

RESPONSE

RESILIENT AND READY FOR THE PEOPLE OF QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND'S OFFICIAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MAGAZINE EDITION 37



**National
Reconciliation
Week**
More than a word

CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATION COOL BURN
Preparing for bushfire season

4



EXERCISE INCENDIUM
Working with Defence

5



CLOSING THE GAP
Award-winning projects

6





ON THE COVER

Robin shared her story as part of National Reconciliation Week in May. She is a proud Mununjali woman from the Beaudesert area and is part of the Scenic Rim State Emergency Service Unit. She believes the future for reconciliation is a work in progress as there is still more to do for her people.

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

QFES appreciates the support of advertisers, but does not necessarily endorse or evaluate advertised products, services or vendors, nor any of the claims made by advertisements.

Address: Response magazine, Media, Communications and Online Branch, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, GPO Box 1425, Brisbane, QLD, 4001
Editor: Jarryd Luke
 Phone: 07 3635 3314
 Email: Magazine.Editor@qfes.qld.gov.au
 Advertising: Martyn Hewett
 Email: mkhewett@bigpond.com
 Graphic Design: Dexart Graphic Design
 Email: dexartgraphicdesign@gmail.com

» Operation Cool Burn	4
» Exercise Incendium	5
» Closing the Gap Awards	6
» The future of warnings	9
» Next Generation Triple Zero	10
» SES fundraiser	13
» Confined Space and Trench Rescue	14
» Climb for a Cause	17
» Bike 4 Burns	17
» New decontamination process	18
» Climate change modelling	19

AROUND THE STATE

» South Eastern Region	20
» South Western Region	21
» Far Northern Region	22
» Northern Region	23
» Central Region	25
» North Coast Region	26
» Brisbane Region	27

COMMUNITY

» Darkness to Daylight	28
» Fire Ed for children with autism	31

GALLERY

SPOTLIGHT

» Trail runner Caine Warburton	34
--------------------------------	----

FOREWORDS



GREG LEACH
Commissioner

QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

One of the best parts of being Commissioner is travelling around Queensland to meet staff and volunteers and hear from you firsthand.

Connecting with our people and gathering a greater understanding of your experiences at QFES is important to me and will help shape our future.

My listening tour is providing me with good insights into where we may need to focus into the future, beyond what we gleaned through the annual workforce experience surveys.

So far, I have held 23 sessions and met with about 210 members in Central Region, Brisbane Region, South Western Region and our Albion office. The tour will continue to all other regions through to September, including South Eastern and Northern regions, which were delayed due to the greater Brisbane COVID-19 lockdown in April.

Thank you for openly sharing with me. We have a lot of loyal, passionate and engaged people at QFES. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming months.

I also had the opportunity to talk with many of our Rural Fire Service (RFS) members at the RFS volunteer summits in Cairns and the Sunshine Coast. The collegiate atmosphere created a lot of positive energy as people came together to share ideas and learn from each other.

We have several new appliances, stations and sheds opening in the next few months, from Redland Bay to Bellthorpe, Roma Street, Windsor, Mount Isa and Yarrabilba. I'm sure our staff and volunteers are looking forward to their new appliances and buildings, which will be a big help for their work with the community.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) recently met in Toowoomba to discuss risk, including updates from the QFES Futures team, the Capability and Knowledge Hub team and the ELT members' Working for Queensland Action Plans.

The next two-day ELT meeting is scheduled for September and will be on the topic of capability and service delivery.

We are currently going through the process for Senate Estimates. There is a lot of work for all involved to prepare this extra information, and I appreciate all your efforts to ensure the process runs smoothly.



MIKE WASSING
Deputy Commissioner

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

I was delighted to participate in the Queensland Disaster Management Conference at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre in June.

The conference was presented by the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), with support from QFES and other agencies such as the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM), Queensland Police Service and Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

The theme was 'Disaster management in the new COVID world', and there was much discussion about the importance of state and local government relationships in the disaster management sector.

We committed support to the conference to help encourage interoperability across the sector and enhance cooperation, engagement and collaboration in Disaster Management Arrangements, a key responsibility we have within QFES.

The conference was a fantastic opportunity to take a closer look at Queensland's disaster management systems and the crucial link between state agencies and local councils.

QFES continues to provide assurance to the Queensland community by working hard to deliver on recommendations from the multiple reviews conducted over the past few years including a number of IGEM reviews, the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, Queensland Audit Office and our own internal reviews and debriefs.

We coordinate and manage this complex work through our own internal lessons management system, and through the state's disaster coordination arrangements with our collective primary aim to continue to strive for improvement in our levels of service delivery with Queensland communities.

The most recent K'gari review made 38 recommendations to help drive improvements for bushfire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in the future.

It also highlighted opportunities for QFES and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) to further engage with stakeholders, the Butchulla people and the community, to plan and undertake hazard mitigation activities.

This work has already started and we are focusing on four key areas: incident management training, fire management training, Traditional Owner representation in incident management, and hazard reduction controls.

I would like to thank all QFES members and our partners who responded to the fire for their outstanding efforts. It was a united effort with the community over a sustained amount of time and the positive outcomes are a credit to everyone involved.

Queensland gets bushfire ready

The planning phase for Operation Cool Burn (OCB) is mostly complete, with many Bushfire Mitigation Plans finalised across Queensland in preparation for bushfire season.

Area Fire Management Groups (AFMG) have identified areas that have a particularly high bushfire risk across the state. QFES and our partners plan to conduct up to 580 activities to help manage these risks.

James Haig, Executive Manager of Bushfire Mitigation, said not all these activities would be completed due to a range of factors.

“The weather is always a challenge and many areas are currently a bit wet, but they’re starting to dry out quickly” James said.

“We don’t always get the right conditions at the right time, so together with our partners we have to be flexible in our approach.”

James said the 2021 bushfire season was looking relatively positive.

“Our friends at the Bureau of Meteorology have suggested we can expect a pretty normal rainfall pattern for the winter,” he said. “The latest Australian Bushfire Seasonal Outlook, available at www.bnhcra.com.au/hazardnotes/97 for June to August also suggests we should anticipate normal conditions for the next three months.

“This is good news, but the devil is in the detail and it may be a bit dryer than average in some parts and a bit wetter in others. Queensland is a big state after all.”

In the last edition of *Response* we described OCB’s transition to a year-round program, which will allow QFES and our partners to focus on the identified risk areas and seize opportunities to deliver activities outside the OCB period.

“As a number of First Nations people have said to me, the bush works to a natural calendar not a human one, so we need to burn when the bush is ready and conditions are right,” James said.

Another component of QFES’ mitigation effort is extensive media work to help our communities understand the risks and the need to prepare.

“Even lower-risk areas still have some risk, but we can’t conduct mitigation activities everywhere,” James said.

“To address this problem, regions and the state office work with the media to share the message about planning and preparing for bushfire season with all Queenslanders.

“This media activity will ramp up as we get closer to the bushfire season. In mid-May we had already undertaken 42 media activities state-wide.

“These activities are also supported by our annual bushfire advertising campaign beginning in July that will point people to a new online Bushfire Survival Plan.

“Thank you again to all the personnel who are continuing to work hard delivering OCB.

“Our mitigation activities make a real difference to the safety of our communities during the bushfire season and we share that goal with all our partners.”



QFES has planned more than 580 Operation Cool Burn activities in high-risk areas across Queensland.

Exercise Incendium

QFES, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and HQ Plantations held a tactical exercise to test how they work together during emergencies and explore new ways of collaborating.

Taking place over three days in Brisbane and North Coast regions, Exercise Incendium (Latin for fire, inferno or conflagration) enhanced the agencies' capabilities in managing large, complex bushfires and other disasters.

Acting Inspector Joel Gordon coordinated QFES' involvement in the exercise.

"About 130 people took part, including members from all QFES services," Joel said.

"The interaction between the agencies was really positive. Everyone was keen to work together and better understand how we can collaborate in the future.

"It was a very challenging exercise that pushed people to fully explore what they were capable of, particularly in terms of communications, engagement and deployment."

On the first day, participants held a strategic round-table discussion in the State Operations Centre about how QFES would engage the ADF during natural disasters. The next two days were devoted to tactical exercises.

"We gathered at the ADF base in Caboolture on the second day to hold a demonstration of each agency's assets and technology," Joel said.

"QFES brought appliances from the Fire and Rescue Service and Rural Fire Service, HQ Plantations brought one of their new fire assets, and the ADF showed us their drone technology."

On the final day they performed a tactical Incident Management Team (IMT) exercise at Caloundra.

"We simulated a fire in the Beerburrum Plantation Estate and tested the capabilities of the different agencies," Joel said.

"One of the key things we tested was using the ADF for reconnaissance. They gathered information ahead of the fire and sent it to their headquarters and the Caloundra Incident Control Centre.

"This will help us identify evacuation routes and vulnerable infrastructure, and measure the effectiveness of fire breaks in the path of the fire."

Joel said the greatest highlight was seeing the positive interaction between the agencies.

"There's a lot of pressure on QFES to deliver frontline response at the highest standard, and an important part of that is using ADF assets to support homeland operations.

"We need to proactively engage with the ADF so we can understand how we can work with them and make the best use of their assets when disaster strikes.

"Both QFES and the ADF are keen to continue building this relationship for the safety of the community."





Closing the Gap

Two projects were recognised in QFES' Closing the Gap Awards for their contributions to improving outcomes for First Nations peoples.

