

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–2024

Queensland Fire and
Emergency Services



Acknowledgement of Country

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Queensland and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to the Elders—past and present—for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

First Nations people have expert knowledge developed over thousands of generations in caring for country.

As an emergency services organisation, we look to our First Nations communities for their knowledge and wisdom—developed over tens of thousands of years—in caring for country, and to learn how we can support in healing country, now and into the future.

This annual report provides information about Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' financial and non-financial performance for 2023–24. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies (2023–2024 reporting period)*.

The annual report includes significant highlights against the objectives and strategies, and service area detailed in the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2022–26 Reviewed / Updated 2023* and the 2023–24 Service Delivery Statement.

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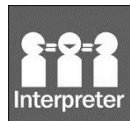
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This annual report is available at www.fire.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-knowledge-centre/reports-and-plans/annual-reports or a paper copy can be provided on request by calling (07) 3635 3859.

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accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty understanding this report, you can access the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) via www.qld.gov.au/help/languages or by telephoning 13 14 50.

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Letter of compliance



Queensland
Government

Office of the
Commissioner

Queensland Fire Department

9 September 2024

The Honourable Nikki Boyd MP
Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery
and Minister for Corrective Services
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 2023–24 Annual Report including financial statements.

This report is prepared on the basis of the administrative arrangements for this agency applying for the whole of the 2023–24 financial year. That is, it reflects the structure, operations and performance of the agency at 30 June 2024.

I certify that this annual report complies with the:

- prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*
- detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual report requirements is included in the appendices of the annual report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Smith'.

Stephen Smith AFSM
Commissioner
Queensland Fire Department

(formerly Queensland Fire and Emergency Services)

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Commissioner's message

I am pleased to present the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) 2023–24 Annual Report.

QFES continued to deliver a high standard of fire and emergency services to Queensland communities in 2023–24.

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and Rural Fire Service (RFS) responded to 82,917 incidents across Queensland, including structure and landscape fires, mobile property crashes and natural hazard and other life-threatening disasters. This averages to 227 incidents per day, an increase of approximately 20 incidents per day when compared to 2022–23.

The implementation of the largest reform of Queensland's emergency services since 1990 commenced as the department prepared for the establishment of historic organisational and legislative changes leading to the establishment of the Queensland Fire Department (QFD) commencing 1 July 2024.

The dedication of our firefighters, staff and volunteers continued to be acknowledged and celebrated, and we commemorated with honour those who lost their lives whilst ensuring the safety of Queensland communities.

Battling bushfires

After several years of La Niña heavy rainfall, Australia entered El Niño conditions resulting in many areas of Queensland drying out, increasing bushfire risks and a challenging 2023–24 bushfire season, demanding concentrations of resources and deployments from partners in state agencies, interstate and internationally, to protect threatened communities across the state.

During the bushfire season, Queensland experienced over 7,500 bushfires including over 100 significant bushfires with almost 3.29 million hectares burnt.

Tragically, five lives were lost during this season—including response personnel.

Cyclones and floods

In December 2023, Queensland experienced bushfires, a heatwave warning, hail, heavy rain and a cyclone, but we were ready to adapt and respond.

More than 140 QFES staff and volunteers deployed to far north Queensland ahead of Tropical Cyclone (TC) Jasper's landfall on 13 December, bringing heavy rainfall and flash flooding.

Severe storms and flash flooding hit the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim on Christmas Day and New Year's Day leaving around 130,000 people without power.

The state's north had not yet recovered from TC Jasper when TC Kirrily arrived on 25 January, bringing more than a metre of rain. More than 200 QFES staff and volunteers were deployed in this event.

FRS swiftwater rescue technicians evacuated people cut off by floodwater, while RFS volunteers supported flooded communities as part of our emergency services to Queensland communities in need.

International deployments

QFES participated in two major overseas deployments to help other nations in dire need.

Canada faced its most destructive wildfire season on record with more than 1,000 fires burning and 120,000 people evacuated from their homes. From late May 2023 to late July 2023, 69 QFES personnel including RFS volunteers, were deployed to the Alberta region, one of the worst hit areas.

Australia's Disaster Assistance Response Team (AUS-1 DART) deployed to Papua New Guinea (PNG) in May 2024 to help local authorities respond to a landslide that buried the village of Yambali under six to eight metres of soil. The United Nations originally estimated 670 lives were lost, however, sadly the figure was later revised to 2,000, with about 1,000 people displaced. AUS-1 DART supported the PNG Government's disaster response through incident management, logistics, damage assessments, drone operations and mapping, and delivery of humanitarian relief supplies.

To honour those lost

Sadly, 2023–24 was a time of commemorating the anniversaries of past losses and a year where loss continued.

Tragically, three people lost their lives in a plane crash near Cloncurry in November 2023. The aircraft was contracted by QFES to support the bushfire response and it was a devastating tragedy for the fire and aviation community.

2 May 2024 marked one year since the loss of First Class Firefighter Izabella (Izzy) Nash at a Slacks Creek factory fire. I accompanied Izzy's family to the National Emergency Services Memorial in Canberra where Izzy's family received an Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) memorial medallion and her name was added to the Memorial Wall.

After the tragedy of the Slacks Creek fire in May 2023, QFES established an Operational Advisory Group to conduct a high-level review and assessment of FRS' structural firefighting capability with the focus on areas of improvement to enhance the performance and safety of firefighters (refer page 34).

On 11 February, I joined firefighters and staff on the Gold Coast to remember the sacrifice made by firefighters Herbie Fennell and Noel Watson who lost their lives in the Southport Honda fire on that day in 1994.

25 February marked two years since the passing of State Emergency Service volunteer Merryl Dray, who tragically died while responding to the 2022 Queensland floods. Merryl's memory will continue in the forefront of our organisational history.

The path to the Queensland Fire Department

Much of our work this year focused on preparing to establish the QFD.

In December 2023, the Honourable Nikki Boyd MP was appointed Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. The Fire and Disaster Recovery portfolio includes QFES and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and set a new direction towards the legislative and organisational changes planned to be in effect from 1 July 2024.

In early 2024, significant pieces of work progressed such as legislative amendments, branding, a simplified organisational governance structure and development of key strategic directives. Queensland Parliament passed legislation providing direction on how the Services would continue to work together to serve Queenslanders. This includes the establishment of Queensland Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) as separate Services and the establishment of the RFSQ Advisory Committee to provide advice to the RFSQ Chief Officer on matters relevant to rural fire brigades and volunteer members. In addition, the role of Chief Fire Officer was established to provide expert advice on matters relating to service delivery and best practice relating to fire services.

In May 2024, I commenced as Commissioner following the departure of Commissioner Greg Leach in October 2023. I acknowledge Commissioner Leach's years of service, professionalism and dedication to QFES.

Following the transition of some disaster management functions to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) in October 2023, the SES also transitioned to the QPS on 3 June 2024 and will continue to provide invaluable services to Queenslanders as it has since 1975.

While 30 June 2024 marked the end of QFES, it was the start of a new chapter for QFD. The reforms have given us a new name, new structures and renewed focus as a fire-focussed agency.

QFD will continue to face new challenges as Queensland's climate, technology and population change. I am confident we are equipped with the right people and capabilities to identify those changes, understand the meaning, and confidently develop effective and innovative service delivery solutions.

Supporting collaborative and sharing partnerships

This year was also an exciting time with QFES hosting several major events and celebrating the people who went above and beyond to uphold our values.

In August 2023, QFES co-hosted with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the internationally recognised AFAC conference. As Australasia's largest emergency management conference, AFAC23 welcomed delegates from emergency services, government, research, academia, and equipment and service businesses from across Australia and internationally, including the United Kingdom, Canada, United States of America, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Pacific Island nations. A highlight for QFES was signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the PNG Fire Service to build on our long-standing partnership.

QFES partnered with the National Emergency Management Agency, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Fire and Rescue New South Wales to host the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) Asia-Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise in Brisbane. The exercise was part of Australia's INSARAG commitment and NEMA's National Crisis Exercise Program with over 250 participants including international teams. The aim of the exercise was to strengthen the preparedness and response to a catastrophic earthquake, including concurrent and compounding events, in accordance with local, state and national plans, through an immersive, face-to-face simulation (refer page 66).

Following a delegate visit from the National Fire Authority of Fiji, an MoU and Collaboration Deed was signed supporting a mutual sharing of information, technology, capacity, capability and resources, and further strengthening our relationships in the Pacific region.

I would like to thank all staff and volunteers for your diligence and commitment during this past year and as we continue to improve what we do and how we do it in order to continue to deliver exceptional service to Queenslanders.



**Stephen Smith AFSM
Commissioner
Queensland Fire Department**

(formerly Queensland Fire and Emergency Services)

9 September 2024

About the department

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is a Queensland Government department under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. QFES was initially established as a department on 1 November 2013 by *Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 8) 2013*.

On 26 October 2022, the Queensland Government released its response to the Independent Review of QFES (the Independent Review) detailing proposed Emergency Services Reforms. The Independent Review examined the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the department, including structure and funding in relation to its core services and associated volunteer entities and made a range of recommendations for strategic and legislative reform. The Queensland Government accepted in-principle all recommendations of the Independent Review, with the exception of recommendation 12 to implement a State Emergency Service (SES) levy, which was not accepted.

For further information relating to the Emergency Services Reforms and machinery-of-government changes refer to pages 9–11.

The implementation of the Emergency Services Reforms includes the establishment of a dedicated fire department—the Queensland Fire Department (QFD)—which will commence on 1 July 2024. The QFD will consist of Queensland Fire and Rescue (QFR), Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ), the Office of the Chief Fire Officer, and operational and corporate support. Machinery-of-government changes resulted in the SES transitioning to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) on 3 June 2024. The QPS is also responsible for marine rescue services and disaster management functions. Further disaster management functions were transferred to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

During 2023–24, QFES was responsible for ensuring the capacity of operational staff and volunteers to respond in emergent situations as legislated in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and for working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to deliver disaster management services under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*.

The department is the primary provider of fire and rescue, and emergency services throughout Queensland. QFES encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and the Rural Fire Service (RFS).

The department works with community and partners to minimise the impacts and consequences of disasters and emergencies on persons, property and the environment. This is supported by assisting communities to understand their local hazards and ensuring they have the right knowledge, information and resources to strengthen their capability and resilience.

The department also has a strong focus on prevention and preparedness to avert emergency incidents as well as response and recovery. These activities include community education, fire safety, hazard identification and risk assessment, and working with communities to plan for and mitigate disasters.

The **Fire and Rescue Service** provides fire prevention, preparedness and response services to fire in the built and landscape environments, as well as scientific and specialist rescue capabilities to Queensland communities. The FRS provides a multi-hazard response which includes structural fires,

road crash rescue, bushfires, hazardous materials, technical rescue including vertical and swiftwater/floodwater rescue, and disaster assistance response, and provides a number of functions supporting community safety outcomes.

The **Rural Fire Service** is a community-based, volunteer emergency service and the lead service for the control and prevention of bush and grass fire in Queensland. The RFS has been an integral part of Queensland’s bushfire response for more than 75 years. The RFS operates in rural, semi-rural and urban fringe areas providing bush and grass fire prevention, mitigation and response capabilities and community engagement services, and assistance during other emergencies and disasters, and in some instances road crash rescue.

The RFS was honoured as a 2023 Queensland Great in the Institution category of the Queensland Greats Awards (June 2023) which recognise the efforts and achievements of Queensland organisations for their remarkable contribution to the history and development of Queensland.

State Operations provides a diverse range of shared organisational capabilities and specialist functions across FRS, RFS, Fire Communications and corporate services. State Operations enhances cooperation and collaboration across the department's operations, with a particular focus on how FRS, RFS, Fire Communications and corporate services come together before, during and after an emergency.

