QFES executives; the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee; the QFES Board of Management and the People Committee to inform strategic priorities and decision-making.

● **KEY ACTION 5: Interpreters and communication strategies**

Queensland Government agencies will ensure people who have difficulty communicating in English can access information and services at the right time and in the right manner, through **improved access to interpreters and implementing multilingual and multi-modal communication strategies**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.
- Culturally capable services and programs.
- A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.
- Queensland gets the most benefit from our diversity and global connections
- Individuals are supported to participate in the economy.

QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 5	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
5.1	Explore opportunities to partner with research institutes and key stakeholders to understand barriers and opportunities to improve communications for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.	1. Strategic Intelligence and Planning Branch 2. Community Capability and Volunteerism	1. Investigate opportunities to partner with the Queensland University of Technology in relation to the multicultural transmedia storytelling framework grant proposal. 2. Strengthen relationship with Multicultural Australia to improve effectiveness of the disaster preparedness of, and communications with, CALD communities.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b>	1) QFES is a partner organisation on an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant application focused on developing a multicultural transmedia storytelling framework to help with disaster risk reduction and resilience building. Led by the Queensland University of Technology, the purpose of the research is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the needs and pathways to support the mission of building a 'Resilient Australia' through consulting with disaster management authorities, multicultural community organisations, and their network members and stakeholders</li> <li>• develop a culturally aware and audience-oriented transmedia storytelling framework that guides those affected by disasters to develop resilience to them</li> <li>• co-design and implement digital technology resources that enable knowledge to be shared and local support networks for Australian disaster education and recovery systems to be established.</li> </ul> The research team was advised in early 2023 that the original submission was unsuccessful, however the ARC encouraged reapplication in the next grant round closing in December 2024. QFES is continuing as a partner organisation and is working more closely with the researchers by having a QFES staff member on the formal research team for the December 2024 submission. 2) During 2022-23, QFES engaged with Multicultural Australia on the review and development of the updated Home Fire Safety Visual Guide, an Easy English resource targeted at persons with low levels of English literacy. The updated resource is available on the QFES website: <a href="http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/Home-Fire-Safety-Guide.pdf">www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/Home-Fire-Safety-Guide.pdf</a> More than 8,000 printed copies have been distributed across the state since its introduction in May 2023.
5.2	Strengthen coordination of QFES community engagement and communications programs targeting CALD communities.	Strategic Policy	Prioritisation of activities to improve communication with vulnerable communities through departmental forums.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b>	In November 2022, QFES hosted a meeting with community leaders from the Queensland African Communities Council, Queensland Muslims Inc, Islamic Society of Gold Coast, Multicultural Social Network, Future Leaders Advocacy Group, Ethiopian Community Association, Syriac Community Association, Congolese Community, Australian Karen Organisation, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, Australian Red Cross and Multicultural Australia. Key discussion points included roles of community leaders and training opportunities, dissemination of information through community and religious leaders and earning the trust of CALD community members through grass-roots relationship building.
5.3	Ensure frontline staff have the skills and knowledge to support CALD customers, including knowledge of how to access interpreters and communicating this with funded non-government service providers.	QFES People (Workforce Development)  (for All QFES)	Develop opportunities to increase awareness of the importance of providing accessible services to people from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds and promote departmental policies relating to use of language services, including procedure PR1003 – Use of Language Services.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b>	Cross-cultural skills for firefighters is a mandatory unit within the firefighter recruitment course and is also available to all QFES paid staff and volunteers on aXcelerate – the QFES Student Management System. During 2022-23, there were 472 completions on aXcelerate. Fire Communications Officer recruits undertake training on how to access and use the Automated Translation and Interpretive Service (ATIS) to support their emergency call-taking role. Optional units—such as the Cultural Protocols Guide for Operators and Cultural Protocols for Crew Leaders—are available to QFES paid staff and volunteers on aXcelerate. During 2022-23, there were 27 completions on aXcelerate. The departmental procedure regarding the Use of Language Services is available to all staff and volunteers on the QFES Gateway (staff intranet).

QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 5	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
5.4	Develop targeted communication and engagement plans that consider multiple formats and modes of delivery, including use of Plain English and audio-visual resources, and targeted and trusted communication channels utilised by diverse communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media, Communications and Online;</li> <li>Community Capability and Volunteerism</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted communication and engagement plans are included in media and communications campaigns.</li> <li>Enhance QFES capability in development of skills and incorporation of 'Easy English' into community engagement materials</li> </ol>	<p><b>On track</b></p> <p><b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During 2022-23, QFES' published advertising across several different media and channels was translated into multiple languages for CALD audiences. The advertising was linked to further information in a range of languages on the QFES website. Information included public safety and preparation messages for smoke alarms, home fire escapes, bushfire safety and fire danger ratings. In addition, QFES delivered resources for SES volunteers within the <i>Get your kit together</i> range including a visual preparedness guide aimed at supporting CALD communities and those with limited language.</li> <li>During 2022-23, QFES enhanced the following QFES engagement materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home Fire Safety Visual Guide: the updated guide was published in May 2023 as an Easy English resource targeted at persons with low levels of English literacy. It is available on the QFES website. Over 8,000 printed copies have been distributed across the state since its introduction in May 2023.</li> <li>Escape Plan Information Sheet: QFES developed Easy English and Translated versions of the Escape Plan Information Sheet in alignment with the Home Fire Safety Campaign. The 2023 Home Fire Safety Campaign aimed to reduce loss of life in structural fires by encouraging households to discuss, plan and practise their home fire escape plan. The 2023 campaign expanded the target audience to the top 11 CALD audiences across Queensland. The campaign ran from April to June on social media, shopping centre digital display boards, podcasts and online digital and video channels. Campaign advertising linked to the QFES website for tips on how to check, plan and practise home fire safety. The campaign successfully reached CALD communities across Queensland using translated social media videos linked to translated online fact sheets in 11 languages. The information sheet is published on the QFES website.</li> <li>Bushfire Preparedness information sheet: QFES developed Easy English and translated versions of the information sheet in alignment with the Bushfire Safety Campaign for publication on the QFES website. This resource is aimed at providing high level preparedness information for vulnerable communities. The Bushfire Safety Campaign ran from late June 2022 to the end of August 2022 and began again in June 2023. The campaign educates Queenslanders about bushfire safety and encourages people, particularly those living close to bushland, to prepare themselves and their properties and complete a bushfire survival plan.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Resources are available on the QFES website: <a href="http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au">www.qfes.qld.gov.au</a></p>

**Case studies or good news stories to highlight achievements relevant to Key Action 5 - Interpreters and communication strategies**

In March 2023, QFES hosted a workshop at the Disaster Community Connectors run by Central Queensland Multicultural Association in Rockhampton. Participants from China, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Bangladesh and Brazil, learnt about the roles of QFES, the Australian Warning System, local risks and about the value and process of volunteering. Workshop discussions provided an understanding of the disaster preparedness information needs of CALD communities.

In addition, QFES conducted three focus groups with CALD community leaders in the South Eastern Region to better understand the emergency and disaster preparedness information needs of local CALD communities. The project aimed to identify better ways of delivering inclusive preparedness initiatives through tailored engagement approaches. The focus groups were conducted as part of a research project through the University of Southern Queensland. A total of 16 community leaders participated in the group discussions which were held in Logan and the Gold Coast in August 2022 and Ipswich in November 2022. Participants represented communities from a broad range of backgrounds including Kenyan, Tongan, Burmese, Qatari, Sudanese, Samoan, Nigerian, South Sudanese, Chinese and Indian. Topics explored in the focus groups included community attitudes toward emergency and disaster preparedness, communication channels and formats, language and cultural considerations, trusted information sources, engagement opportunities and resources. Key themes were identified and shared with internal and external stakeholders.

QFES is a founding member of the Ipswich CALD Disaster Management Collaboration Network established in January 2023. The network includes representatives from Multicultural Australia, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, City of Ipswich, Red Cross Australia, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and the Polynesian African Cross-Cultural Advisory Group. The purpose of the network is for disaster management agencies and CALD communities in Ipswich to work together in collaborative and coordinated way to support and deliver emergency and disaster resilience initiatives.