The Torres Shire Emergency Services Cadets (ESC) Unit on Thursday Island won the Partnership category of the awards for building opportunities for local young people.

All but one of the cadets in the unit are from the outer islands and board on Thursday Island. More than 200 islands with a population of about 4500 are scattered across the 150-kilometre wide Torres Strait.

Station Officer Conor Maguire, now based in Brisbane, established the unit in 2018 to address a disconnect between QFES and the community.

"We wanted to create a fun but educational format to get kids interested in the emergency services," Conor said.

"We developed mentor relationships with the cadets and taught them about fire science. They practised using different spray patterns, energising water and manipulating smoke travel with ventilation."

The team had the support of local elders for the program.

"They said they've never seen such a positive experience and sense of achievement for the kids," Conor said.

"Because the cadets are boarding, it's hard for them to have a true mentor outside of school. Cadet leaders can fulfil that role.

"As a leader myself, I always let them know the program was on their terms. It was important for me to empower them as young adults.

"Our local auxiliary crews included them in their hazard reduction burns and took them under their wing for pre-incident planning."

Cadets then pass on those skills and knowledge to their friends and families, as communal knowledge-sharing is central to First Nations peoples.

This is invaluable for a remote community in the dry tropics. There are four seasons related to the wind: Kuki (January to April wet season with strong north-west winds), Sager (May to December dry season with south-east trade winds), Zey (southerly winds that blow throughout the year) and Nay Gay (October to December hot and humid season with northerly winds).

"The most common emergency is storm surges. Rising sea levels are inundating communities, particularly on low-lying islands (less than a metre above sea level), causing erosion, contaminating drinking water and damaging houses," Conor said.

"We also respond to a lot of HazMat jobs, particularly aluminium phosphide (rat poison) canisters that wash up on beaches."

Since Conor moved to Brisbane, Robert Beach and more recently Michael Beck have continued this valuable work as the unit's Local Cadet Coordinators.

Embracing diversity

Storm Richter, ESC Program Manager, said he found it extremely rewarding to work with the cadets.

"We have such a diverse range of members," he said. "The program brings people together. So many kids are learning from our volunteer adult leaders and it's changing their lives."

Storm said the Thursday Island unit was a great success story.

"That unit is totally different to any other unit in Queensland," he said.



“To have 30 Torres Strait Islander cadets participate in the program and watch them grow as young people is quite special.

“I love going up there and experiencing their culture. It’s a real privilege to see Torres Strait Islander culture influence our program as well.”

The ESC program has a strong rate of Indigenous participation throughout the state.

“Having that cultural impact and contribution from all communities is really important,” Storm said.

“It’s part of unity. We’ve all got a story to tell.”

Sharing stories

Breanna Travers from the QFES Media team won the Individual category of the awards for her work creating social media content for QFES’ celebration of NAIDOC Week.

Her posts featured First Nations members of QFES’ workforce, highlighting career opportunities within QFES for First Nations people. The posts reached 330 275 people in eight days.

“I wanted the project to generate positive conversations about what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute as part of QFES,” Breanna said.

She said the project lit a fire in her to share more stories and be more involved.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within QFES have so much to say, and I think it’s essential that we listen,” she said.

“These are some of the oldest stories that exist in this world and they could disappear if we don’t tell them. Unfortunately, we



won’t realise how tragic that truly is until it’s too late.

“Everyone who was a part of this project was in such different stages of their lives, careers and experiences. But they were all so passionate about Mother Nature and Country, and preserving their culture.

“It was an interesting concept to someone like me who is non-Indigenous and has no strong ties to a particular place. It encourages me to ensure my daughters are aware of the importance of culture and

that I give them every opportunity in life to better understand that.”

Breanna said the response to the project was overwhelmingly positive and generated great commentary from and for the Indigenous community.

“Most importantly, I think people were able to see themselves represented within QFES and felt inspired by that.

“The fact that these wonderful people were willing to trust me was probably the most rewarding part of it all. I will keep telling these types of stories as best I can.”

Kim’s story

One of the participants in Breanna’s project was auxiliary firefighter Kim, a proud Noonuncal woman from the Quandamooka People, who lives and works on the island Mindjerrabah (North Stradbroke):

The Quandamooka People are saltwater people, and their connection with the coastline and islands provides Kim with a sense of purpose and calm when she is working among the spirits.

Kim regularly asks the ancestors to protect her and keep her safe while she explores and protects the bush. She asks them to keep her safe from the animals and make sure they know she’s only visiting.

The Country that Kim stands on has a heartbeat and breathes life into its People. Kim hopes one day everyone will understand and be responsible for caring for Country – our Naree Budjong Djara (Our Mother Earth).





Welcome to ZERO fees novated leasing.



1300 22 55 82

allianceleasing.com.au

*Zero entry fees,
zero exit fees, zero management fees.

APPROVED QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT SUPPLIER

Alliance Leasing Pty Ltd is an approved supplier under the Queensland Government panel arrangement Novated Leasing Services QGP0026-16. The arrangement commenced 7 November 2016 for a period of three (3) years with an extension option of up to two (2) years. From 7 November 2016, all Employees who wish to access a motor vehicle using a novated lease must use one of the approved Salary Packaging Novated Leasing Panel Suppliers to arrange, organise and manage the novated lease. The novated lease will continue to be administered through the Salary Packaging Administrator.

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT DISCLAIMER

The implications of salary packaging a motor vehicle through a novated leasing arrangement, including tax savings will depend on your individual circumstances. The information in this publication has been prepared by Alliance Leasing for general information purposes only, without taking into consideration any individual circumstances. Before acting on any information or entering into a novated leasing arrangement, you should consider your objectives, financial situation and needs, and, take the appropriate legal, financial or other professional advice based upon your own particular circumstances. **The Queensland Government strongly recommends that you obtain independent financial advice prior to entering into, or changing the terms of, a salary packaging arrangement.**

The future of warnings

QFES has improved the way we create and send bushfire warnings to make sure Queenslanders get the information they need as soon as possible.

As bushfires grow more intense, the community's need for clear, accurate and timely warnings is greater than ever.

To help people prepare and protect themselves and their loved ones, QFES is increasing our capacity to communicate before and during bushfires.

Assistant Commissioner Emergency Management and Community Capability Joanne Greenfield said over the last few years there had been considerable change in Australia's disaster management landscape, including community expectations and available technology.

"QFES has a strong and impressive history in the way we manage incidents and disasters," Ms Greenfield said, "but there is always room to continuously improve our approach to information and warnings, which is a high-visibility responsibility."

A dedicated project team has been consulting with different parts of QFES since last year to develop a new warnings system.

"Changes being made for the 2021 bushfire season include adjustments to warnings language, formatting and levels, and new systems to empower trained personnel to create and issue warnings regionally," Ms Greenfield said.

The new system automates a lot of the processes for sending warnings, which previously had to be done manually. It also

allows QFES members in each region to send bushfire warnings for their region, drawing on their local relationships and intimate knowledge of the area.

All these improvements save precious time and make the warnings more accessible and easier to read.

Firefighter First Class Steve Evans from North Coast Region has been at the frontline of public information for several major fires, including Deepwater in 2018 and Peregian in 2019, and agrees that people want a clear message.

"We know people don't always read the whole warning," Steve said. "There is definitely some confusion about the different levels of warnings."

"I'm looking forward to seeing how the new system plays out this season. It certainly has the potential to be a more efficient way of doing things."

It is important for all Queenslanders to be familiar with the new bushfire warnings and have a Bushfire Survival Plan in place if required.

The new warnings can be found on the QFES website. To learn more about the Australian Warning System, check out the Australian Disaster Resilience website.

New bushfire warning levels

Advice

Avoid Smoke
- or -
Stay Informed



There is no immediate danger but you need to stay informed in case the situation changes.

Watch & Act

Prepare to Leave
- or -
Monitor conditions
(de-escalating only)



There is a heightened level of threat and conditions are changing. Act now to protect yourself and your family.

Emergency Warning

Leave immediately
- or -
Seek shelter immediately



You are in danger and need to take life-saving action immediately.



FireCom officers are using AML to verify callers' locations. Photo by Country Lei Photography.

Next Generation Triple Zero

Every second counts in a Triple Zero call, so QFES is using technologies to improve community access to emergency services like device location, messaging and video calls.

The goal of Next Generation Triple Zero (NG000) is to ensure any person in Australia needing emergency assistance can effectively contact the emergency services, no matter what circumstance, from any device, anytime, anywhere.

Voice calls will always be important, but we need alternative methods. In December last year, QFES introduced Advanced Mobile Location (AML), which allows most mobile phones and wearables (with SIM cards) to automatically send their device's location when they call Triple Zero.

AML is an international standard being implemented across the globe, with the US (911), UK (999), EU (112) and New Zealand (111) leading the charge.

Queensland was an early adopter of AML and went live in December 2020. The remaining Australian states and territories are expected to be using AML by the end of June 2021.

Pinpointing location

Superintendent Bevan Moore and Acting Fire Communications Manager Jessica Blamires are the QFES delegates on the National Emergency Communications Working Group - Australia/New Zealand (NECWG A/NZ), which advocates for the Triple Zero service and the implementation of new technologies like AML.

Jessica said AML was helping FireCom Officers improve their ability to identify an emergency caller's location, particularly since 88% of the Australian population owns a mobile phone.

"AML is accurate within a five-metre radius outdoors and a 25-metre radius indoors," she said.