Corporate personnel within the department provide a broad range of services including specialist operational support and corporate services. These frontline enablers are also able to transition to liaison, coordination and logistical roles to provide surge capacity during large-scale events and heightened response.

For further information regarding the department's structure and responsibilities refer to pages 15–24.

Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 2) 2023*, at 30 June 2024, the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services administers the following Acts and subordinate legislation relative to the fire services portfolio:

✦ *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*

- *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*
- *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*
(responsibility is shared with the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works).

For information regarding the legislation administered by the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services relating to the fire services portfolio from 1 July 2024, refer to *Emergency Services Reforms* (pages 9–10).

Our accountabilities

During 2023–24, the main functions of QFES under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* were to:

- a) protect persons, property and the environment from fire and hazardous materials emergencies
- b) protect persons trapped in a vehicle or building or otherwise endangered, to the extent that QFES' personnel and equipment can reasonably be deployed or used for the purpose
- c) provide an advisory service, and undertake other measures, to promote—
 - i) fire prevention and fire control
 - ii) safety and other procedures if a fire or hazardous materials emergency happens
- d) cooperate with any entity that provides an emergency service
- e) perform other functions given to QFES under this Act or another Act
- f) perform functions incidental to its other functions
- g) identify and market products and services incidental to its functions.

Strategy 2030

Strategy 2030 reflects how QFES will meet future challenges and realise opportunities through to 2030. The five guiding principles of *Strategy 2030* (refer page 6) are embedded across governance, risk, planning and performance mechanisms to further support and ensure alignment and execution.

Since *Strategy 2030* was first published in June 2019, Queensland experienced a severe bushfire season in late 2019 and major flooding in February 2022 as well as the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) and escalating geo-political tensions.

During the reporting period, with QFES transitioning to QFD on 1 July 2024, *Strategy 2030* was reviewed. The guiding principles from *Strategy 2030* have carried-over into the new foundation and strategy document – *Beyond the Smoke: Queensland Fire Department's foundation and direction for a safer tomorrow* (Beyond the Smoke).

Beyond the Smoke can be accessed at www.fire.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-06/Beyond-the-Smoke.pdf

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2022–26

Reviewed / Updated 2023

Guiding principles from Strategy 2030



Our vision

To create and sustain a safe and resilient Queensland in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters

Our purpose

Deliver contemporary and effective fire, emergency and disaster management services that meet Queensland communities' needs

Our opportunities

- ✦ Optimise existing and leverage emerging partnerships to improve community connectedness and capability to manage risk and enhance resiliency.
- ✦ Harness research and enable technological and innovative advancements to deliver more sustainable services.
- ✦ Adapt our workforce arrangements to provide greater flexibility and budget sustainability in a post-COVID world.

Our challenges

- ✦ Continue to meet community, stakeholder and government expectations.
- ✦ Continue to ensure information technology infrastructure and information management enable us to adapt to new and emergent technology while reducing impacts on future efficiency and effectiveness.
- ✦ Continue to ensure the QFES' service delivery model meets the shifts in demographic and workplace trends, and the impacts of climate change.

In addition, fiscal sustainability remained an ongoing challenge for the department and was a continuous focus for QFES leadership. Information about how QFES responded to these challenges can be found in Our performance (refer pages 32–72).

Objectives

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

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

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

Strategies *

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

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

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

Measures of Success *#

- ✦ Percentage increase in the number of clients who identify that they have had a positive interaction with QFES
- ✦ Maintain percentage of total QFES expenditure within QFES' total operating budget tolerances
- ✦ Percentage increase in our Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys of our people, who recognise a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery
- ✦ Percentage increase in volunteers who are satisfied with the experience of volunteering for QFES

- ✦ Percentage of service delivery partners who feel that QFES works collaboratively to achieve results
- ✦ Percentage of delivery partners who are satisfied that QFES' service delivery offerings match local risk profiles
- ✦ Percentage increase in the number of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community

- ✦ Percentage increase in the number of communities who recognise and understand their local risks
- ✦ Percentage of high-risk bushfire communities where mitigation strategies have been undertaken by QFES
- ✦ Percentage increase in community engagement across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery

* Machinery-of-government changes occurred during 2023–24 with the transition of functions to QPS and the QRA (refer pages 10–11 for further information).

Refer to Key performance measures for further information on pages 28–31.

Queensland Government objectives

The *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (section 10) requires that the Premier prepares and tables in the Legislative Assembly a statement of the government's broad objectives for the community.

The objectives for the community reflect the government's vision for Queensland and outline the plan to build future prosperity and growth across the state.

Further detail about QFES' role in supporting the government's objectives is detailed throughout this report.

QFES supports the government's objectives for the community:

- ✦ Good jobs: Good, secure jobs in our traditional and emerging industries.
- ✦ Better services: Deliver even better services right across Queensland.
- ✦ Great lifestyle: Protect and enhance our Queensland lifestyle as we grow.

QFES contributes to these sub-objectives:

- ✦ Backing our frontline services.
- ✦ Keeping Queenslanders safe.

Our Values and Charter

Values are the deeply held ideals and beliefs that the department holds and is guided by when making decisions. Our shared values play a vital role in guiding our decisions and behaviours individually and collectively as a department. Promoting a shared understanding of the department's values fosters a sense of belonging and purpose and sits at the core of how the department works to support each other and the community.

Our shared values are:



The way we live our values every day is outlined in the department's Charter which was launched in December 2022.

The Charter document was developed with input from our people, to set out the behaviours we expect to see in our workplace, and the behaviours we do not accept. The Charter recognises the importance of not only calling out inappropriate behaviours, but also celebrating actions that demonstrate the department's values and positively impact on another person.

QFES is equally committed to upholding the Queensland public service values of:



Customers first

- ✦ Know your customers
- ✦ Deliver what matters
- ✦ Make decisions with empathy



Ideas into action

- ✦ Challenge the norm and suggest solutions
- ✦ Encourage and embrace new ideas
- ✦ Work across boundaries



Unleash potential

- ✦ Expect greatness
- ✦ Lead and set clear expectations
- ✦ Seek, provide and act on feedback



Be courageous

- ✦ Own your actions, successes and mistakes
- ✦ Take calculated risks
- ✦ Act with transparency



Empower people

- ✦ Lead, empower and trust
- ✦ Play to everyone's strengths
- ✦ Develop yourself and those around you

Our environment

Through active environmental and horizon scanning activities, the department continued to monitor external trends that have the potential to shape or influence future service delivery needs to ensure it is well-positioned to continue to meet the challenges shaping the environment.

Some of the strategic environmental factors QFES continued to work to address during the reporting period include:

- ✦ the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on Queensland's population which will continue to be felt over the medium term. These include reduced international migration which has led to an increased ageing population, and a shift in projected population dispersal, with greater numbers moving to rural and peri-urban locations across Queensland
- ✦ a predicted increase in the severity, frequency and duration of natural disasters
- ✦ an increased likelihood of multiple large-scale events occurring simultaneously
- ✦ changing community expectations for government services including service delivery and engagement changes in the volunteer landscape
- ✦ low unemployment rates that will continue to challenge the ability to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce.

QFES responded to these environmental factors through the delivery of its strategic plan. Importantly, QFES worked collaboratively with public safety agencies, local governments and other non-government and community organisations such as Red Cross, Rotary Australia and The Salvation Army, to enable it to respond to these factors whilst continuing to deliver frontline fire and emergency services.

Further information about how the department responded to these environmental factors can be found in Our performance (refer pages 32–72).

In its 2022 report *Our Future World*, Australia's National Science Agency, the CSIRO, identifies global megatrends. Megatrends are long-term, transformative shifts that significantly impact societies, economies and organisations. These trends shape the world over decades and have wide-ranging effects. These megatrends are likely to impact the fire and emergency services sector and the future QFD over the next decades and offer both challenges and opportunities:

- ✦ Adapting to a changing climate
- ✦ Leaner, cleaner, and greener
- ✦ Unlocking the human dimension
- ✦ The escalating health imperative
- ✦ Geopolitical shifts
- ✦ Diving into digital
- ✦ Increasingly autonomous.

For further information regarding the megatrends and their relevance to the fire and emergency services sector including the QFD refer to *Beyond the Smoke*: www.fire.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-06/Beyond-the-Smoke.pdf

During the reporting period, QFES also actively participated in a range of national forums including the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee, national Champions of Change Fire and Emergency Group and the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) and its sub-committees, to inform and influence the development of future focused operational and strategic research and policy. As a result of the Emergency Services Reforms, the Commissioner's membership on the ANZEMC transitioned to the QPS in December 2023.

Emergency Services Reforms

An Independent Review of QFES was undertaken to examine the department's capability and funding model. The review assessed the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the department, including structure and funding in relation to QFES' core services and associated volunteer entities.

The final report and Queensland Government Response to the Independent Review was released on 26 October 2022. The government accepted in principle all recommendations of the Independent Review with the exception of one recommendation to implement an SES levy which was not accepted. Emergency Services Reforms to implement the Queensland Government Response include the establishment of a dedicated fire services department—the Queensland Fire Department (QFD)—to ensure an ongoing and specific focus on fire service delivery, with the department consisting of Queensland Fire and Rescue (QFR), Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ), Office of the Chief Fire Officer, and operational and corporate support.

The reforms also led to the transition of the SES, marine rescue services, service agreements and some disaster management functions to the QPS and QRA. To support implementation of the Emergency Services Reforms, the government committed up to \$578 million over five years from 2023–24 and \$142 million per annum ongoing, with an uplift of over 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to ensure Queensland's frontline officers, staff and volunteers are best positioned to respond in emergency and disaster situations and keep Queenslanders safe.

The legislative instruments to underpin the changes arising from the Emergency Services Reforms were passed, with additional amendments, during the Queensland parliamentary sitting of 2 May 2024. These included the:

- ✦ *Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2024* (commenced 3 June 2024)
- ✦ *Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024* (commenced 3 June 2024)
- ✦ *State Emergency Service Act 2024* (commenced 3 June 2024)
- ✦ *Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* (commences 1 July 2024).

A Reform Implementation Taskforce (RIT) was established in January 2023 to lead timely implementation of the outcomes arising from the Independent Review. QFES established a temporary RIT Support Directorate to work closely with, and assist, the RIT to deliver on the transition of functions and the significant uplift for fire and emergency services across Queensland.

Amendments in the *Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* will result in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* being renamed the *Fire Services Act 1990* and provide the structures and principles that will set the new QFD up by:

- ✦ establishing QFR and RFSQ as separate services to facilitate financial, administrative and operational enhancements
- ✦ recognising the highly valued service provided by volunteers in communities across Queensland and ensuring greater legal protections for them as they serve these communities by bringing brigades and brigade volunteers within the membership of the RFSQ.

Additional significant amendments include:

- ✦ establishing the role of Chief Fire Officer to provide expert advice to the Commissioner on a range of matters including operational assurance and setting out in more detail key roles and functions
- ✦ establishing the RFSQ Advisory Committee, which will have strong volunteer representation, to provide advice to the RFSQ Chief Officer on matters relevant to rural fire brigades and volunteer members, including the administration and management of Queensland rural fire brigades
- ✦ extending smoke alarm requirements to caravans and motorised caravans.

The *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011* will also be renamed the *Fire Services Regulation 2011*, to align with changes to the primary legislation.

On 1 July 2024, QFES will become the QFD comprising QFR, RFSQ, Office of the Chief Fire Officer, State Operations, and Strategy and Corporate Services (refer page 22 for the QFD organisational structure).