● **KEY ACTION 6: Address racism and discrimination, and promote inclusion**

Queensland Government agencies will ensure equitable and respectful opportunities and experiences for staff and customers from CALD backgrounds, through targeted initiatives to **address unconscious bias and racism and promote inclusion**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*
- *Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.*
- *Queenslanders celebrate our multicultural identity.*
- *Connected and resilient communities.*
- *A respectful and inclusive narrative about diversity.*

QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 6	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
6.1	Provide anti-racism training for all staff, including what it is, and how to prevent and respond to it.	QFES People	<p>Build awareness within workforce of training courses available relating to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Functional areas within QFES People Directorate will review current programs relating to education, training and resources addressing racism, discrimination, diversity and inclusion to identify gaps in QFES offerings.</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p> <p><b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)</p>	<p>The QFES Corporate Induction Forum includes a number of sessions focusing on building a supportive and inclusive workplace with a focus on cultural safety, challenging bias, equity and diversity, and recognising the value of diverse perspectives.</p> <p>The Multicultural Queensland Charter is required reading for on-boarding new and cross-boarding existing employees within the QFES Human Resource system.</p> <p>QFES launched the QFES Charter: how we live our values in December 2022. The charter sets behavioural expectations for the QFES workforce. The QFES values guide the way we behave towards ourselves, our colleagues and others and hold significant meaning across the workforce, with 95 per cent of staff and 94 per cent of volunteers saying they understand the importance of behaviour in a manner that aligns to the QFES values. Building on the 2021 <i>Values in action</i> activity, in which over 100 teams across the department identified the <i>above-the-line</i> behaviours they expect and those <i>below-the-line</i> behaviours they reject, the QFES Charter succinctly reinforces the values-aligned behaviours people want to see in their work environment.</p> <p>QFES takes a continuous improvement approach to ensure that contemporary attitudes to racism, discrimination, equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded within training and development resources.</p> <p>During 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QFES supported and socialised campaigns and resources to build awareness of available training courses relating to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Racism. It stops with me. – an Australian Human Rights Commission campaign.</li> <li>○ Human Rights Awareness - including an e-learning product (launched March 2022) that explores human rights from the perspective of the responsibilities of staff and volunteers to respect, promote and protect the human rights of all Queenslanders is available on aXcelerate - the QFES Student Management System accessible to all QFES paid staff and volunteers and continued delivery of an <i>Introduction to the Human Rights Act</i> session in the QFES Corporate Induction Forum. Induction participants are also provided with a one-page <i>Guide to the Human Rights Act</i> and directed to the resources available on the QFES Gateway for further information.</li> <li>○ Cultural Protocols Guide – is available on aXcelerate.</li> <li>○ Diversity Council Australia corporate and individual membership for access to research and events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>QFES also continued delivery of QFES Allies of Inclusion 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 20 per cent since 30 June 2022.</p>