"It's activated when Triple Zero (000) is called and the location data is sent while the caller is talking to the Emergency Call Service. After the call, AML is deactivated."

Implementing AML required centralised coordination of project activities between QFES, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and other states' police, fire and ambulance services.

The QFES project team established sub-groups to implement AML and integrate it with QFES' systems.

"We set up strong partnerships with telecommunication carriers, Triple Zero, public safety agencies and the device manufacturers (Apple and Google) to work out the technical requirements and privacy arrangements," Jessica said.

"It was a huge piece of work and we delivered it during COVID lockdown, as well as providing training and support for FireCom Officers in all seven regions."

Saving precious time

Jessica said the feedback from FireCom Officers was extremely positive.

"They still ask callers the same questions, but now they can instantly verify the caller's location," she said.

"If a caller hangs up or is disconnected, FireCom can still see their location and send a resource to investigate if there's a problem.

"Recently, someone called 000 from a bush track because they could see smoke, but they didn't know where they were. FireCom used AML to work out it was a permitted burn, which saved us resources and time because we didn't have to respond."

The State Emergency Service (SES) recently discovered an unexpected benefit for lost hikers: after hikers call Triple Zero, via QPS, the SES can tell them how to navigate their way out of a dangerous situation because they can plot their location on a map. This saves resources as the caller can find their own way back to a track and avoid an intensive land search.

"AML will keep maturing," Jessica said. "The next iteration is 'breadcrumbing', which allows FireCom to see the person moving on the map in real time. For example, if they're in a car floating in floodwaters, we will be able to map where they're going.

"We're also considering how people could call Triple Zero on other devices, like their computer or Google Home."

Sending out an SOS

The next innovation on the horizon is messaging to Triple Zero. The Commonwealth Government, in partnership with states and territories, aims to deploy this technology over the next three years.

"In 2019, QUT released a paper that stated, 'The majority of young people assume they can already text message Triple Zero,'" Bevan said. "We need to meet that expectation."

"Sending a text will be invaluable for people in Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) situations who might not be able to talk, as well as people with hearing impairments or language barriers."

"A future possibility could be that if someone speaks a language other than English, whatever they type will be converted into English for FireCom, and whatever FireCom type will be translated back again."

The next initiative after messaging to Triple Zero will be video/imagery to Triple Zero.

Other sources

The national working group is also collaborating with the automotive industry to develop the use of telematics – data provided by car sensors.

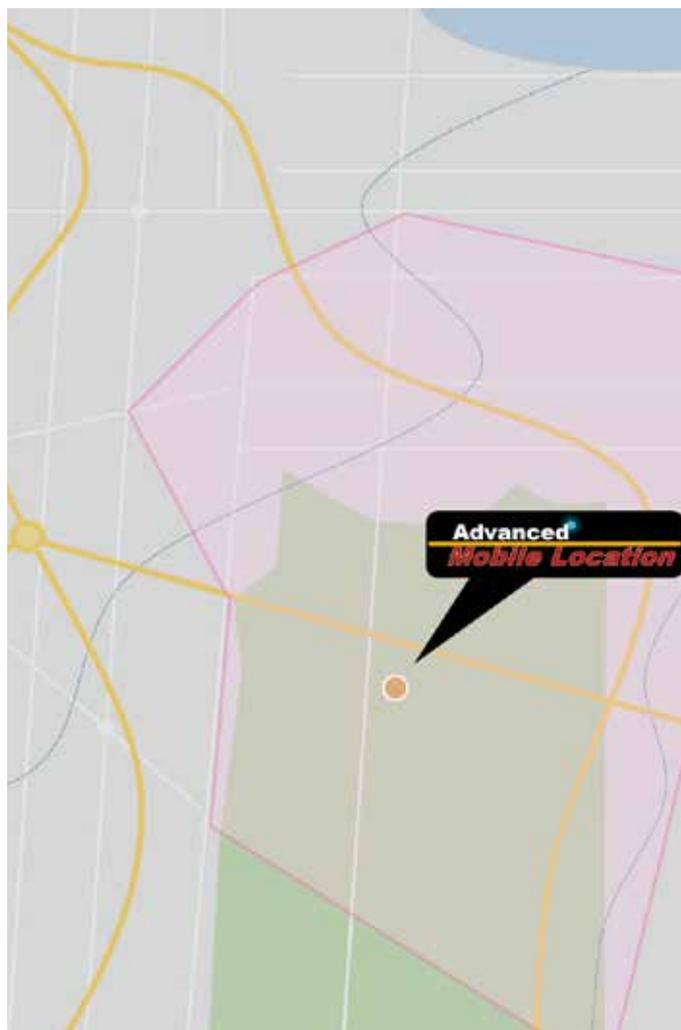
"In a road traffic crash, newer cars have sensors to measure all kinds of data, from the level of impact to how long it takes the car to stop, which airbags were deployed, which seatbelts were activated and so on," Bevan said. "The sensors can tell if the car has rolled over or is underwater."

"The data goes to a third party, who interprets it before passing it on to Triple Zero. It gives us rich information that we know is from a reliable source."

The working group also recently finished an autonomous response protocol, which sets out how alarm notification companies could provide information to emergency services from sources such as smart buildings and wearable devices (medical alert bracelets and so on).

"All of these technologies record rich data that needs to be interpreted and pushed through to emergency services," Bevan said.

"There is a lot of work for us to understand the industry and what's happening globally, and how we can apply that."



AML (orange) can pinpoint a user's location much more accurately than the old system (pink).



**A SMOKE ALARM
DOWN THE HALL
CAN'T BE HEARD THROUGH
A CLOSED DOOR.**

From 1 January 2022, landlords must install interconnected smoke alarms in residential rental properties.

A small fire can escalate to a major situation very quickly. Interconnected smoke alarms give everyone extra time to escape because when one goes off they all go off.

Similar rules also apply to owner occupiers.

**GET INTERCONNECTED.
FROM 1 JANUARY 2022,
IT'S THE LAW.**

qld.gov.au/smokealarms





Supporting one of our own

On Wear Orange Wednesday, as part of National Volunteer Week in May, we heard countless stories of the dedication and teamwork of our State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers. One such story is when QFES rallied together to support Local Controller Adriaan Greyling from the Barcaldine SES Unit after he was injured in a life-changing accident.

In 2020, Adriaan fell from a great height while abseiling and was paralysed from the waist down.

Adriaan has been an inspiring leader to his fellow SES members for more than eight years. They wanted to give back to a man who's spent so much time giving to others.

The Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association (QLDSEVA) opened a bank account in his name and raised funds, in conjunction with QFES, for the adjustments he'd need to make to his lifestyle.

Adriaan kept working for his SES unit while he was recovering in a hospital bed.

"I organised training and made sure things were running smoothly," he said.

"I've been really lucky because I put a lot of hard work into our current group leaders, so now it's much easier to organise activations.

"We recently had to organise a land search. It was a simple process for me to coordinate with the group leaders when and where we needed to deploy members.

"I can't visit our groups at the moment, but once I've made it home I'll check in with them."

Having recovered enough to leave hospital, Adriaan is in a Transitional Rehab Program, where he lives independently while he waits for a specially made wheelchair to arrive so he can return home.

Adriaan said he was first drawn to the SES because he wanted to help the community.

"It's a great satisfaction to support community members when they're in need," Adriaan said. "Just recently we helped an elderly couple who were stuck in their house after a tree fell over.

"As Local Controller, I look after several small outback SES units. Our members are always keen to get involved and get qualified.

"Everyone is really positive and when emergencies happen, we're ready, from flood boat callouts to land searches and roof tarping."

Adriaan said it was very humbling to have the support of his fellow SES members.

"We're all part of the orange family," he said. "The fact that they would go to those lengths to help me is incredible.

"They really care about their fellow members. They visited me while I was in hospital and they call me up and check in



Adriaan has been with the Barcaldine Unit for more than eight years.

to see how things are going. It makes you see the broader picture of what we do and what it really means."

Adriaan said his injury hadn't held him back and he was still doing what he loved.

"I just think of different ways of doing things," he said. "It's just a mindset."

If you'd like to contribute to the fund, you can visit Adriaan's fundraiser page on the QLDSEVA website.



Adriaan's fellow SES members visited him while he was recovering in hospital.



Adriaan was left paralysed after an abseiling accident.



Firefighters use hydraulic shores to secure the walls of a trench.

Hard, dirty work: confined space and trench rescue

Confined space and trench rescues are among the rarest and most dangerous operations. QFES members venture underground into claustrophobic and unstable environments to rescue people who have been caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The State Technical Rescue Unit manages several rescue disciplines: swiftwater, vertical, remote, motorised swiftwater craft and urban search and rescue. One of their lesser-known areas of expertise is Confined Space and Trench Rescue (CS&T).

This capability has grown quickly in recent years, particularly with increased construction across south-east Queensland, and there are now five senior instructors, with three more starting in 2022.

Hidden dangers

Confined space rescues take place in enclosed areas with a potentially toxic atmosphere – stormwater drains, septic tanks, vats, silos and fuel tanks.

Technical Rescue Technician Nathan Chadwick said people get caught in these spaces when they slip and fall, have a medical emergency or are entrapped by machinery.

“We also rescue people who have gotten lost or trapped while exploring stormwater drains, which can flood extremely quickly,” Nathan said.

On the lighter side, the team also saves their fair share of animals, pulling ducks, cats and other critters from drains.