The QFD, through the QFR and RFSQ, will be the hazard management agency for bushfire, structure fire and hazardous materials with responsibilities set out under the *Fire Services Act 1990* and associated instruments. It will also provide lead agency support functions a part of Queensland's disaster management arrangements (QDMA).

The position of Chief Fire Officer will be responsible for providing advice to the Commissioner on matters relating to service delivery, operational culture, best practice, and innovation and research.

The establishment of the RFSQ Advisory Committee was announced in June 2024 with membership comprising 10 volunteers including a representative of the Rural Fire Brigade Association of Queensland and a First Nations representative, and four RFSQ senior officers. The committee is scheduled to hold its first meeting in July 2024.

To best suit the differing needs of the Services, FRS and RFS moved to four region models on 3 June 2024.

The RFS regions include Northern, Central, South Western and South Eastern, with the Service to receive an enhancement of an additional 114 positions committed by government.

The FRS regions include Northern, Central, Southern and Greater Brisbane. FRS will receive an additional 143 firefighter positions, providing for an additional 500 firefighter positions over six years from 1 July 2020 (including the 2020 Government Commitment for an additional 357 firefighters).

Regional Fire Communications Centres continue to provide coverage across the state and moved to central coordination in conjunction with the establishment of State Operations arrangements in June 2024.

To ensure services are well supported, on 3 June 2024, regional corporate support was enhanced by the establishment of an additional Corporate Services Hub on the Sunshine Coast. Corporate Services Hubs provide services in the areas of: human resources, finance, asset services, workplace health and safety, community engagement and mental health. Commencing in August 2024, Information and Technology services will also be provided from the hubs. These hubs are regionally located in eight locations including Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Kedron, Beenleigh, Charlton and the Sunshine Coast.

Information regarding the divisions and functions that left QFES as a result of the reforms during the reporting period is provided under Machinery-of-government changes (pages 10–11). The reform process and transition to the QFD involved significant consultation activities such as departmental townhalls with question and answer sessions; regional visits; executive briefings (in person and online); reference group and working group meetings; feedback and sentiment surveys; change impact assessments; ‘closing the loop’ communication; and one-on-one meetings with personnel directly impacted. Stakeholder engagement was also undertaken with industrial bodies, associations and the Local Government Association of Queensland.

Information was also available through the department’s website and staff intranet, the Queensland Government information website (www.forgov.qld.gov.au), regular email updates and announcements, newsletters and magazines.

In preparation for the transition, the future QFD Senior Leadership Team (formerly the QFES Executive Leadership Team (ELT)) held a QFD induction from 18 to 21 June 2024. This induction enabled all the executive leaders to unite on the common mission, focus on the approach for leadership and culture, and spend time on service-specific deep dives to ensure a seamless transition and strong interoperability. The executive leaders developed a Leadership Charter describing who they are and how they operate. The Leadership Charter outlines the behaviours and commitments identified as the most important to position the QFD Senior Leadership Team to operate efficiently and effectively and most importantly in an inclusive and respectful way to achieve its objectives and ensure accountability.

Further, in early July 2024, the QFD will conduct a QFD Foundations Forum with two forums to be held over two-days. The forums aim to provide staff, volunteers, emerging leaders and stakeholders with information about the vision and purpose of QFD, its strategic direction and priorities.

Machinery-of-government changes

During 2023–24, there was a change of ministerial responsibilities. The Honourable Nikki Boyd MP was appointed the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services on 18 December 2023.

As at 30 June 2024 and relevant to QFES, the responsibilities of the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services include:

- ✦ Fire and rescue services
- ✦ Rural fire services.

The following table outlines the divisions and functions that left QFES during the reporting period as a result of the Emergency Services Reforms, including machinery-of-government changes, and the related annual reports where the non-financial performance information and financial statements are published for 2023–24.

Left the department	Date of transfer	Receiving agency	Related annual report #
State Emergency Service	3 June 2024	QPS	QPS – non-financial performance information QFES – financial statements
Disaster management functions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Functions with staff included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ disaster management training ✦ Regional Emergency Management Coordinator ✦ State Disaster Coordination Centre Watch Desk ✦ Emergency Management Exercise Coordination ✦ Emergency Management Planning 	30 October 2023	QPS	QPS – non-financial performance information QPS – financial statements QFES – financial statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Functions without staff included*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ disaster management policy, coordination and support 	30 June 2024	QPS	QPS – non-financial performance information QPS - financial statements QFES – financial statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Functions without staff included*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ community engagement and education activities ✦ communications campaigns ✦ hazard and risk (non-hazard specific to QFD) 	30 June 2024	QRA	QRA – non-financial performance information QRA – financial statements QFES – financial statements
Service level agreements			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Management of service level agreements with Surf Life Saving Queensland, Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc. and the Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association for the Emergency Services Cadets Program 	1 October 2023	QPS	QPS – non-financial performance information QPS – financial statements QFES – financial statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Management of service level agreements with the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland 	1 July 2023	QPS	QPS – non-financial performance information QPS – financial statements
Campaign management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Responsibility for the management of the <i>If It's Flooded, Forget It</i> campaign 	1 August 2023	QRA	QRA – non-financial performance information QRA – financial statements QFES – financial statements

* Includes functions that are non-hazard specific to QFD. The QFD will remain focussed on responsibilities as the hazard lead for bushfire, structure fire and chemical/hazardous material incidents.

Where a function transferred from QFES during the financial year, actual expenditure and/or explanatory disclosures are included in the financial statements of both the transferring and receiving department.

The QFD will retain hazard specific disaster management functions including:

- ✦ state operations
- ✦ incident management capability
- ✦ intelligence and predictive services
- ✦ sustainable development functions.

For further information refer to Emergency Services Reforms on pages 9–10.

Outlook

The strategic plan reflects the department's future focus. The department's strategic plan is updated annually and provides the vision, purpose and objectives, as well as the strategies the department will implement to achieve them and the performance indicators to measure how well their outcomes achieved the department's objectives.

The inaugural QFD strategic plan—*Queensland Fire Department Strategic Plan 2024-28*—is available at www.fire.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-06/QFD-Strategic-Plan.pdf

The QFD's purpose is:

To pre-empt, prevent, mitigate and manage the consequences of fires and other emergencies on Queensland communities.

The QFD's vision is:

Working together to create safer communities through contemporary fire and emergency services.

Key **priorities** for QFD during 2024–25 include:

- ✦ embed implementation of the new QFD to ensure there is an ongoing and specific focus on fire service delivery and support the reformed Queensland disaster management arrangements so that the government is best positioned to meet challenges that Queensland faces due to climate change; increases in the regularity and intensity of natural events such as bushfire; and the changing face of communities and community expectations
- ✦ continue to maintain a responsive QFR delivering state-of-the-art response, rescue, scientific and specialist capabilities to Queensland communities
- ✦ continue to focus on reducing bushfire risk through year-round planning and conducting of mitigation activities through Operation Sesbania; improving community safety awareness and knowledge in relation to bushfire safety and prevention; and increasing the skills and experience of RFSQ volunteers
- ✦ continue to promote the home fire safety message highlighting the importance of fire escape plans; the roll out of smoke alarm legislation milestones; the Fire Ed program delivered to year one students to develop an understanding of the dangers of fire and the appropriate response; and the Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) initiative designed to support parents and guardians educate children to remain safe from fire
- ✦ promote Bushfire Safety through an enhanced campaign program to continue to educate Queenslanders on how to prepare their property and family for bushfire
- ✦ continue to ensure information and communication technology (ICT) supports and enhances frontline service and operational capabilities and minimise risk to ICT assets disrupting response to Queensland communities.

Key **opportunities** for QFD are:

- ✦ development of the staff and volunteer workforce's capability, adaptivity, and interoperability could lead to enhanced skills and knowledge, and a more contemporary and safer workplace
- ✦ leveraging research, innovation and technological solutions to existing and new problems could result in more effective service delivery, lower emissions and a safer work environment for our staff and volunteers
- ✦ communities that are developing greater capability and shared responsibility for safety through prevention and preparedness initiatives we deliver and support, reduces the impacts of emergencies and disasters on the community and the emergency and disaster management sector.

Key **risks** for QFD are:

- ✦ a changing climate may lead to an increased demand on QFD, greater exposure to risk for our staff and volunteers and reduced ability to deliver our services
- ✦ failure to adapt the QFD service delivery model due to the increasing complexity and scope of the operating environment and changes in demographics and community needs may result in greater risk to our staff and volunteers and a reduced ability to service communities
- ✦ damage or loss to QFD's digital and information systems, caused by unauthorised or inappropriate access, use, or disclosure, may impact QFD's ability to respond to emergencies in a timely manner.

Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of frontline services contributing to the strength of the department and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience. The department is one of the largest volunteer organisations in the state with approximately 27,500 dedicated volunteers in the RFS, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Auxiliary Support Officers and Peer Support Officers (PSOs).

As Queensland is one of the most disaster-prone states in Australia, communities rely on volunteers to deliver frontline operations and support before, during and after an emergency.

Rural Fire Service

The RFS provides services and support to its volunteers with regional offices, district offices and area offices throughout the state ensuring operations are coordinated and managed within the region.

Volunteer rural fire brigades provide fire management services, external structural firefighting and road crash rescue for rural and semi-rural communities and some urban fringe areas across the state. In addition to responding to fires in their local area and surrounding areas in support of other brigades and emergency services, volunteer brigades undertake a range of planning, preparation and response and recovery activities to ensure communities are well prepared for the bushfire season. This includes community education and hazard reduction and mitigation activities to reduce the risk from fire to people and property. Volunteer Community Educators also play a key role in their local community promoting and delivering safety and bushfire preparedness education packages.

The Permit to Light Fire system, which ensures the controlled use of fire across the state, is also largely implemented by volunteer fire wardens.

Volunteer brigades are often called upon to assist other emergency service agencies during disasters such as floods and storms and may be deployed to assist other states during fire disasters.

As at 30 June 2024, there are 1,408 rural fire brigades and 2,282 Fire Warden Districts across the state, supported by approximately 27,200 RFS volunteers.

Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network

The Research and Scientific Branch within FRS consists of a core of permanent staff and a network of volunteers who respond to fire and hazardous materials incidents across Queensland. The Volunteer Scientific Officer network is a critical component of the branch's expert operational response and advice service. The network includes chemists and chemical engineers who provide prompt, at-the-scene responses to emergency incidents involving chemical hazards. These specialists are drawn from private industry, local governments and tertiary educational institutions across Queensland.

During 2023–24, the branch responded to a range of incidents including chemical reactions and spillages; gas and vapor cloud releases; clandestine drug and home-made explosives laboratories (in support of the QPS); incidents involving radioactive substances; and fires involving hazardous materials including lithium-ion batteries. These incidents ranged in circumstances from domestic situations and transport settings, through to large scale industrial chemical emergencies. The branch contributes to the safe resolution of approximately 800 incidents per year with up to 10 per cent of these requiring the activation of regional volunteers.

As at 30 June 2024, there are 52 scientific volunteers including 46 regional-based Volunteer Scientific Officers and six Queensland Health Brisbane-based Scientific Support Officers.

AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team

The AUS-1 DART includes the Queensland Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team. This is a multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary USAR team made up of full-time and volunteer members, including firefighters, paramedics, hazardous materials specialists and communications operators and the volunteer network, who respond to natural and human-induced disasters across Queensland, Australia and internationally. The volunteer network within this team is a critical component comprising doctors, engineers and canine handlers. These specialists come from private industry, local governments and tertiary institutions across Queensland.

As at 30 June 2024, the AUS-1 DART has 21 volunteers including doctors, engineers and canine teams (including handlers and canines).