QFES Action No.	Agency activities supporting Key Action 6	Responsible portfolio/area	QFES Activities to Support the Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24	Progress status for 2022-23	Outcomes achieved for people from CALD backgrounds
6.2	Uplift the cultural capability of agency staff, to help them better understand their CALD colleagues and customers.	QFES People (Workforce Development)  (for All QFES)	QFES leaders support policies and programs which aim to support understanding of CALD communities, including attendance at cultural events, and undertaking and promoting training opportunities such as cross-cultural intelligence, unconscious bias and diversity awareness training.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)	<p>QFES Corporate Induction Forum includes a number of sessions focusing on building a supportive and inclusive workplace with a focus on cultural safety, challenging bias, equity and diversity, and recognising the value of diverse perspectives.</p> <p>The Multicultural Queensland Charter is required reading for on-boarding new and cross-boarding existing employees within the QFES Human Resource system.</p> <p>QFES launched the QFES Charter: how we live our values in December 2022. The charter sets behavioural expectations for the QFES workforce. The QFES values guide the way we behave towards ourselves, our colleagues and others and hold significant meaning across the workforce, with 95 per cent of staff and 94 per cent of volunteers saying they understand the importance of behaviour in a manner that aligns to the QFES values. Building on the 2021 <i>Values in action</i> activity, in which over 100 teams across the department identified the <i>above-the-line</i> behaviours they expect and those <i>below-the-line</i> behaviours they reject, the QFES Charter succinctly reinforces the values-aligned behaviours people want to see in their work environment.</p> <p>During 2022-23, QFES supported and socialised campaigns and resources to build awareness of available training courses relating to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion including a Bias Awareness session delivered to the Executive Leadership Team. For further information refer to Action 6.1.</p> <p>QFES socialised Multicultural Queensland Month in August 2022 through the QFES Gateway with access to resources, events and opportunities.</p> <p>QFES also continued delivery of QFES Allies of Inclusion 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 20 per cent since 30 June 2022.</p> <p>During 2022-23, QFES representatives participated in various Multicultural events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Village Festival – 24 September 2022</li> <li>• Hungaro Spring Festival – 2 October 2022</li> <li>• Logan Multicultural Community Safety Day – 5 November 2022</li> <li>• Thriving Multicultural Communities Community Connection Exhibition – 30 November 2022</li> <li>• Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast Twilight Multicultural Mixer – 6 December 2022</li> <li>• Congo Flavour Festival - 10 December 2022</li> <li>• Islamic Women’s Association Emergency Day Out – 10 December 2022</li> <li>• Chinese Lunar New Year Festival – 28 January 2023</li> <li>• LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood, Redbank Plains - 2 June 2023.</li> </ul>
6.3	Senior Executives provide clear messages affirming the agency’s commitment to zero-tolerance to racism and discrimination and encouraging anti-racism initiatives in their agency.	QFES People (for QFES ELT; Media, Communications and Online)	Senior Executives develop opportunities to increase awareness of the importance of providing accessible services to all cultural and linguistic backgrounds and promote zero-tolerance messaging through department-wide communications and leadership forums.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)	<p>During 2022-23, a Bias Awareness session was delivered to the Executive Leadership Team. QFES provides ongoing messaging through internal communications channels, including Commissioner’s Update (monthly newsletter to all staff and volunteers), Response Magazine articles, QFES Gateway banners and content such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response Magazine articles: Inclusion in Action (August 2022); Engaging with Ukrainian community; Connecting to Culture (October 2022); Laos delegates visit QFES (December 2022); Empowering culturally diverse community leaders (February 2023); CALD communities get disaster connected, First Nations Public Administration Conference (April 2023); and Cultural groups celebrate faith, culture and families (June 2023)</li> <li>• Commissioner newsletters: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 2023)</li> <li>• Gateway banners and content: Multicultural Month (August 2022) – banner and video; Human Rights Week – banner (December 2022); International Volunteers Day - banner and video (December 2022) and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 2023).</li> </ul>
6.4	Promote education, training and resources addressing systemic issues of racism, discrimination, diversity and inclusion.	QFES People (for All QFES)	QFES leaders undertake and promote training opportunities such as existing cross-cultural intelligence, unconscious bias and diversity awareness training.	<b>On track</b> <b>30 June 2024</b> (Business as usual)	<p>The QFES Corporate Induction Forum includes a number of sessions focusing on building a supportive and inclusive workplace with a focus on cultural safety, challenging bias, equity and diversity, and recognising the value of diverse perspectives.</p> <p>The Multicultural Queensland Charter is required reading for on-boarding new and cross-boarding existing employees within the QFES Human Resources system.</p> <p>During 2022-23, QFES continued to support and socialise campaigns and resources to build awareness of available training courses relating to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion. For further information refer to Action 6.1.</p> <p>QFES also continued delivery of QFES Allies of Inclusion 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 20 per cent since 30 June 2022.</p>

**Case studies or good news stories to highlight achievements relevant to Key Action 6 - Addressing racism and promoting inclusion**

QFES hosted, in partnership with QPS, Multicultural Australia, the Queensland Human Rights Commission and the Rockhampton Regional Council the sixth annual multi-Faith Dinner in June 2023. The dinner enables government and other agency representatives to join together and promote the shared values of all faiths. There were 125 guests representing 21 cultures and 11 religions.