The first thing confined space rescue technicians do when they arrive at the scene is map out the potential dangers by developing a risk assessment and lodging it with FireCom.

“We test the atmosphere with monitors to make sure there’s nothing toxic like carbon monoxide,” Nathan said. “From there, we either ventilate the area with a RamFan, or use an airline trolley to deliver oxygen from tanks through a long pipe into our breathing apparatus.

“Claustrophobia is a constant threat and the environments are filthy, but we’re trained to stay focused on the mission.

“We have to act fast because a toxic atmosphere can overwhelm someone very quickly, and if they’re incapacitated, it’s much harder to extract them.

“We use rope systems and tripods to create artificial high points and lift the person to safety.”



Nathan said one of the unexpected benefits of the work was engaging with industry and other agencies.

“It’s a good way to gain exposure to industry and see how they conduct their business in confined spaces,” he said.

“There are confined spaces everywhere, so we see a lot of different industries – maritime, local councils, defence.”

The team raises awareness in the community about confined spaces, warning people about exploring drains or tanks.

“People often underestimate the hidden danger of chemicals that build up in the air and turn deadly.”

Technical rescue technicians complete a five-day course on confined spaces, in conjunction with the other technical rescue disciplines.

“The disciplines are all designed to complement each other,” Nathan said. “If we’re doing a confined space rescue in a flooded stormwater drain, we draw on our swiftwater rescue skills, and if the container is deep we use vertical rescue skills.”

In the blink of an eye

Paul Beck is a trench rescue expert who has seen the discipline evolve from an ‘add-on’ to a respected field of expertise.

“Trench collapses aren’t common, but they’re very sudden and dangerous, and you never know when they could happen,” Paul said.

“Since we don’t practise this type of rescue often, it’s a challenge to keep competent and compliant.”

The team attends jobs at construction sites and private property when someone makes a mistake or takes a shortcut while shoring up a trench.

“We also get called out for unexpected emergencies, like if a child is digging a tunnel on a beach and the sand collapses,” he said.

The chief danger at trench rescues is secondary collapse – the possibility of the trench wall sliding further and burying the rescuers.

“When we arrive at the scene, the hardest thing for us is to hold off entering the trench until we’ve made it safe,” said Paul.

“As first responders, we just want to get in there and find the person, but we have to take a step back, slow down and assess the scene.

“Soil mechanics affect how trenches collapse. There are different types of soil, but we treat every rescue as if it’s the worst kind of soil.

“We teach candidates to recognise different types of conditions at the edge of the trench – earth fretting, tension cracks, slippage.”

The next step is to shore up the trench. The team used to use timber shoring, but now they mainly use hydraulic shoring.

“They’re multipurpose and can be used for road crash rescues too. We put a piece of plywood on each side of the trench and activate the struts to hold it up.”

With the trench wall secure, rescuers dig down to the person. It’s hard, dirty work because they have to dig by hand.

“We can’t use any machinery because the vibrations could cause a collapse. So we lower a bucket down, fill it up by hand and raise it back up to the top.”

As the rescuers make their way down over several hours, they keep shoring up the wall.

Sadly, many of their rescues end with them retrieving a body. The weight of the soil is often enough to crush someone, not to mention the amount of time it takes to reach them.

“It’s terrible when we find them too late, but that’s something all firefighters must confront, whether at fires or road crash rescues,” Paul said.

“I remember one incident where a man was very unlucky. At the start of the day at a construction site, they took the shoring out of a trench, but he jumped in to turn on a pump at the bottom of it.

“He was only in the unshored trench for two minutes, but a three-metre wall collapsed on him, killing him. It was a one-in-a-million chance.”

Paul said that despite the hard work and often tragic outcomes, there was satisfaction in doing the job well and making sure all the rescuers were safe.



Firefighters using an airline trolley to access a stormwater system in Ipswich.



Training with a tripod at the HMAS Diamantina in the Brisbane city dry docks.

THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR.

For example in QLD when claiming a subsequent visit for psychology...

Emergency Services
Health pay up to

\$237.30*

with an annual
maximum of \$850*

Combined annual maximum with counselling

& up to \$1700* in Rollover
Maximum

Rolling Extras

BUPA pay up to

\$89.00*

with an annual
maximum of \$750*

Top Extras 90

Medibank pay up to

\$80.10*

with an annual
maximum of \$500*

Top Extras 90

Curious to find out more?

Scan the QR Code to
compare your cover!



*Advertisement

The Evidence is Clear, in Australia first responders and their families can get more back from their private health insurance with Emergency Services Health.



COVER LIKE NO OTHER



CALL IT IN – 1300 703 703

Emergency Services Health brought to you by Police Health Limited ABN 86 135 221 519 A restricted access not-for-profit Private Health Insurer ©

* Subject to waiting periods and other conditions. Comparisons correct as of 1 April 2021, published on privatehealth.gov.au.

ADVERTISEMENT



Climb for a Cause

QFES members from all three services rappelled more than 95 metres down the iconic Castle Hill in Townsville to raise valuable funds for the Brighter Lives Townsville Hospital Foundation.

Tickets to abseil or zipline down the landmark sold out online in under 24 hours, and thanks to the community's support, the team raised \$8 500.

Senior Firefighter Hal Tucker collaborated with Sam Steadman from Outer Limits Adventure Fitness and Mark Gomers from Castle Hill Adventures to make the event happen.

"Sam's company ran an abseil challenge off Castle Hill when *The Amazing Race* came to Townsville and my crew helped out," Hal said. "We thought we'd recreate it.

"There was a huge amount of work behind the scenes. About 20 or 30 staff and volunteers from all three services were on the hill at any one time.

"Some of them stood patiently at the bottom of the abseil for six hours at a time, unclipping people. The State Emergency Service brought a kitchen trailer and sold out of food five times.

"We were there before dawn and we walked out in the dark. About 90 people did the abseil and more than 100 went on the zipline."

Brighter Lives CEO Tanya Busoli said, "Fundraising events are the lifeblood of our organisation but Climb for a Cause is particularly special to us.

"Working with some of our community's first responders to raise funds to support our local hospital and health service in such a unique way was amazing.

"Thanks to Senior Firefighter Hal Tucker, Outdoor Limits Adventure Fitness and all of the people who volunteered on the day. Together they raised \$8 500 – this is an outstanding result and will be used locally to help our hospital patients, staff and visitors to have a brighter experience."



Hitting the road for burns research

An intrepid team of 33 QFES members and Queensland Police Service cousins rode 710 kilometres from Gympie to Brisbane to raise funds for children's burn research.

Over the past 14 years, Bike 4 Burns has criss-crossed Queensland, raising more than \$758 000 along the way.

This year the group took an inland route from Gympie, passing through Murgon, Jandowae, Dalby, Millmerran, Allora and Ipswich before arriving at the Queensland Children's Hospital in South Brisbane.

Bike 4 Burns President, Acting Superintendent Gordon Hemphrey, said all the riders worked together.

"The stronger riders helped the others make it up some of the hills," Gordon said. "After a few long days, your whole body is telling you you've done a lot of work, but everyone handled it well.

"A really big thank you to everyone who helped make the ride happen, including our support crew, who drove escort vehicles to protect the riders and made lunch on the side of the road."

Acting Station Officer Kim Hanssen joined the ride for the first time, looking for a personal fitness challenge.

"I met a lot of new people and it was really nice to see the generosity of the volunteers and everyone who helped out," Kim said.

"The ride was painful at times and I had sore legs from day one, but it got easier as we built up our fitness. We had a retro day where we dug out our old jerseys, and some of us sang songs and told jokes while we rode.

"The Dalby State School let us use their sports hall for accommodation one night. The kids wore free dress that day and donated about \$700 in gold coins. After their presentation of the check to Bike 4 Burns, we showed the grade ones and twos the appliance and had a discussion about fire safety."

At the time of printing, the ride had raised about \$47 000 to help the Children's Hospital Foundation Burns Research Group implement burns prevention campaigns and develop better methods for treating burns.

Drop, doff and decon: New decontamination process

Recent scientific research has revealed firefighters can be exposed to many toxic substances while fighting fires and handling contaminated equipment. QFES has developed a decontamination process to reduce the risk.

Research in this area is ongoing, but we know firefighters' health can be affected if they're exposed regularly throughout their career.

Wearing self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) makes a big difference, but harmful chemicals can still be absorbed through the skin and inhaled after the SCBA is removed.

These substances include volatile organic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, polybrominated diphenyl ethers and many other toxic fire effluents. Exposure to them is linked to long-term health effects including a wide range of cancers.

QFES established the Firefighter Safety Working Group (FFSWG) in 2020. Their first initiative was to look at identifying, developing and implementing measures of reducing firefighter exposure to contaminants, including a standardised approach to on-site fire decontamination.

FFSWG is coordinated by Station Officer Justin Francis from Brisbane Region, and is currently chaired by Chief Superintendent Jason Lawler, Director Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) Branch.

Justin said that while QFES currently had decontamination processes for chemical incidents, there were no consistent approaches to decontamination for fire incidents.

Jason said that for many firefighters, the largest chemical incident they attended with the most dangerous mix of chemicals would be a fire.

"The new process draws on expert knowledge from both operational firefighters and the Research and Scientific Branch," Jason said. "It's a significant step forward for firefighter safety.

"The group's membership also includes Safety and Wellbeing, Uniforms and Equipment, union representatives, and regional firefighters and senior officers.