Auxiliary Support Officers

Auxiliary Support Officers are volunteers who provide non-operational support and assist with a range of duties depending on their skills, knowledge and abilities. Auxiliary Support Officers may assist with a range of duties including community education and messaging activities, maintenance and repair of station facilities, training activities, and administration and recordkeeping.

As at 30 June 2024, there are 32 Auxiliary Support Officers.

Peer Support Officers

The department is committed to providing a broad range of support options for its members and their immediate family to promote mental health and wellbeing. The Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN) is responsible for coordinating the delivery of peer support and counselling services.

The Peer Support Program consists of PSOs from various roles, ranks and positions across the state. PSOs are selected and trained to support colleagues who may be experiencing work or personal difficulties. By virtue of a common working environment and shared experiences, they are equipped to provide early intervention, social support, understanding, practical assistance and links to professional services if necessary. PSOs are involved in supporting members following exposure to critical incidents, as well as providing informal individual support and delivering education sessions to promote mental health and wellbeing.

As at 30 June 2024, there are 177 active PSOs.

Structure

As at 30 June 2024, QFES comprises the:

- ✦ Office of the Commissioner
- ✦ Fire and Rescue Service
- ✦ Rural Fire Service
- ✦ State Operations Directorate
- ✦ Strategy and Corporate Services Division.

The **Office of the Commissioner** provides support and advice to the Commissioner and broader ELT to enable decision-making and ensure achievement of service delivery and strategic objectives. The office also ensures coordinated, timely advice and communications to the Commissioner and Minister's office on a range of executive government functions. The office is a liaison point on behalf of the department with a variety of stakeholders and other government departments.

The **Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)** provides fire prevention, preparedness and response services to fire in the built and landscape environments, as well as scientific and specialist rescue capabilities to Queensland communities. FRS provides a multi-hazard response which includes structural fires, road crash rescue, bushfires, hazardous materials, technical rescue including vertical and swiftwater/floodwater rescue, and disaster assistance response, and provides a number of functions supporting community safety outcomes.

The FRS workforce includes senior officers, station officers, firefighters (permanent and auxiliary), specialist scientific officers and corporate support staff. FRS is also supported by volunteers in the areas of scientific, USAR and auxiliary support.

The FRS is led by a Deputy Commissioner who is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and control of the Service which consists of one directorate—State Capability—and four regions.

- ✦ The **State Capability Directorate** is led by an Assistant Commissioner who is focused on the strategic development and overall enhancement of capability for the FRS to enable specialist technical capabilities for operations and community safety.

The directorate plays a key role as the interface between FRS, the broader department and external stakeholders while also driving the long-term planning for FRS. The directorate also supports operations within Queensland, interstate and internationally with the wide-ranging specialist capabilities from building compliance, international deployment of USAR teams and chemical emergency management to forensic investigation.

The directorate consists of six branches including Capability Development and Sustainability; Training and Development; Engagement and Coordination; Specialist and Technical Response; Community Safety and Resilience; and Scientific:

- ✦ The **Capability Development and Sustainability Branch** builds and sustains the FRS capability and organisational interface on innovation, processes and standards.

The branch is responsible for the development and maintenance of FRS doctrine, coordinating FRS input into departmental policy and standards, managing FRS strategic planning and inputting into processes, and evolving the FRS service delivery model.

Work in the branch also includes coordinating service level inputs into asset and procurement services, leading FRS innovation, strategic intelligence and planning, managing rostering coordination, and specific talent acquisition including firefighter, station officer and senior officer recruitment and workforce planning.

- ✦ The **Training and Development Branch** builds FRS capability through providing a learning environment that delivers effective and efficient professional development across the Service.

The branch is responsible for the development, design and implementation of firefighter and station officer core skills development, including curriculum development, firefighter development, officer development (including auxiliary), senior officer development, auxiliary firefighter development, tactical firefighter training, development of materials and competency maintenance standards, tools, assistance and advice.

- The **Engagement and Coordination Branch** builds and sustains the FRS capability through leading operational and business planning, operational engagement and operational support.

The branch is responsible for supporting operational planning, service delivery assurance, deployment of operational outputs from state capability into regions and divisions, and providing centralised coordination of FRS response to major events.

Responsibilities also include capturing opportunities for improvement including lessons learnt, providing advice and practical deployment support for exercising and enabling implementation of an integrated service delivery model with continued engagement with the regions and stakeholders.

- The **Specialist and Technical Response Branch** develops operational capability across the key technical domains within the Technical Rescue and Transportation Rescue capabilities.

The branch is responsible for maintaining and operating the State Deployment Centre and developing USAR competency, coordinating complex technical rescue training programs, and transportation rescue response, while also leading hazardous materials management in the Service and providing subject matter expert input to state standards, direction and policy for technical rescue, hazardous materials and safety equipment.

- The **Community Safety and Resilience Branch** builds operational capability and expertise in community safety and resilience through influencing government policy and industry standards and providing expert advice.

The branch is responsible for providing subject matter expertise and input into state standards; and direction and policy for community fire safety, compliance, investigation and enforcement including identification of new and emerging risks for key stakeholders on fire safety matters.

Work in the branch includes providing fire engineering advice and compliance for major infrastructure and major deployments, building fire safety, regulatory fire compliance and fire alarm management, while also supporting post-fire incident investigations and the provision of advice for major events and community education to elevate fire safety.

- The **Scientific Branch** builds operational capability and provides expert technical and scientific advice to support research and the development of policies, programs and activities.

The branch is also responsible for providing expert input to manage and advise on emergencies (primarily chemical hazards), strategic planning for current and emerging Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) threats, providing CBRNE advice and review for global agencies and the operationalisation of research outcomes.

The branch delivers CBRNE training to internal and external stakeholders, reviews industry emergency plans to provide intelligence and key environmental scanning input, and provides hazardous materials policy and legislative advice on industry standards.

The **four FRS regions** are focused on the management and delivery of capability for the FRS. Each of the four regions is led by an Assistant Commissioner whose primary role is to maintain a strategic overview of regional service capability and capacity which enables a combination of specialist services and operational response, tailored to the unique requirements of the Queensland communities they serve. The Assistant Commissioner leads the planning and delivery of FRS services and has full responsibility and delegated accountability for all operational and financial management aspects of the region.

A typical high-level structure within a region consists of two divisions, with each division further segregated into two zones to support an effective span of control. Responsibility is further delegated to areas which can comprise of a combination of station types, including 24 hours, seven-day stations; seven-day stations with auxiliaries; day work stations and auxiliaries; and auxiliary only stations. Each division also has an operational capability command which is responsible for community safety, professional development and operations management, and business support.

The **Rural Fire Service (RFS)** is a community-based, volunteer emergency service and the lead service for the control and prevention of bush and grass fire in Queensland. The RFS operates in rural, semi-rural and urban fringe areas providing bush and grass fire prevention, mitigation and response capabilities and community engagement services, and assistance during other emergencies and disasters and in some instances road crash rescue.

The RFS is led by a Chief Officer who is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and control of the Service which consists of one directorate—Strategic Capability—and four regions.

✦ The **Strategic Capability Directorate** is led by a Deputy Chief Officer to provide strong strategic foundations to empower staff and volunteers, and support brigades in delivering exceptional fire and emergency services to the community through hands-on training, resources and regional collaboration.

The directorate is responsible for strategic planning, with input from volunteers, to ensure that business initiatives are aligned with on-the-ground needs; coordinating and maintaining strategic frameworks; leading service-wide operational oversight and response planning; leading involvement of volunteers in innovation, research, and development initiatives to ensure practical, field-tested outcomes; managing strategic financial and business systems; coordinating data and reporting; and leading business process improvements.

The directorate also leads the development of the organisational mitigation strategy framework, engagements and partnerships, and coordinates data and systems management to support the framework; prioritises asset planning and investment based on the requirements of the brigades to ensure readiness and effectiveness; leads development of the organisational volunteering strategic framework; and coordinates development and implementation of priority initiatives across QFES, with a focus on RFS.

The directorate consists of four branches including Training and Capability; Business Support; Bushfire Resilience and Operational Support; and Volunteering and Culture:

- The **Training and Capability Branch** facilitates a dynamic volunteer and staff development framework, providing hands-on training and access to innovative resources, tailored to empower staff and volunteers with skills and knowledge required for service delivery excellence.
- The **Business Support Branch** drives business performance and provides governance that supports the administrative needs of volunteers, offering technical services and resources that streamline brigade operations.

- The **Bushfire Resilience and Operational Support Branch** coordinates fleet and equipment to enhance regional operations, while leading bushfire mitigation and land use resilience activities to enhance community safety.
- The **Volunteering and Culture Branch** fosters a vibrant volunteer culture with streamlined pathways for engagement, offering support that enhances the volunteer experience and acknowledges the critical role of brigades.

The **four RFS regions** are each supported by a Deputy Chief Officer. The regions coordinate and support districts, focusing on staff support and development. The regions translate organisational strategy into actionable business strategy, serve as escalation points for operational issues, and foster collaboration with partner organisations. The four regional offices are responsible for implementing strategic plans, allocating resources and enhancing emergency response capabilities.

The functions of the RFS regions include:

- ✦ **Regional Operations:** strengthen emergency preparedness and response by supporting volunteer coordination, enhancing risk management strategies, and fostering strong relationships with external groups.
- ✦ **Specialist Capability Coordination:** coordinate advanced capabilities such as remote firefighting and air operations, focusing on equipping volunteers with the necessary tools and information for maximum operational effectiveness.
- ✦ **Planning and Performance:** guide organisational improvement with a focus on staff training and development, while refining business processes to support brigade and service efficiency and effectiveness.
- ✦ **Bushfire Regulatory Compliance:** lead regulatory compliance and investigation programs, empowering brigades with support to resolve bushfire compliance issues.
- ✦ **Finance:** provide financial oversight geared towards optimising resources for volunteer brigades, ensuring budget allocations directly support frontline needs and enhance rural fire brigade needs and focus on reducing administrative burden on volunteers.

The **State Operations Directorate**, established in June 2024, provides a diverse range of shared organisational capabilities and specialist functions across FRS, RFS, Fire Communications and corporate services. State Operations enhances cooperation and collaboration across the department's operations, with a particular focus on how FRS, RFS, Fire Communications and corporate services come together before, during and after an emergency.

The State Operations Directorate incorporates four branches under the Assistant Commissioner's Office: FRS Specialist Services; RFS Specialist Services; State Fire Communications; and State Intelligence, Predictions and Planning.

With the needs of the Services at the forefront, the directorate utilises a collaborative way of working to lead and support prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR) activities through maintaining and enhancing common capabilities. In turn, it drives consistency and mitigates risk for the department through setting standards, policy and processes for interoperability within and beyond the department.

- ✦ The **FRS Specialist Services Branch** incorporates Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Operations and Incident Management Capability. It also has oversight of the State Fire Control Centre.
- ✦ The **RFS Specialist Services Branch** incorporates Public Information and Warnings; Air Operations; and Incident Management Capability.
- ✦ The **State Fire Communications Branch** provides centralised reporting for all Fire Communications business units and Fire Communications Centres across the state including Communications Training and Development; Specialist Operational Services; and the seven Fire Communication Centres located throughout the state.

- ✦ The **State Intelligence, Predictions and Planning Branch** enables the department to strengthen community resilience through the analysis of hazards that lead to an evidence-based identification of risk upon which intelligence and planning is undertaken. The branch is also the central point of coordination for disaster management readiness as well as the department's response to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Prior to June 2024, the former Emergency Management and Community Capability Directorate consisted of the Office of the Assistant Commissioner; Community Capability and Volunteerism Branch; Community Resilience and Risk Mitigation Branch; and State Operational Coordination Branch. In March 2024, the Community Capability and Volunteerism Branch transitioned to the Assurance, Communications and Engagement Directorate, and a number of functions moved to RFS.