"The method is designed for both primary and secondary fire decontamination. QFES Regional Management will roll it out



A firefighter demonstrates the steps involved in the new fire decontamination process.

across the FRS this year and I encourage all firefighters to embrace it."

The FFSWG will continue to refine and improve this method. Please send any feedback, questions or ideas to Fireandrescuebranch@qfes.qld.gov.au with attention to Justin Francis.

Primary fire decontamination

This is designed for smaller incidents with fewer available resources. The key steps are:

1. A decontamination kit should be available on every fire appliance and placed in a decontamination zone (including smaller incidents, like car fires).
2. After fighting the fire and booking back into BA control, proceed to the decontamination zone. Drop your contaminated firefighting equipment and hose contaminants off your boots using a soap solution.
3. Doff your helmet, gloves, flash hood and SCBA. After you remove the SCBA facemask, put on a P2 mask with a carbon filter to reduce the chance of breathing in contaminants as you remove the rest of your Personal Protective Clothing (PPC).
4. Remove your jacket and consider removing over-trousers and boots if practical. You can then remove your P2 mask.
5. Conduct Decon: clean all accessible areas of your skin with soap, water and a cloth wipe.
6. For additional SCBA wears, re-don your turnout gear in reverse order while wearing nitrile gloves and a P2 mask. If possible, wear a clean flash hood for each SCBA wear.

Secondary fire decontamination

This applies to larger incidents with more resources and firefighters. It is similar to primary fire decontamination, but the three zones are clearly identified and established: drop, doff and decon. They should be suitably marked, for example with different-coloured marker cones.

Consider appointing a dedicated Decontamination Officer or Team to facilitate this method.

The key principles include:

- Keep the cabin clean – don't place contaminated items in it.
- Bag contaminated PPC on the fire ground, place in a locker and send for laundering.
- Handle contaminated PPC or firefighting equipment with a minimum of a P2 mask (carbon filter) and nitrile gloves.
- Have a thorough shower with soap and water after every fire incident (even a car fire).



QFES models paint a picture of a future Australia affected by climate change.

Preparing for the storms of our grandchildren

Soaring temperatures, rising sea levels, raging bushfires – QFES is building models of how climate change will affect Australia in the years ahead so we can better prepare for natural disasters.

Imagine Australia is hotter and drier, with more frequent storms and bushfires that disrupt your life.

Imagine yourself in that world as a parent or caregiver, as an emergency services worker or volunteer.

And what if that world was poorer or richer than it is now, with stronger or weaker communities?

These are the kinds of scenarios QFES is modelling in order to stay in front of changing service demands in a world affected by climate change.

Matt Dyer, Principal Program Officer from QFES Futures, said QFES officers and emergency services experts from across Australia and New Zealand were investigating how climate change would affect communities globally and on a smaller scale.

“We’re looking at how different groups and systems adapt and how they intersect with other complex social, ecological and economic dynamics,” Matt said.

“Agencies can apply these scenarios to test and strengthen current thinking, capabilities, strategies and operational plans against plausible futures.”

This innovative work is funded by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative

Research Centre (BNHCRC) in support of AFAC Members and the AFAC Climate Change Group.

Climate scenarios are accessible to the public on the Queensland Future Climate Dashboard (longpaddock.qld.gov.au/qld-future-climate/dashboard).

The dashboard shows how Queensland’s climate is predicted to change by 2090, depending on how much greenhouse gasses are emitted. You can scroll through the decades and watch factors like high temperatures, heatwaves and extreme rain increase in intensity.

“Things will get difficult, but it will depend on how well we adapt,” said Matt.

Climate change action

Acting Director QFES Futures Adam Green said the project continued QFES’ focus on including climate change in our decision making.

“QFES is taking action on climate change in a range of ways, such as in our *Strategy 2030* and *Climate Change Position Paper*,” Adam said.

“We have identified climate change as an enterprise risk, and our Climate Change Working Group is helping us better consider that risk.

“Last year’s *Integrating Climate Change @ QFES* articulated QFES’ approach to climate change more clearly than ever before and contains key actions we are now progressing.”

Deputy Commissioner Mike Wassing said QFES continues to lead action on climate change.

“The State Heatwave Assessment from 2019 showed large parts of Queensland will be challenged by increasing heat, with implications ranging from how communities adapt right through to how QFES will deliver services and even what our officers and volunteers will wear,” Mr Wassing said.

QFES, in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Environment and Science and the Commonwealth’s Geoscience Australia, is also delivering the Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland.

“This enables the emergency management sector and local governments to more effectively engage with the community on the risks posed by cyclones and inform long-term strategic risk management strategies,” Mr Wassing said.

To learn more about climate change at QFES or let the team know about projects that are adapting to climate change, email QFES.ClimateChange@qfes.qld.gov.au



SOUTH EASTERN REGION

Graduate paramedic simulations

Auxiliary firefighters from the Lockyer Somerset Command recently participated in the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) Graduate Paramedic Simulations – Road Crash Rescue (RCR) Module at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA).

The module helped foster interagency communication and interoperability with a team-centric approach to extracting patients.

The Fire and Rescue Service crews participated in RCR scenarios that exposed the QAS paramedics to a range of techniques for gaining access to a patient who is trapped or encapsulated in a vehicle.



Farewelling a local legend

After 43 years and nine months of service, it's time for Captain Graham Francis of Toogoolawah Fire and Rescue Station to hang up his helmet for the last time.

Graham joined the Toogoolawah Fire Brigade in 1977 and was soon promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. In 2012 he was appointed as the Captain of Toogoolawah Auxiliary Fire and Rescue Station.



"It's been great to be part of the team here at Toogoolawah," he said. I've enjoyed my time here and we have had a lot of fun, but when there's a job to be done, we get stuck in and get it done."

The highlights of Graham's career include coming to training and meeting new people, community engagement, firefighter competitions and helping his community during emergencies.

"The community support is invaluable within Toogoolawah. If we needed any sort of help, all we had to do was make a phone call and the community were keen to help out with water trucks, machines and meals.

"I couldn't have done any of it without my family, the crew and the community's support."

The Lockyer Somerset Command thank Graham for his years of service and wish him all the best in his retirement.



Disaster management information session

The South Eastern Region Emergency Management Coordinator and Manager Community Safety Operations recently presented at the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland Conference, attended by around 100 caravan park owners from across Queensland.

The information session focused on how to protect caravan parks from the impacts of natural disasters. It included an overview of the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements and terminology, understanding local risk, business continuity planning, evacuations, case studies, resources and contacts.

Clean Up Australia Day in Logan

Every year on Clean Up Australia Day, the Logan State Emergency Service (SES) takes it upon themselves to do their part by collecting as much rubbish as possible from the Logan and Albert Rivers.

This year they combined the activity with flood boat training for new operators. Six boats were allocated sections of the river to navigate and clean. The operators in training were challenged to not only pull up alongside rubbish on the riverbanks but hold the boat steady as other crew members picked up the rubbish.

Support units on land moved boat trailers from launch points to recovery points and towed box trailers to cart the rubbish to the nearest landfill sites.

In total the boats pulled about two tonnes of rubbish from the rivers in about five hours. Some of the more unusual items included an air-conditioning unit, tractor tyre and an Australian flag.

The Logan SES members teamed up with PCYC Emergency Services Cadets to clean up the local parks as well.





SOUTH WESTERN REGION

Charlton RHQ official opening

The South Western Regional Headquarters and Fire and Rescue Station was officially opened on Tuesday 18 May.

The site was the former Charlton State Primary School from 1898 to 2013 and has been home to QFES regional headquarters staff since late 2014.

This multi-stage project started with the construction of the Tactical Training Facility in July 2018 and the Fire and Rescue Station and Regional Headquarters in July 2020.

The facility accommodates QFES personnel from the State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue Service, including Fire Communications and Regional Operational Coordination – all united for the first time.

The building has many state-of-the-art technical features that ensure our staff and volunteers can deliver services to the community safely and efficiently.

South Western Region FireCom, who were temporarily working from Southport for four weeks while their new Fire Communications Centre was fitted out, say they feel right at home in their brand-new facility.

FireCom Manager Michelle McLeod commended her staff on their flexibility and professionalism during the relocation process and extended her thanks to South Eastern Region FireCom for their hospitality.

“It has been a privilege to be a part of the new build of our FireCom and I commend the hard work and dedication of the technical team who have worked tirelessly to build a communications room of the highest standard,” Michelle said.

The FireCom centre started operations on 13 May 2021, providing a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week capability for the region and Queensland, and will be permanently staffed by two FireCom Officers.

Photos by Country Lei Photography.



Army Reserve Open Day

Staff and volunteers from the region attended an Army Reserve Open Day in May at the O’Quinn Street Barracks in Toowoomba.

This open day was the final activity after a week-long exercise involving the Australian Defence Force and Queensland Police Service. QFES attended the event to promote the roles available for volunteers in the region.

Many army reservists undertake volunteer roles at QFES and they were excited to talk to staff and volunteers and see the equipment and capability QFES had on display.

Swift water training in new location

The training area for swift water technicians has moved from the lower reaches of the Tully River to just below the Koombooloomba Dam Wall, south of Ravenshoe, in far north Queensland.

Swift water specialists from South Western Region and across the state attended recent workshops at the Koombooloomba location to hone their existing skills and learn new ones.

The new training area includes a specialised car prop simulating a stranded car in floodwater, which can be safely situated for training without disrupting other people using the river.