The **Strategy and Corporate Services Division** is responsible for leading the department's integrated framework and vision and driving performance and strategic capability across the department.

The division works closely with the department's portfolio partners to ensure the planning, policy and capability of its people, services and equipment are at their optimum in readiness for service delivery to the communities of Queensland.

The division comprises Finance, Procurement and Levy; Strategy; Assurance, Communications and Engagement; Asset Services; Information and Technology; and People and Culture Directorates.

- ✦ The **Finance, Procurement and Levy Directorate** includes Finance Services and Levy, and Procurement Services.

The directorate provides a range of financial services including budget preparation, financial reporting, financial systems administration and training, and financial risk management and compliance. The directorate also monitors local government administration of the Emergency Management Levy to ensure compliance with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*. The directorate also leads the department's procurement and travel functions and is responsible for procurement governance, strategic sourcing, and contract administration and support.

- ✦ The **Strategy Directorate** includes Organisational Capability Doctrine and Lessons; Strategic Policy; First Nations Strategy and Partnerships; Legislation; Strategic Intelligence and Planning; and Cabinet, Executive and Ministerial Services.

The directorate leads the planning and delivery of executive, ministerial and corporate services across the department as well as supporting the Minister's Office. The directorate maintains strategic partnerships with service delivery providers and contributes to the department's strategic direction, planning and compliance functions, and capability development and review.

In late 2023, the First Nations Strategy and Partnerships Branch was established. The branch will guide the department's engagement in First Nations policy development, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives embedded into the design, delivery and evaluation of policy, programs and services, and review the department's obligations under the Queensland Government's Path to Treaty journey.

- ✦ The **Assurance, Communications and Engagement Directorate** (previously known as the Assurance Directorate) includes Media, Communications and Online; Strategic Content, Community Engagement and Partnerships (formerly Strategic Content Services); Legal Services including Right to Information and Privacy; and Governance and Reporting.

The directorate is responsible for ensuring the department has a contemporary governance framework, and delivers vital operational support capabilities to enhance the department's operational and corporate reputation. The directorate also ensures the department's obligations are met in terms of whole-of-government and legislated reporting requirements.

In March 2024, the Community Capability and Volunteerism Branch, including the Partnerships and Sponsorships Unit and the Community Engagement Unit, joined Strategic Content Services to form Strategic Content, Community Engagement and Partnerships.

- ✦ The **People and Culture Directorate** (previously known as QFES People) includes Health Safety and Psychological Services; Strategy and Services; Relations and Standards; Industrial Relations; Academy and Learning Services; and Organisational Development.

The directorate supports and improves the end-to-end workforce experience by providing strategic and value-added people-focused programs and services. The directorate spans the entire workforce lifecycle including attraction, recruitment, training and support with specific focus on workforce safety and wellbeing, conduct, culture and professional development.

- ✦ The **Information and Technology Directorate** includes Portfolio Governance, Strategy and Architecture; Service Management and Operations; Enterprise IT Solutions and Services; and Frontline IT Solutions and Services. The directorate supports operations and organisational capability through the facilitation, development and management of technological solutions and initiatives that help solve ICT business problems. This includes the provision of advice, analysis and governance for ICT projects, programs and portfolio management frameworks, and oversight of the ICT functions delivered by the Frontline and Digital Division of QPS.

✦ The **Asset Services Directorate** comprises the Building and Property Management Branch and the Fleet and Logistics Branch. The directorate is responsible for managing the delivery of the department's capital investment programs for built infrastructure and fleet.

The Building and Property Management Branch is responsible for managing all property interests including land and built assets for the department,

FRS and RFS, and the facilities management of key assets. The Fleet Unit provides oversight of the department's fleet-related matters notably the fleet delivery, fleet leasing and fleet maintenance programs. The Uniform and Logistics Unit is responsible for the provision of uniforms, personal protective equipment and equipment to the department's workforce.

Internal Audit is a key component of the department's corporate governance. It provides independent assurance that the department's policies, operations, systems and procedures meet appropriate standards of effectiveness, efficiency, propriety, regulatory requirements and good business practice, while adequately recognising and managing risk and complying with internal policies. Internal Audit supports the department in achieving its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes.

The Head of Internal Audit is directly accountable to the Commissioner for the efficient and effective operation of the Internal Audit function. The Head of Internal Audit also reports regularly to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC) based on Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines Improving Accountability and Performance October 2023*.

Our locations

Across Queensland, the department delivers its services from:

- ✦ four FRS regional offices and eight divisional offices
- ✦ 244 FRS stations
- ✦ four RFS regional offices, eight district offices and 25 area offices
- ✦ 1,408 volunteer-based rural fire brigades including 523 which have a station or shed
- ✦ seven Fire Communication Centres—located at Brisbane, Cairns, Kawana, Rockhampton, Southport, Toowoomba and Townsville. The Fire Communication Centres have their own service delivery areas that in some cases will cover multiple FRS and RFS boundaries
- ✦ Special Operations Centre located at Cannon Hill, Brisbane
- ✦ four Regional Fire Control Centres located at Townsville, Toowoomba (Charlton), Maryborough and Brisbane
- ✦ State Deployment Centre located at Morningside, Brisbane
- ✦ eight regional Corporate Services Hubs.

In addition, the Emergency Services Complex in Brisbane's northern suburbs houses emergency services including the state fire and emergency services functions, including the Office of the Commissioner, FRS, RFS, State Operations, State Fire Control Centre, and Strategy and Corporate Services.

Regional maps for FRS and RFS are provided on pages 23–24.

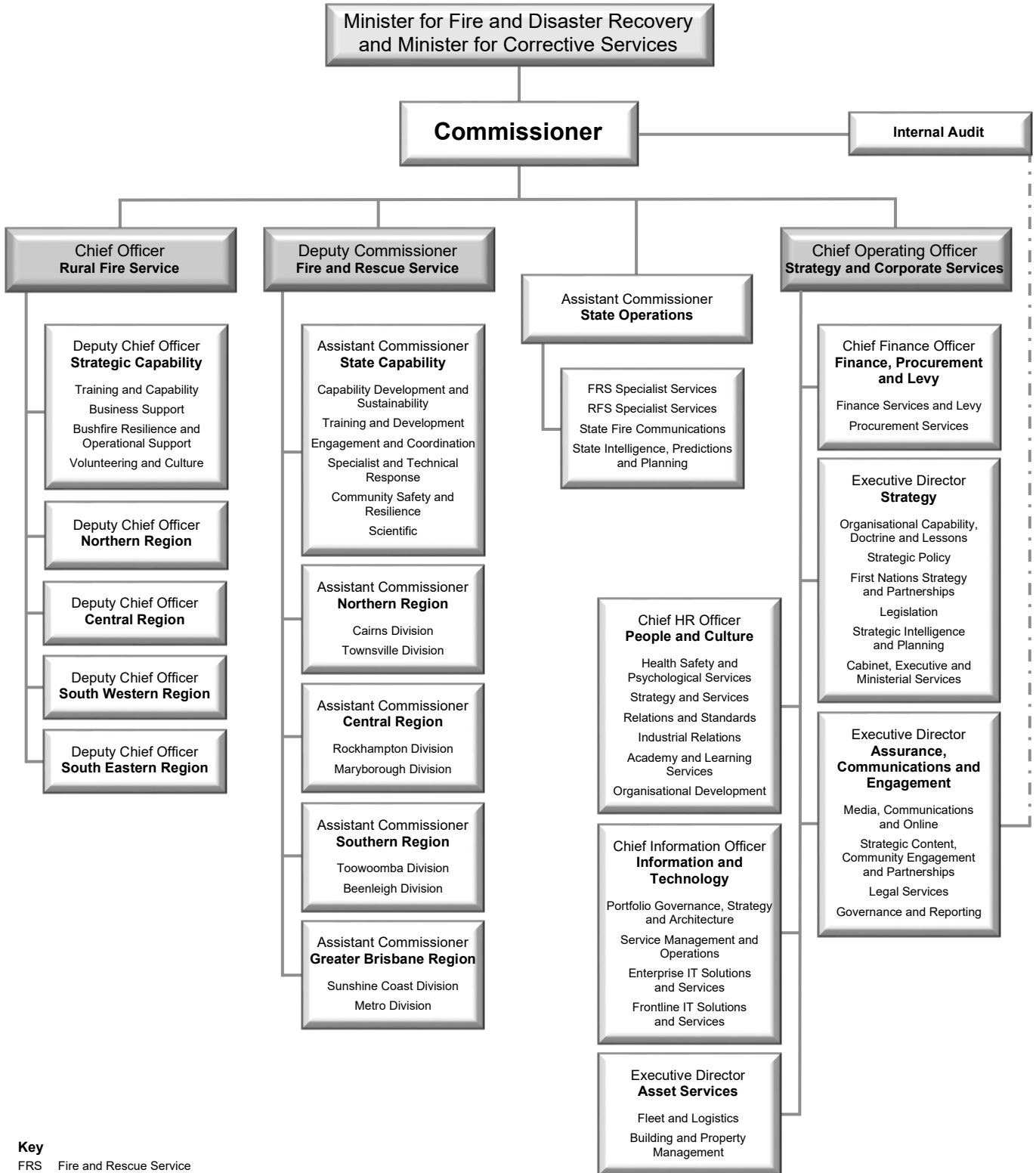
Frontline staff and volunteers are trained throughout the state in various education and training campuses including the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training (SFEST) located at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA) at Whyte Island (Port of Brisbane) and the Northern Region Training and Operations Support Complex in Townsville.

Key locations including contact details are available at www.fire.qld.gov.au/about-us/contact-us

Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2024

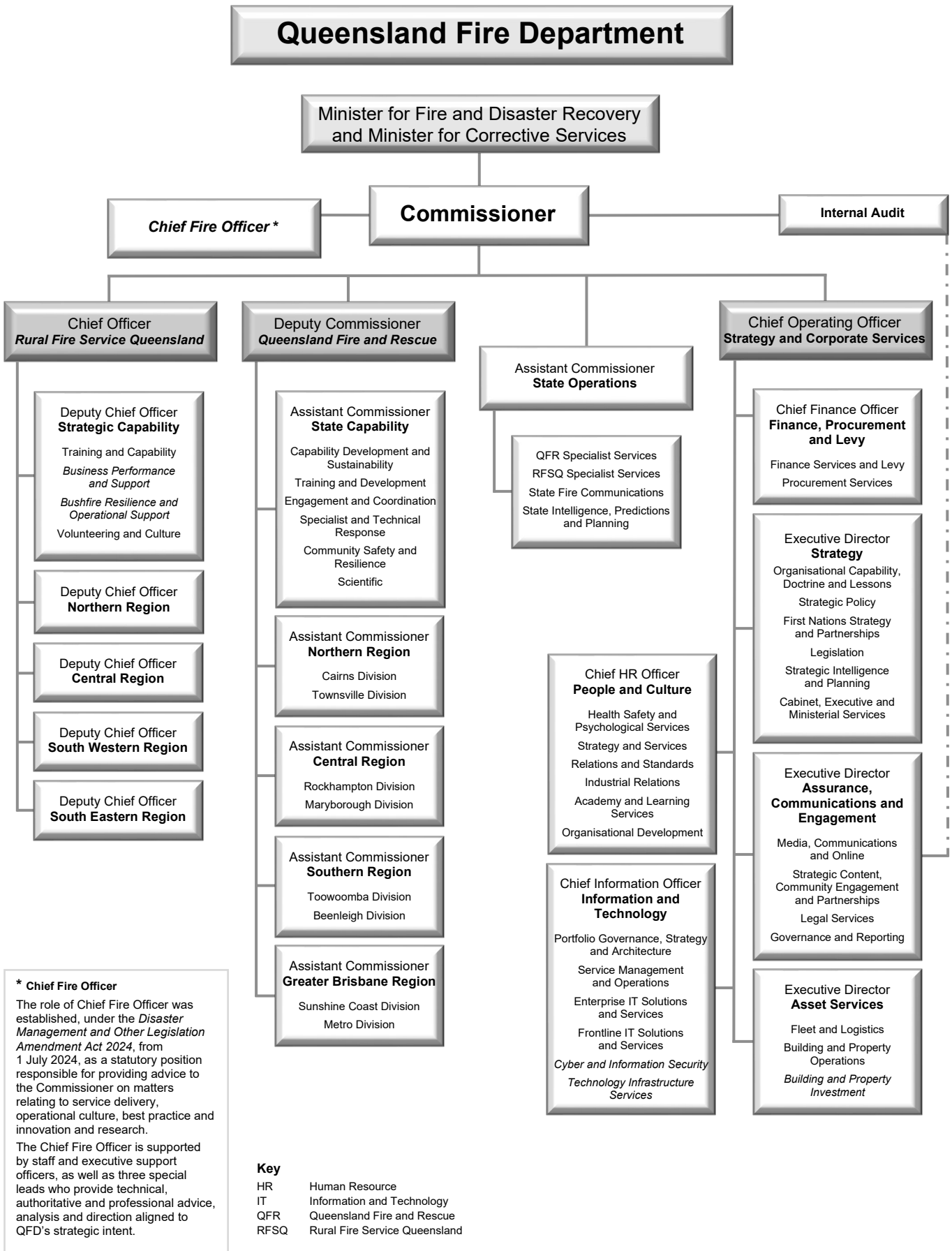
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services



Key
 FRS Fire and Rescue Service
 HR Human Resource
 IT Information and Technology
 RFS Rural Fire Service

Organisational structure (cont'd)

As at 1 July 2024
Italics - changes from 30 June 2024



*** Chief Fire Officer**

The role of Chief Fire Officer was established, under the *Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024*, from 1 July 2024, as a statutory position responsible for providing advice to the Commissioner on matters relating to service delivery, operational culture, best practice and innovation and research.

The Chief Fire Officer is supported by staff and executive support officers, as well as three special leads who provide technical, authoritative and professional advice, analysis and direction aligned to QFD's strategic intent.

Key

HR Human Resource
 IT Information and Technology
 QFR Queensland Fire and Rescue
 RFSQ Rural Fire Service Queensland

Regions – Fire and Rescue Service

As at 30 June 2024



	State Total	Northern	Central	Southern	Greater Brisbane
Regional offices	4	1	1	1	1
Divisional offices	8	2	2	2	2
Fire and rescue stations	244	55	60	73	56
Queensland population *	5,528,292				

* Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Catalogue No. 3101.0, National, state and territory population December 2023, published June 2024

Regions – Rural Fire Service

As at 30 June 2024



	State Total	Northern	Central	South Western	South Eastern
Regional offices	4	1	1	1	1
District offices	8	2	2	2	2
Area offices	25	8	7	5	5
Rural fire brigades	1,408	408	510	340	150
Queensland population *	5,528,292				

* Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Catalogue No. 3101.0, National, state and territory population December 2023, published June 2024

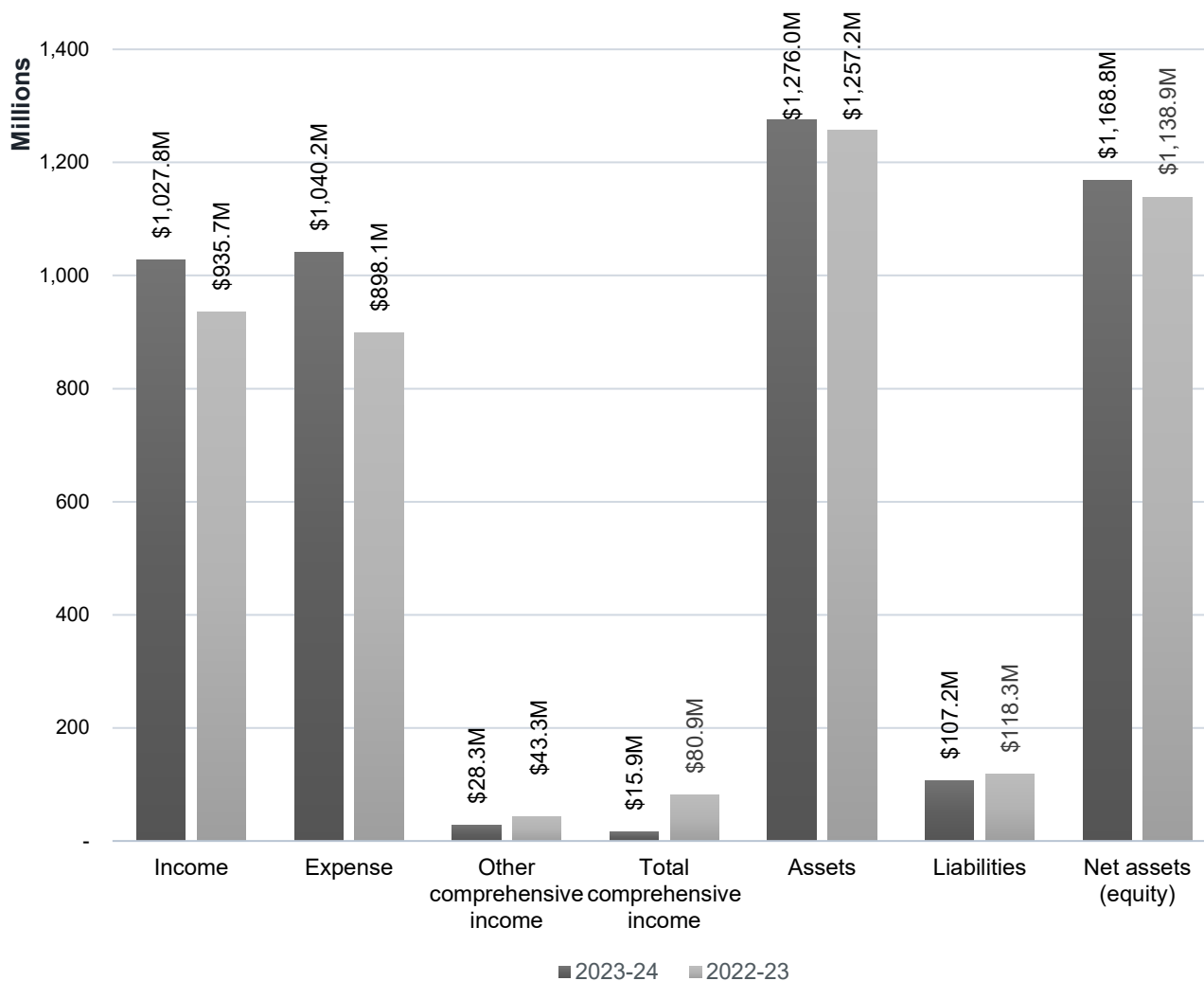
Financial summary

Summary of financial performance

The following table summarises the operating result and financial position for QFES 2023–24 and 2022–23. In accordance with the *Queensland Treasury Financial Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*, the 2023–24 financial figures include functions up to the date of transition, with the disaster management function (with staff) transferred to the QPS effective 30 October 2023 and the SES transferred to the QPS effective 1 July 2024.

Statement of comprehensive income	2023–24 \$'000	2022–23 \$'000
Total income from continuing operations	1,027,832	935,673
Total expenses from continuing operations	1,040,241	898,072
Other comprehensive income	28,340	43,311
Total comprehensive income	15,931	80,912
Statement of financial position	2023–24 \$'000	2022–23 \$'000
Total assets	1,275,963	1,257,185
Total liabilities	107,205	118,304
Net assets (equity)	1,168,758	1,138,881

The operating result and financial position are represented below:



Income and expenses from continuing operations

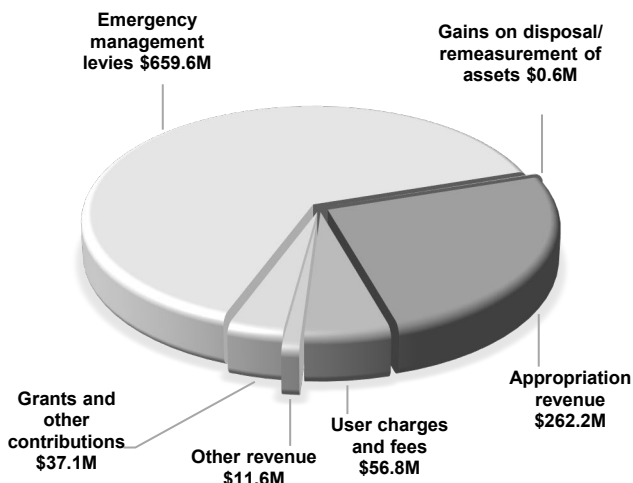
QFES is funded to deliver a wide range of fire and emergency management and recovery services through the Emergency Management Levy paid by prescribed property owners across the state.

QFES also receives income from other revenue sources including user fees and charges from building and infrastructure fire safety and alarm monitoring services, charges for attendance at incidents, parliamentary appropriations, and Australian government grants and contributions.

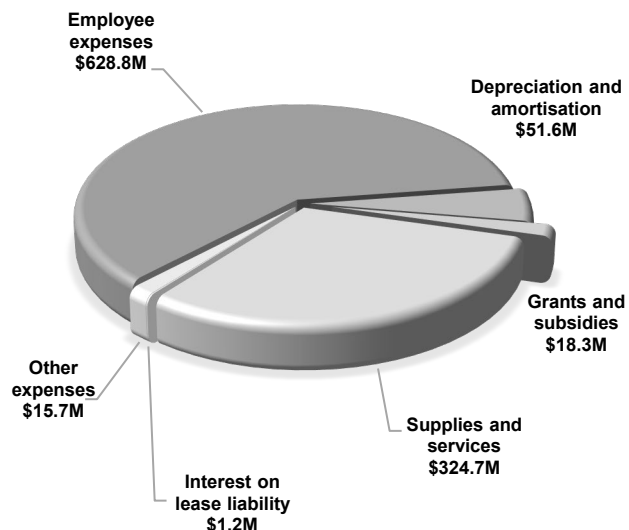
QFES aims to protect persons, property and the environment through the delivery of emergency services, awareness programs, response capability and capacity, and incident response and recovery for a safer Queensland. The expenses incurred in the delivery of these services are summarised further on page 27.