FAR NORTHERN REGION

How to make hard decisions

QFES staff, along with Maritime Safety Queensland, Queensland Health and local government representatives from Weipa, Douglas and Wujal Wujal participated in a Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework masterclass titled High Consequence Decision Making.

The full-day session supported leaders to make critical decisions in situations of uncertainty and high pressure.

Participants learnt strategies for managing sense-making, situational awareness and cognitive bias. They explored tools to support decision making, methods for building and maintaining psychological safety, and strategies to build the right communication climate.



Leading Women Network event

The 2021 Leading Women Network professional development and networking event, sponsored by QBANK, focused on retaining your individuality and defining your identity at work.

Women in operational and non-operational roles from across the region were invited to partake in a virtual hub to view the live proceedings from Brisbane.

Representatives from QFES, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service, Australian Border Force and Queensland Corrective Services participated in the event.

Building capability in the far north

The State Emergency Service ran an impressive schedule of training courses during May and several members from Bamaga and Tully qualified in land search.

The region now has new storm damage operators and updated air observers, who hold the honourable title of Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET) survivor.





NORTHERN REGION

Rescue Flick fundraiser

In April 2019 the Charters Towers Fire and Rescue Social Club embarked on a major community fundraiser titled 'Rescue Flick' to restore an old fire appliance.

Affectionately known as Flick, the 1927 Chevrolet Utility was purpose built for the Charters Towers Fire Brigade in 1928 and remained in service until 1968. It was then retired to community parades and events. When the Fire Brigade Board was taken over by the state government in 1992 the government declined Flick, so it was sold to the social club for \$1.

Housed in the engine bay until the late 90s, Flick was eventually placed outside on display for the community. Flick remained in this location until 2008 when, due to significant deterioration from weather, it was relocated to a shed and placed on jacks. It remained like this until April 2019.

The community response to 'Rescue Flick' was overwhelming, with fundraising, donated labour and materials to the value of around \$25 000. Talented social club members undertook the bulk of the work and engaged specialist trades where required. The United Firefighters Union Queensland donated two brass helmets to give the drivers a period look.

The restoration exceeded all expectations and the community response was amazing. Flick is fully registered and insured and has already delivered the Easter Bunny and led the recent Charters Towers Country Music Festival.

Station Officer Peter Marten stated, "It has been one of the most rewarding community projects I have been involved in, as it has received so much goodwill and support. Almost everyone in town remembered that little old fire truck."

Flick recently won the best vintage car category in the 2021 Charters Towers Motor Show.



Fun and learning day

The Townsville Multicultural Support Group recently held a Fun and Learning Day at Sherriff Park for the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community.

Several not-for-profit and government organisations participated to provide educational information.

The State Emergency Service and Fire and Rescue Service were on hand to promote disaster preparedness and home fire safety, as well as participating in the cultural dance activity.



Vale Matti Kangas

More than 200 mourners packed St Mark's Lutheran Church, overflowing onto Townsville Road to honour Hinchinbrook identity and Rural Fire Service (RFS) Queensland stalwart Matti Kangas, who passed at the age of 81.

Matti was a well-loved and highly respected cane farmer who connected to the soil through his trademark bare feet and was remembered as 'Mr Abergowrie' at a sombre funeral service in Ingham on 18 May.

Northern Region RFS staff and volunteers formed an honour guard as Matti's coffin was carried from the church and grieving family members attested to the love in which he was held. Matti will be remembered for his tireless voluntary service over 37 years with the Abergowrie Rural Fire Brigade.

Fund of the Year

Our members know whatever the future holds,
there is always blue sky.



Visit [QSuper.com.au](https://www.QSuper.com.au) today



Winner of SuperRatings' Fund of the Year 2021 award. The rating/award is issued by SuperRatings Pty Ltd ABN 95 100 192 283 AFSL 311880 (SuperRatings). Ratings are general advice only and have been prepared without taking account of your objectives, financial situation or needs. Consider your personal circumstances, read the product disclosure statement and seek independent financial advice before investing. The rating is not a recommendation to purchase, sell or hold any product. Past performance information is not indicative of future performance. Ratings are subject to change without notice and SuperRatings assumes no obligation to update. SuperRatings uses objective criteria and receives a fee for publishing awards. Visit [superratings.com.au](https://www.superratings.com.au) for ratings information. © 2021 SuperRatings. All rights reserved. Product issued by the QSuper Board (ABN 32 125 059 006, AFSL 489650) as trustee for QSuper (ABN 60 905 115 063). Consider the PDS on our website to see whether QSuper is right for you. © QSuper Board.

ADVERTISEMENT



CENTRAL REGION

Keeping people safe at Way out West

QFES deployed personnel and resources to Winton during the Way out West Festival to create a surge capacity to handle the crowds. The township's population typically quadruples during the festival.

Not only did the crews ensure the safety of the community, they also took the opportunity to engage with local stakeholders, conduct a recruitment drive, undertake training and complete some inspections.



Special Olympics torch relay

The Law Enforcement Torch Relay was held in April in appreciation of the athletes who competed in the Central Queensland Special Olympics. The event was held by the Queensland Police Service and supported by QFES and Mackay Regional Council.

QFES members from all services proudly walked with the relay team through a major shopping centre in Mackay to applause from the community.



Meet Grayson Little

Personnel from all three services welcomed Central Region's newest honorary firefighter, Grayson Little, to the ranks at the Mackay Fire and Rescue Station in April.

Crews presented Grayson with a uniform and name badge which he donned just as the bells dropped. Luckily, Grayson's quick actions saved the day and Mackay. This little man holds many hearts in Mackay.



Plane crash exercise in the hometown of Qantas

QFES, Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), Longreach Scouts, Qantas and Queensland Airports Limited (QAL) staff came together at the Longreach airport to conduct a joint emergency services exercise.

The scenario was a small plane that had crashed and caught fire.

Fire and Rescue Service crews were tasked with rescuing passengers and extinguishing the fire, the Rural Fire Service extinguished a running fuel fire and subsequent grass fire, and the State Emergency Service assisted QPS with a land search for passengers as well as containing and preserving the crash site.

All services assisted QAS with first aid and patient care, while Qantas staff helped coordinate passengers in the terminal and QAL staff escorted emergency services throughout the airport complex.

All agencies worked well together and a lot of lessons were learnt throughout the day. A big thanks to the Longreach Scouts who acted as our plane passengers and whose bus was used as the plane fuselage.



Community engagement at Beef 2021

QFES attended the Beef 2021 event in Rockhampton to provide recruitment information and collect data about the community's understanding of the risks of natural disasters.

More than 115 000 people attended, and many filled in QFES surveys that will inform future community education needs.

The surveys will be promoted as a tool for use at future community engagement activities to help collate even more data.

There was a lot of interest about each of the QFES services from people all over the region.



NORTH COAST REGION

Launch of the emergency services expo on the Sunshine Coast

Local emergency services, including QFES, came together with Sunshine Coast Council to launch the Sunshine Coast Emergency Services and Disaster Preparedness Expo at Kawana Stadium in May.

Mayor Mark Jamieson and Assistant Commissioner Gary McCormack spoke with attendees and media about how the event would benefit community and services.

All the agency mascots looked great lined up together to promote the expo, and the launch received strong media interest.



Bunya Mountains Local Emergency Plan launch

The Emergency Management Coordinator and Regional Community Engagement Officer have been involved in the development of a Local Emergency Plan for the Bunya Mountains. The plan came about thanks to a strong partnership approach, involving the South Burnett and Western Downs councils and a local community organisation, which has formed a local emergency group that includes the local rural fire brigade.

The plan details the communication process between the local emergency group and councils in a major event and the local group's role. The plan was launched in April at Bunya Mountains, and attracted a lot of interest from residents, property and business owners.

The launch was an opportunity to go through the plan, answer questions and gather feedback, which was very positive. This was followed by a community fun day where all QFES services had displays and resources available.

COVID-19 Check in Queensland app ambassador

The Queensland Government put out a call for Community Recovery Ready Reserves to become ambassadors and visit hospitality businesses as part of the roadmap to keeping Queenslanders safe.



The mobilisation saw Ready Reserves out and about in the community, helping businesses understand the requirements for implementing the Check in Queensland app by 1 May 2021.

Sandra Brown, Support Officer, SES North Coast Region, responded to the callout and over six days visited hospitality businesses in the Fraser Coast area, speaking to owners and managers and handing out information.

Sandra said a lot of businesses were already using the app or were aware of it and their obligations. Even though some businesses challenged the initiative, all in all it was a very positive experience.

You can find out more about joining the Community Recovery Ready Reserves on the Community Recovery page of the Gateway, or by emailing QFES.CommunityRecovery@qfes.qld.gov.au



Engaging with the community at the Gympie Show

At the Gympie Show in May, Gympie Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and State Emergency Service (SES) put their all into the activities and meeting the community.

They displayed appliances, a vintage red truck, preparedness resources, a kitchen fire trailer and a road crash rescue demonstration. The FRS also ran a 20-minute tribute to the Gympie Station's 80 years of continuous service to the brigade, which turned 120 years old on 20 November 2020.

Members from the local SES group conducted a dash roll, which is a road crash rescue technique, while the FRS led a parade with their appliance and vintage truck. Both services also featured in the grand parade.



BRISBANE REGION

Good timing for SES base handback

During National Volunteer Week, Moreton Bay Regional Council officially handed the extensively renovated Redcliffe State Emergency Service (SES) base back to its volunteers.