For 2023-24, QFES received income from continuing operations totalling \$1,027.8 million and incurred total expenditure from continuing operations of \$1,040.2 million. This comprises:

Income



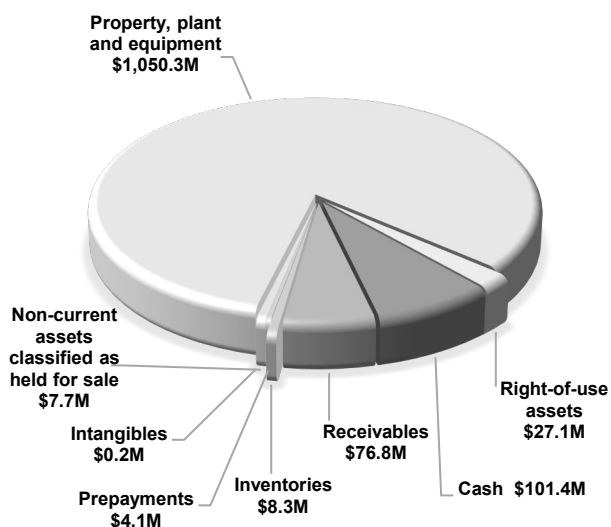
Expenses



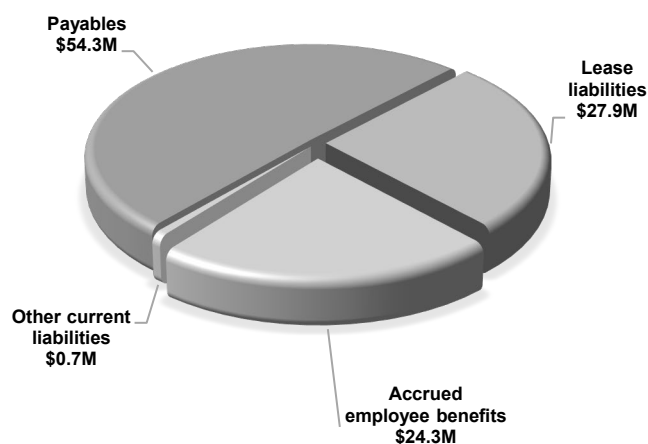
Summary of financial position

QFES was in a positive financial position at the end of the financial year. The total equity (assets less liabilities) of QFES at the end of 2023–24 was \$1,168.8 million. The financial position predominately comprises:

Assets



Liabilities



Performance

Key performance measures

The service area objective is to enhance community safety by minimising the impact of fire, emergency events and disasters on the people, property, environment and economy of Queensland.

The service area aligns with the department's objectives outlined in the strategic plan and supports the Queensland Government's objectives for the community (refer page 7).

The table below provides an overview of the key performance measures for QFES for 2023–24.

Service area: Fire and Emergency Services							
Performance measures	Notes	2023–24 SDS	Strategic plan	RoGS	2022–23 Actual	2023–24 Target/ Estimate	2023–24 Actual
Rate of accidental residential structure fires reported (per 100,000 households)	1, 2, 3	✓		✓	48.0	<60	46.0
Response times to structure fires including call taking time:	3, 4, 5	✓		✓			
• 50 th percentile	6				8.2 minutes	<7.8 minutes	8.4 minutes
• 90 th percentile	7				12.5 minutes	<14 minutes	12.7 minutes
Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin	3, 4, 8	✓		✓	80.6%	≥80%	79.7%
Estimated percentage of households with smoke alarm/detector installed	9	✓			98.5%	95%	97.6%
Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	10	✓			52.9%	50%	55.5%
Rate of Unwanted Alarm Activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment	11	✓			2.3	<4	2.4
Engagement levels of Rural Fire Service volunteers	12	✓			82%	80%	85%
Fire and Emergency Services expenditure per person	13	✓			\$177	\$179	\$199
Percentage increase in the number of clients who identify that they have had a positive interaction with QFES	14		✓		No change	> 0 percentage points	- 5 percentage points
Maintain percentage of total QFES expenditure within QFES' total operating budget tolerances	15		✓		108%	100%	113%
Percentage increase in our Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys of our people, who recognise a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery	16		✓		-	≥ 0 percentage points	0 percentage points

Service area: Fire and Emergency Services (cont'd)

Performance measures	Notes	2023–24 SDS	Strategic plan	RoGS	2022–23 Actual	2023–24 Target/ Estimate	2023–24 Actual
Percentage increase in the number of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community	17		✓		- 9 percentage points	≥ 0 percentage points	- 2 percentage points
Percentage increase in the number of communities who recognise and understand their local risks	18		✓		- 3 percentage points	≥ 0 percentage points	- 2 percentage points
Number of mitigation activities completed within Operation Sesbania	19				1,042	-	1,291
Percentage increase in community engagement across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	20		✓		3%	5%	21%

Key

- Not available/not applicable

RoGS: Report on Government Services

SDS: Service Delivery Statement

Strategic plan: *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2022–26 Reviewed / Updated 2023*

Notes:

- Accidental residential structure fires are those fires in a residential structure that are not deliberately lit and with effective educational programs can be reduced or prevented from occurring. Household data is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Household and Family Projections, Australia*, catalogue no. 3236.0, released 28 June 2024.
- A residential property is one in which sleeping accommodation is provided for normal living purposes, for example family dwelling, units, flats and apartments.
- Structure fires are fires in housing and other buildings.
- Only incidents occurring within the Levy District Boundaries (Class A-D) are included. Excluded are non-emergency calls and those where the department experienced delays due to extreme weather conditions or where the initial response was by another agency or brigade. Only primary exposure incidents are included. The location of incidents in relation to the levy district boundary is identified using the latitude and longitude of where the incident occurred or originated from.
- Response times are measured from either alarm time or the point at which the incident is verified as requiring QFES attendance, to the time in which the first responding vehicle arrives at the scene. Response times can be affected by population growth, road congestion, driver behaviour (distraction and inattention to emergency responder), high density urban residential designs, competing demand and weather.
- This measure reports the time within which 50 per cent of the first responding fire appliances arrive at the scene of a structure fire.
- This measure reports the time within which 90 per cent of the first responding fire appliances arrive at the scene of a structure fire. QFES has a long-established service delivery model for responding to 90 per cent of structure fires within 14 minutes.
- Only structure fires where the confinement has been determined are included in the calculations.
- This measure provides an indication of the effectiveness of smoke alarm legislation and awareness raising campaigns represented by the percentage of households with smoke alarms installed. Results are derived from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey and published on the department's and Queensland Government's Open Data websites.
- This measure reports the percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant with building fire safety regulations (*Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, Building Act 1975 and Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*) and fire safety procedures on first inspection.
- This measure indicates the effectiveness of QFES strategies to help reduce the number of unwanted alarm activations. This measure compares the number of system initiated false alarms responded to by departmental fire personnel with the number of connected alarm signalling equipment devices per annum. Unwanted alarm activations are defined as any activation of the fire alarm and detection system that could have been avoided. The *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* (section 104DA) provides a legislated target of no more than four unwanted alarm activations per alarm signalling equipment per annum.

12. This 2023–24 SDS measure has been amended from ‘Engagement levels for volunteers from the Rural Fire Service’ to align with the 2024–25 SDS measure. There is no change to the counting methodology. This measure also replaces the strategic plan measure ‘Percentage increase in volunteers who are satisfied with the experience of volunteering for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services’. The annual QFES Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) survey, based on the Queensland Government Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey, was amended in 2022 and the questions relating to the general satisfaction measures were removed. Data for this measure is sourced from the VfQ survey. The measure is calculated from the results for three questions: ‘I am proud to tell others I volunteer for my organisation’, ‘I would recommend my service as a great place to volunteer’ and ‘I feel strong personal attachment to my organisation’. For each question, a result is calculated from the number of respondents selecting ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ divided by the number of respondents to the question. The overall engagement measure is the average of the results for the three questions.
13. This measure reports the fire and emergency services’ expenditure divided by the estimated population of Queensland. Population data is based on the Queensland Treasury population estimates. This measure is a proxy measure for efficiency, reported in line with the RoGS methodology. Expenditure includes QFES operating expenditure plus a calculated user cost of capital for property, plant and equipment assets excluding land assets. The variance between the 2023–24 Actual and the 2023–24 Target/Estimate is mainly due to the continuing recruitment of additional firefighters to fulfil the 2020 Government Commitment to provide an additional 357 FTE firefighter positions over five years commencing 2020–21 and operational response for bushfire and severe weather disaster events during 2023–24. The 2022–23 Actual is above the 2022–23 Target/Estimate of \$166 mainly due to onboarding of additional firefighting staff, and additional funding for the RFS, SES and enterprise bargaining outcomes.
14. Data is sourced from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey. Values calculated for 2023–24, 2022–23 and 2021–22 were 78 per cent, 83 per cent and 83 per cent respectively. During 2023–24, warnings and alerts was the most received service, although fewer people indicated they received warnings and alerts, or education and community safety checks compared to 2022–23. Warnings and alerts service delivery is a function of severe weather events, with the 2022 South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding event likely prominent in the memories of respondents and influencing the 2022–23 value, and the severe flooding and cyclone event in Far North Queensland (associated with Tropical Cyclone Jasper) occurring after data was collected for 2023–24. This measure includes service satisfaction related to services provided by SES and disaster management which transitioned to QPS on 3 June 2024 after the data collection period.
15. This measure reports QFES actual operating expenditure as a percentage of the operating budget. The 2023–24 Actual of 113 per cent is above the Target/Estimate of 100 per cent with additional income received in 2023–24 and further income to be received in 2024–25 which offsets the overspend. The overspend relates to additional funding for the RFS and SES, as well as operational response for bushfire and severe weather disaster events during 2023–24. The 2022–23 Actual of 108 per cent was above the Target/Estimate of 100 per cent with additional expenditure wholly funded by additional income received during the financial year, which mainly related to additional funding for the RFS, SES, and marine rescue, and enterprise bargaining outcomes.
16. The WfQ and VfQ surveys were amended in 2022 with ‘safety’ assessed under a new sub scale, subsequently changing the methodology for this measure. The percentage of respondents who recognised a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery in 2022–23, based on the revised methodology was 74 per cent which set the target for the calculation of this measure into the future. The value calculated for 2023–24 was 74 per cent, which achieved the target of ‘no change’ from 74 per cent. Data includes SES staff and volunteers and disaster management staff that transitioned to QPS on 3 June 2024 after the surveys were conducted.
17. The Actuals are determined from the percentage of exercises that QFES participated in that involved QFES partner organisations and the community (a multi-agency exercise). The 2023–24 result was 81 per cent, the 2022–23 result was 83 per cent, and in 2021–22 it was 92 per cent. The decrease in 2022–23 and 2023–24 from 2021–22 may be attributed to a number of targeted internal exercises run across QFES service streams which subsequently did not require the involvement of partnership organisations and the community; and in 2023–24, the transition of disaster management functions and SES to QPS.
18. Results are derived from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey. The Actuals are determined from the percentage of communities who recognise and understand their local risks. The percentage of communities who recognise and understand their local risks in 2023–24 is 45 per cent, 2022–23 was 47 per cent, in 2021–22 was 50 per cent.
19. This measure replaces the strategic plan measure ‘Percentage of high-risk bushfire communities where mitigation strategies have been undertaken by QFES’. Operation Sesbania is a three-year rolling program which enables bushfire mitigation activities to be conducted year-round across Queensland, safely and in line with fuel and weather conditions. On 2 May 2022, the Operation Sesbania Dashboard went live and 2022–23 was the first full year of its operation. The mitigation activities completed within Operation Sesbania include activities reported to QFES by its partners and activities reported by rural fire brigades through survey 123 Apps which are recorded in the Operation Sesbania Dashboard.

20. This measure is calculated based on core community engagement activities delivered through the programs of FFF; Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP); and Safehome. For each discrete program, the per cent change was calculated and the three change values were averaged to yield an overall change value. Significant increases in demand for the delivery of FFF and Safehome impacted the 2023–24 Actual. The 2022–23 Actual has been revised in line with the counting methodology.



Our performance

This section reports on the objectives and strategies of the QFES strategic plan 2022–2026 (reviewed/updated 2023) and is a sample of the department’s performance highlights from 2023–24. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.

Machinery-of-government changes occurred during the reporting period with the transition of functions to the QPS and the QRA (refer pages 10–11 for further information).

Objective

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

Strategies

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

Volunteerism Strategy

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

QFES has approximately 27,500 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers and PSOs.

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

The department has identified a new approach to a strategy that supports volunteerism, ensuring alignment with volunteer services and implementation of industry best practice. The development of a strategy is underway and will directly align with the QFD's strategic plan and subsequent annual service stream action plans.