Redcliffe Group is one of the oldest in Queensland, formed just after the SES was inaugurated in 1974 following the disastrous Brisbane floods. The speaker of the Queensland Parliament at the time, the Hon JE Houghton, officially opened the first buildings on 24 June 1978.

The \$300 000 renovation saw new bathrooms, disability access improvements, classroom upgrades, new or additional air conditioning, carpets, new furniture, overhead projectors, rectification of workplace health and safety concerns, landscaping and extensive repainting.

Acting Group Leader Michelle Bowker thanked the council and its Disaster Manager Carl Peterson and his team for making the renovation happen.



Graham King retires after 26 years

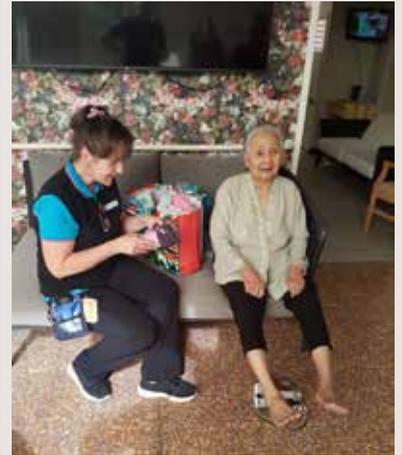
It was bittersweet times for Graham King at his career and retirement celebration at the Kilcoy Fire and Rescue Station on 24 April, after dedicating 26 years to the Fire and Rescue Service.

The speakers described the impact Graham has had on individuals, teams and the community. Assistant Commissioner John Bolger said it was impossible to count the number of people Graham had supported.

Graham's foresight and ingenuity opened the gateway for firefighters to achieve their Certificate II Public Safety (Firefighting Operations), with Kilcoy being the first station in Queensland to have firefighters accredited.

Graham spoke of the changes he had seen during his time as an auxiliary firefighter. He joined the brigade in late 1994 as a trainee firefighter and quickly worked his way up the ranks to become a Lieutenant Trainer in 1996 and Captain in 1999.

Robert Smith, Area Commander, spoke of Graham's perfection and pride in his work, the impact he had as a trainer and the relationships he developed across the region. Ian Swadling, representing the Rural Fire Brigade Association Queensland, said the relationships across services that Graham developed were the best in the district if not the state.



Going the extra mile for those in need

Brisbane Region firefighters and FireCom officers banded together in May to deliver care packages to nursing homes on the north and south sides of Brisbane and show the residents around their trucks and equipment.

The event organiser, FireCom Officer Brooke Morgan, came up with the idea because she wanted to bring smiles back to the faces of the most vulnerable in our community.

Brooke said, "The residents were so warm and receptive. We got a lot of 'This is for me? It's for me? Why do I deserve this?', smiles and many teary-eyed recipients."

"The positive impact the care packages had on the residents who received them was immeasurable. The staff couldn't thank the Fire and Rescue Service enough for everyone's kindness and explained to us how some of the recipients have absolutely no one outside of the nursing home and would be forever thankful for our generosity."



Graham was presented several awards including the Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation for 26 years of service to the community and an Assistant Commissioner's Commendation.

Graham said that although his time as a paid firefighter had now come to an end, he would continue to support the community as a Rural Fire Service volunteer.

QFES speaks out against domestic and family violence

During Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month (DFVP Month) in May, QFES joined the Darkness to Daylight challenge and held a panel discussion to encourage conversations about domestic and family violence in our community.

One hundred QFES members from across Queensland walked 110 kilometres in this year's Darkness to Daylight challenge to raise awareness and funds to help end domestic and family violence (DFV).

Deputy Commissioner Mike Wassing also chaired a panel for DFVP Month to discuss the spikes in DFV after natural disasters and what this means for QFES.

DFVP Month also includes LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day, which raises awareness of DFV in LGBTIQ+ communities, where people can struggle to find support services that meet their needs.

Darkness to Daylight

Acting Logistics Support Officer Kaylene Neal has assisted with and organised QFES' participation in Darkness to Daylight for the last three years. QFES has participated in the event for the last five years.

"I love to organise this event because it gets QFES people thinking about how they can support their colleagues in difficult times," Kaylene said.

"You don't really know or understand DFV until you're actually involved with it.

"I'm a DFV survivor, and part of my journey was sharing my story at QFES on White

Ribbon Day 2017. If one person in that audience went home and had a think about whether they'd done those things to their partner, then it was worth it.

"QFES and my team supported me through that time, and today there is even more support available."

Kaylene said it was crucial to support victims/survivors and refer them to DFV services, but there was also more work to do with perpetrators and the family around them.

"Until we stop the person who's doing the violence, it will never go away," she said.

"It's complicated because the victim loves that person and thinks they can help them, but it comes to a point where they can't. I was one of the lucky ones, and I got out, but there are times now when I think of what happened and realise I may not have been so lucky."

First responders encounter victims of DFV at anything from road traffic crashes to incidents where they're supporting the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Police Service (QPS).

"It's about understanding behaviours or little comments people make, instead of sweeping it under the rug," Kaylene said.

QFES raised around \$10 000 for Darkness to Daylight at the time of printing.

A conversation we need to have

The live panel on 28 May discussed how QFES members could support victims of DFV, particularly during and after emergencies.

The panel featured Assistant Commissioner Steve Smith, along with Rowena Hardiker, Acting Senior Sergeant, State DFV and Vulnerable Persons Unit at QPS, and Joanne Radke, Social Policy Manager at the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Djirabal/Ba-barum woman.

Panel Chair, Deputy Commissioner Mike Wassing, said, "Sometimes we feel uncomfortable talking about these things, but we need to be able to talk about them.

"QFES' mission is about fostering safe and resilient communities, and we are all responsible and accountable for that.

"We have victims and perpetrators as part of our workforce, so we need to continue to educate ourselves."

Calling it out

Steve Smith said QFES needed to work across whole of government to do everything possible to alleviate spikes in DFV after disasters.

"Peoples' vulnerabilities are heightened in emergencies," Mr Smith said. "We need to consider the impact of our actions. Instead of imposing a context on someone, we should try to understand local culture and support networks."

Mr Smith said calling out inappropriate behaviour was a core part of the QFES Values.

"It takes courage and respect to step up and challenge behaviour, particularly if you have your own history with DFV," he said.

"Loyalty in its true form is loyalty to values and being true to yourself. The negative



One hundred QFES members participated in the Darkness to Daylight challenge.



QFES marked the start of the Darkness to Daylight challenge on 1 May with a group walk along Kedron Brook.

side of loyalty is if your obligation to a colleague or a friend is stronger than your will to call them out.

“If someone is behaving to a level where you’ve got to call it out, they’ve made that decision themselves. It’s an opportunity for them to rebalance their approach to the world.”

How to refer

In Queensland, almost 40 per cent of policing hours are related to DFV, with 295 incidents each day.

Rowena Hardiker said first responders needed to recognise they couldn’t personally support every person experiencing DFV.

“We need to be aware of the service providers in our area who can support them,” Ms Hardiker said.

“We’re not the lead in this area, and there are so many services we can refer people to rather than trying to do it all ourselves.”

Ms Hardiker said an important part of supporting people in DFV situations was making sure victims and perpetrators weren’t placed together in evacuation centres.

“It’s a really tricky situation, because there’s so much change and turmoil. Computer checks take time we often don’t have.

“We need to be observant of behaviours that suggest DFV. Speaking to the parties individually can be the first port of call, including asking if there’s anything that prevents them from being together.”

Showing respect

Joanne Radke’s work supports a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, perspectives and priorities as part of the Queensland Government’s response to help end DFV.

“Agencies should have a no-wrong-door approach,” Ms Radke said. “When someone comes to you, have a list of services to refer them to.”

Ms Radke said working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was about being respectful and talking with each other in a non-judgemental way.

“It’s not about why a person is still in this relationship,” she said. “It’s about how we keep them safe.

“If we rephrase the way we speak, we can build trusting relationships that encourage people to share with us so we can refer them on.”

Ms Radke said a victim might hold back from disclosing their situation if they felt unsafe, particularly if their partner or family were nearby.

“It’s also about fear, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in particular. For example, a woman might fear her children may be removed as a result of this situation.

“Put her at ease by saying she’s not the problem and this isn’t her fault. She’s got to feel and know that you are listening to her.

“Queenslanders of all ages, abilities and cultures can experience abuse – as agencies we need to consider who we refer

people to and how we can best support them.”

Ms Radke recalled how and she and other people in the community felt hope when they saw a red truck.

“People respond to fires and they just love the fact that you are saving their life. Kids just want to run to you and climb all over your trucks.

“I think that’s really important – that you are seen as lifesavers. In DFV situations you can continue that approach by saying, I’m a lifesaver and I’m here to save people and make their lives better.”

Support services

- In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for police.
- Call DVConnect for free, confidential crisis support:
 - Womensline: 1800 811 811 (24/7)
 - Mensline: 1800 600 636 (7 days, 9am to midnight)
- Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN):
 - Call 1800 805 980 for 24-hour counselling
 - Contact an independent counsellor of your choice
 - Visit the FESSN website for more details
- Elder Abuse Helpline: 1300 651 192
- Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service: 1800 88 77 00



EOS IS COMING

EOS IS CUTTING EDGE

**STRUCTURAL
FIREFIGHTING
OUTERWEAR**

FROM MSA BRISTOL

WITH A FOCUS ON
**PARTICULATE
PROTECTION**
& CLEANING EFFICIENCY

EOS IS AUSTRALIAN CERTIFIED
AS 4967:2019

EOS IS INCLUSIVE
OFFERING **28 MALE &
28 FEMALE SIZES**
+ MADE TO MEASURE OPTIONS

AND THE BEST PART?
**EOS IS COMPLETELY
CUSTOMISABLE**
TO YOUR SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

GET MORE INFO:



ADVERTISEMENT - PF0532 JUL21

MSA BRISTOL

GARMENTS & GLOVES, AVAILABLE FROM:

PACFIRE

PACFIRE.COM.AU   

Inclusive Fire Ed for children with autism

QFES has joined forces with the AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism to make our Fire Ed program more inclusive.

A new version of the long-running program features modified language and fire drill activities to ensure children with autism are prepared if a fire starts in their home.

The driving force behind the project, A/Inspector Mark Stephenson from Camira Fire and Rescue Station, said his crew came up with the idea after delivering the original program at their local AEIOU centre.

“We realised we weren’t communicating effectively to the children, so we decided to tailor the program based on advice from AEIOU’s teachers and specialists,” Mark said.

“Together, we made the program’s language more literal and concise, and adjusted the Stop, Drop and Roll drill, which can be physically difficult for children with autism.

“In the modified program, we break things down to focus on one action at a time, and we use props to show what we mean.

“We use positive language by telling the children what to do rather than what not to do.”

Firefighters can look and sound frightening to children with autism, particularly when they’re wearing breathing apparatus.



The teacher dresses up in PPE one piece at a time so the children can see there’s a real person inside and firefighters are their friends.

The team ran the first trial with six children at the AEIOU centre in May and both the firefighters and educators from AEIOU were happy with the results.

“QFES aims for every child to receive fire education, and this project is one way of achieving that,” Mark said. “All children need to know how to stay safe from fire.”

“The AEIOU Foundation has been hugely supportive, along with the QFES State Community Engagement Unit. Regional Community Engagement Officer Hailey Hayes worked really hard to coordinate the project. Without her there’s no way we could have gotten this off the ground.”

The team is now refining the program and will shortly release it Queensland-wide for delivery through AEIOU centres and special schools.





More than 20 State Emergency Service volunteers travelled to Perth in April to support clean-up operations in the wake of ex-Tropical Cyclone Seroja.



QFES members everywhere, such as this group at Yeppoon Bunnings, celebrated National Volunteer Week in May, including Wear Orange Wednesday.



The crew from Beaudesert Fire and Rescue Station, along with some friends from the Queensland Police Service, joined a fun run at Gleneagle State School to support the school chaplaincy.



Fire and Rescue Service crews attended a fire at a factory in Brendale, bringing it under control within 90 minutes and preventing it from spreading to nearby gas cylinders.



QFES members commemorated Anzac Day at services across the state.



People came from far and wide, including New South Wales, to join in the fun at the Jondaryan Rural Fire Brigade's open day.



Rural Fire Service Area Training and Support Officers attended a workshop at the Queensland Police Service Academy at Oxley. The workshop covered the Rural Fire Development Framework, a new training pathway providing flexible delivery options based on local needs.



Volunteer Marine Rescue Whitsunday and the local Water Police held a joint search and rescue exercise (SAREX) in the Whitsundays.



A team of State Emergency Service members from Central Region completed a vertical rescue course at Isla Gorge in Taroom.



Volunteers gathered in Cairns for the 2021 Rural Fire Service Volunteer Summit, a great opportunity to collaborate, learn and develop their skills.



Firefighters from Beaudesert Fire and Rescue Station delivered the Fire Ed program to Year 1 and 2 students at St Mary's Catholic Primary School.

Running up that hill

A new film follows the adventures of Senior Firefighter and sponsored trail runner Caine Warburton, who has run up and down Mount Barney hundreds of times to train for international races.

The film, *Blazing Trail*, describes Caine's deep connection to the mountain and his efforts to protect it during the 2019 Black Summer bushfires.

In trail running, the goal is to run to the highest peak of a mountain and down again as quickly as possible. It takes the average person five to six hours to get up and down Mount Barney, but Caine can do it in two-and-a-half hours.

"When the ground's really steep I switch to power hiking, and in rocky areas I use bouldering and rock climbing moves," he said.

"When I'm running back down it's like being a jet pilot – I read the terrain and react quickly, leaping from rock to rock."

Caine has been trail running since 2006, when he was deployed with the army to Europe.

"I've represented Australia a few times, and I've won 46 medals out of 55 races," he said.

"In 2014, I participated in the World Skyrunning Championships, a 10-hour race where I traversed five summits and climbed



glaciers with crampons (spikes fixed to a boot for walking on ice or rock climbing)."

Caine has been with QFES for six years. His strength and endurance help with the physical aspects of the job, but more than that is the mental fortitude he's developed.

"I'm able to dig deep and find the extra energy when I'm working hard in a house fire, wearing multiple BAs or attending a grassfire for hours," he said.

"I've learnt not to stop when something starts to hurt or goes wrong."

Blazing Trail showcases the pristine landscape surrounding Mount Barney.

"It's one of the highest mountains in south-east Queensland and there's nothing more than a rough track, so you can really connect with the environment," Caine said.

"The 2019 bushfires were devastating for the national park and wildlife.

"I went out to the mountain with a crew of FRS firefighters and we conducted a hazard reduction burn around the whole front side of the park with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service."

Caine returned to the mountain in 2020 to make the film, working with three local filmmakers who were keen to start a new project after the COVID-19 restrictions.

The environmental impact was stark. Many of the mountain's oldest, most majestic trees had burnt and fallen over.

"The canopy was completely gone," Caine said, "but it was good to see new sprouts on the trees.

"We filmed over two arduous days, carrying about 40 kilograms of film equipment each. There were 90 kilometre-an-hour winds and it was freezing cold.

"The film shows that, while we want to enjoy beautiful places like Mount Barney, we also need to respect them. By managing the risk of fire, we can preserve the environment for the future."

Blazing Trail is currently showing at film festivals in Australia and overseas.



Photos by Kai Pantano.



NO SALES TALK, NO ONE ON ONE PRESSURE SELLING

DEAL WITH LICENSED, EXPERIENCED TAX ADVISERS WORKING IN YOUR BEST INTEREST



AT YOUR SERVICE

DIRECT ACCESS TO YOUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP MANAGER FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR LEASE



WE DO IT ALL

FROM START TO LEASE END, ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR LEASE ARE COVERED



NO HIDDEN CATCHES

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET!



FAST SECURE CLAIM PROCESS

QUICK AND CONVENIENT



ON LINE, ANYTIME

MOBILE FRIENDLY WEBSITE



It's Your Choice!

100% Queensland Owned
Local, Experienced, Licensed

1300 76 1114

www.statewideqld.net.au



Novated Leasing Pty Ltd

ABN 48101218731

AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL SERVICES LICENCE: 439732

AUSTRALIAN CREDIT LICENCE: 387111

TAX PRACTITIONERS BOARD REGISTRATION: 24792339

Please contact us for a free no-obligation consultation and quote.



SERVICING EMPLOYEES FOR 19 YEARS

Statewide... the really smart choice!



APPROVED SUPPLIER

Statewide Novated Leasing Pty Ltd ("Statewide") is an approved supplier under the Queensland Government panel arrangement Novated Leasing Services QGP0026-16. From 7 November 2016, all Employees who wish to access a motor vehicle using a novated lease must use one of the approved Salary Packaging Novated Leasing Panel Suppliers to arrange, organise and manage the lease. The novated lease will continue to be administered through the Salary Packaging Administrator.

Queensland Government Disclaimer: The implications of salary packaging a motor vehicle through a novated leasing arrangement, including tax savings will depend on your individual circumstances. The information in this publication has been prepared by Statewide Novated Leasing for general information purposes only, without taking into consideration any individual circumstances. Before acting on any information or entering into a novated leasing arrangement, you should consider your objectives, financial situation and needs, and, take the appropriate legal, financial or other professional advice based upon your own particular circumstances. **The Queensland Government strongly recommends that you obtain independent financial advice prior to entering into, or changing the terms of, a salary packaging arrangement.**

End of Financial Year SALE

EOFY could be the right time for
big savings on a new car



Advertisement

 1300 73 14 29

 remservlease.com.au/vehicle-offers

RemServ
LEASE

Things you need to know: The implications of salary packaging a motor vehicle through a novated leasing arrangement, including tax savings will depend on your individual circumstances. The information in this publication has been prepared by RemServ for general information purposes only, without taking into consideration any individual circumstances. Before acting on any information or entering into a novated leasing arrangement, you should consider your objectives, financial situation and needs, and, take the appropriate legal, financial or other professional advice based upon your own particular circumstances. The Queensland Government strongly recommends that you obtain independent financial advice prior to entering into, or changing the terms of, a salary packaging arrangement.

Conditions and fees apply, along with credit assessment criteria for lease and loan products. The availability of benefits is subject to your employer's approval. RemServ may receive commissions in connection with its services. Actual vehicle price is based on specific vehicle and accessories, prices and savings may vary based on additional options selected with vehicle. RemServ does not act as your agent or representative in respect of the purchase of any vehicle. RemServ does not provide any advice or recommendations in relation to the purchase of any vehicle. Remuneration Services (Qld) Pty Ltd | ABN 46 093 173 089 (RemServ)