During the reporting period, in support of the department's volunteers, QFES:

- ✦ delivered a Supportive Employer campaign and resources to support volunteers' request for leave from their employment to meet their volunteer commitment to the emergency services
- ✦ featured Volunteer Spotlight stories on the department's website celebrating volunteers
- ✦ delivered a wellbeing digital program to support resilience and positive mental health of volunteers
- ✦ established a social media platform to interact with volunteers highlighting and celebrating their contributions to the department

- ✦ progressed development of a digital solution known as the Volunteer Onboarding Improvement Project as part of the Volunteer Onboarding Project. The Volunteer Onboarding Project aims to achieve shorter timeframes for onboarding completion for volunteers in each of the services (FRS and RFS) and increase consistency and reliability in onboarding systems and processes
- ✦ continued to support delivery of the Emergency Service Volunteer Pin launched in 2019.

Aerial firefighting capability

The QFES State Air Operations provides support to ground crews during bushfire and other emergency events through the provision of safe aircraft, trained personnel and relevant aviation resources.

Queensland has access to over 150 call-when-needed aircraft (planes and helicopters) and National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) contracted aircraft capable of performing water-bombing, airborne coordination, line scanning or intelligence gathering functions in support of ground crews during bushfires and other emergency events.

The department will use aircraft through these commercial providers during bushfires and other emergency events to assist with transport of rescue crews and cargo, and resupply within affected communities.

RPAS (drones) are also extensively used during these types of events as well as more broadly in search incidents and in support of investigations. The RPAS have demonstrated a solid intelligence gathering capability that is increasingly being applied by the department.

In 2023–24, the Queensland Government committed \$17.58 million over three years to enhance the aerial firefighting capability with additional contracted aircraft services coordinated through NAFC.

The uplift saw the inclusion of amphibious scooping, fixed wing bombing capability (called a Fireboss) and a dedicated video imagery relaying helicopter that has been historically engaged through call-when-needed ad hoc arrangements. The Fireboss aircraft has national and international recognition as a very capable suppressant delivery aircraft and the inclusion of two into the contracted services fleet enables a further reaching capability, that was used significantly in North and North Western Queensland.

During Queensland's bushfire season, a Large Air Tanker (LAT) and lead plane is based at Bundaberg due to the coverage area for an hour's flying time of a typical LAT. Coverage includes from the New South Wales (NSW) border to Proserpine, and West to Tambo, allowing for support to the majority of Queensland communities.

The Queensland contracted LAT service is for 84 days starting September each year, with the possibility of extension dependant on seasonal conditions and fire activity at the time. On completion of the service delivery contract, the LAT is transferred to Victoria during its bushfire season and remains in Victoria between seasons, as part of a co-sharing arrangement.

The LAT is a strategic asset equipped to deliver 10,000 litres of fire retardant or firefighting gel to reinforce fire break activities and protect structural or economic assets during bushfire seasons.

The 2023–24 bushfire season, which ran from 1 August 2023 to 1 February 2024, saw a significant increase in aircraft activity from August to mid-December 2023, the main timeframe of the NAFC contracted fleet. The bulk of over 8,000 hours flown by aircraft during bushfire season operations was equally spread between contracted aircraft and call-when-needed assets predominantly in RFS South Western Region but with distribution across all regions. The LAT conducted many operational responses delivering over 660,000 litres of both retardant and gel suppressant during the 2023 contracted period which was extended to mid-December 2023. The remaining contracted services were also extended into January 2024 to ensure sufficient coverage was available to the state.

Operational Advisory Group Review

Following the tragic Slacks Creek incident in May 2023, the FRS established the Operational Advisory Group (OAG) to conduct a high-level review and assessment of FRS' structural firefighting capability. The focus of the review and assessment was on areas of improvement within the structural firefighting capability which would enhance the performance and safety of firefighters.

The OAG released its High-Level Assessment Report (the report) on 23 October 2023 which identified areas for review and improvement covering eight key themes:

1. Operations strategy, structure and culture
2. Incident command and control
3. Building construction, fire behaviour and suppression
4. Breathing apparatus (BA) safety team operations
5. BA operations
6. BA team/firefighter self-rescue
7. Fireground radio communications
8. Incident debriefing and lessons management.

Following the report's release, the OAG commenced development of the Structural Firefighting Action Plan (the action plan) which outlines how FRS will implement the report's recommendations in a staged approach. The action plan was released on 10 May 2024 and provides clear objectives, actions, timeframes and responsibilities for each recommendation. It also describes how FRS will monitor and report on progress and outcomes.

FRS has identified implementation of the action plan as a key priority program requiring immediate, significant effort – known as the Enhanced Firefighter Safety Program (the program). The 2024–25 budget provides additional funding of \$5 million for the purchase of priority fire safety equipment such as thermal imaging cameras and rapid intervention team kits.

The program will be active for an extended period to implement all actions within the action plan and to ensure improvements are embedded within firefighting operational capabilities, with the goal of supporting operational excellence in structural firefighting. The program aims to enhance the performance and safety of FRS's structural firefighting capability and is designed to ensure that the Service is prepared and equipped for structural firefighting now and into the future.

Incident Management Concept of Operations

The Incident Management Concept of Operations (CONOPS) was launched on 3 June 2024 and outlines the arrangements for command, control and coordination within the new QFD and will be utilised by all Services within the department where more than one of its operational Services are providing or supporting a response to a significant incident and disaster events. The CONOPS provides the principles and foundations that will assist in achieving common understanding of all fundamental terms related to incident management and provides a model to achieve interoperability.

The CONOPS came into effect upon initiation of the four region models, which saw an amendment to the command and control arrangements to accommodate the structural changes surrounding the future QFD's service centric model. The arrangements enable appropriate preparedness and response for significant incidents and disaster events to communities and ensures interoperability between the department's Services and capabilities, and partner agencies across QDMA.

The State Fire Control Centre (formerly known as the State Operations Centre) will continue to be led by the State Fire Controller (formerly State Commander) who is the Commissioner's delegate for state-based oversight on a day-to-day basis. Service leads in each region (Assistant Commissioner, QFR and Deputy Chief Officer, RFSQ) will provide command through their Service structures until such time incident thresholds require combined regional capabilities to be utilised and oversight to be increased. Once this occurs, the appropriate hazard lead will assume the role of Regional Fire Controller, with the alternative regional Service lead assuming a supporting role. Both Services in the regions will be responsible for jointly managing the preparedness and operations of Regional Fire Control Centres (formerly Regional Operations Centres) and Incident Control Centres within regional footprints and the Regional Fire Controller will nominate the Regional Fire Control Centre from which they will operate upon activation.

National and international engagement—AUS-1 DART

QFES continues to develop and maintain an internationally recognised Disaster Assistance Response Capability through AUS-1 DART. This team is managed through FRS and is made up of full-time and volunteer members, including firefighters, paramedics, doctors, engineers, hazardous materials specialists, canine teams (including handlers and canines), and communications operators, to provide an internationally deployable disaster assistance team that is classified under the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) guidelines. The responsibility to maintain this capability is a shared initiative by QFES and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

QFES continued an arrangement with DFAT during 2023–24 for the availability of internationally deployable DART personnel and equipment if required for international deployment assistance. An annual grant of \$475,000 to QFES provides assistance for the development and maintenance of AUS-1 DART capability, along with international engagement activities. A new five year agreement was developed and signed in June 2024.

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

Major deployments

Deployments can be an opportunity to gain personal and professional development including learnings around incident management and resourcing systems, as they often involve an integration of the QFES workforce, including corporate staff, permanent and auxiliary firefighters, and volunteers, and resources. International deployments also provide an opportunity to share knowledge with emergency services professionals and dedicated USAR teams from around the globe.

QFES maintains the AUS-1 DART, which is the Queensland USAR Team, for immediate deployment to international disasters. This team is classified by the INSARAG under the oversight of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance.

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

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

On 28 May 2024, 11 firefighters and one Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) paramedic from AUS-1 DART deployed to Papua New Guinea to support the Papua New Guinea Government's response to the horrific landslide which hit the Enga Province on 24 May 2024. Enga is a remote highland province about 600 kilometres north-west of Port Moresby that is difficult to access. The landslide affected six villages in the Porgera-Paiela district of Enga, with the village of Yambali engulfed by six to eight metres of soil. The AUS-1 DART provided assistance to local responders with incident management, logistics, damage assessments, drone operations and mapping, and delivery of humanitarian relief supplies to the affected local community. The team returned to Australia on 6 June 2024.

During 2022–23, three separate deployments of QFES personnel travelled to Alberta, Canada (in May and June 2023) to assist with large wildfires—the most destructive fire season on record. The three deployments, known as Alpha, Bravo and Charlie, were for a nominal period of 40 days. The Alpha deployment (Incident Management Team) returned to Australia by 30 June 2023. The Bravo deployment (Incident Management Team) and the Charlie deployment (Arduous Firefighters and an Air Attack Supervisor) returned to Australia by 31 July 2023.

In addition, interstate and intrastate deployments occurred in response to severe weather season and bushfire season events, such as the deployment of three Air Operations personnel to Tasmania between 26 February and 8 March 2024 to assist with bushfire response.

Capital program

Significant capital works initiatives were delivered or progressed during 2023–24 including:

- ✦ **completion of the:**
 - ◆ new FRS permanent fire and rescue stations at:
 - Caloundra South
 - Moreton Bay Central
 - Mount Cotton Road
 - ◆ refurbished FRS auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
 - Allora
 - Imbil
 - ◆ upgraded FRS Emerald permanent and auxiliary fire and rescue station
 - ◆ refurbished FRS Roma Street Fire and Rescue Station
 - ◆ new RFS rural fire brigade stations at:
 - Kunwarara
 - Millaroo Dalbeg
 - Ogmore
- ✦ **commencing (includes planning) or continuing the:**
 - ◆ new FRS Greater Springfield permanent fire and rescue station
 - ◆ replacement FRS permanent and auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
 - Airlie Beach
 - Drayton
 - ◆ refurbished FRS auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
 - Boonah
 - Mitchell
 - ◆ replacement FRS Gympie South permanent fire and rescue station
 - ◆ new RFS Maryborough Brigade Headquarters Facility
 - ◆ new RFS Moore Linville and Mount Alford rural fire brigade stations
 - ◆ new Bamaga fire and emergency services complex.

In addition, the location for the new QFD headquarters was announced in February 2024. The new office at Albion in Brisbane will bring together more than 500 staff from offices in Kedron, Albion and Brisbane city. Work commenced to refurbish and upgrade the identified site into a contemporary 5-Star (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) green office with purpose-designed workspaces.

Consolidating the headquarters and three other office locations will deliver better value for money, provide room for growth and enable better collaboration between staff. The move will also ease the pressure on accommodation in Brisbane that has resulted from the uplift in staffing arising from implementation of outcomes from the Independent Review of QFES. The move to the new headquarters will occur in 2025 and the department will continue to have a presence at the Emergency Services Complex in Brisbane along with the QAS and QPS.

QFES completed three FRS Indigenous Projects that supported the *Queensland Government Building and Construction Training Policy*—Caloundra South, Moreton Bay Central and Mount Cotton Road Fire and Rescue Stations. The policy forms part of the State Government’s commitment to Closing the Gap and providing equal opportunities to First Nations people through skill development and employment opportunities in the construction sector. Working on the projects, contractors engage First Nations workers as apprentices, trainees or through other workforce training.

The department also continued the practice of recognising Traditional Owners on the naming plaques of newly constructed QFES facilities to recognise and increase knowledge and understanding of First Nations cultures, such as the new Caloundra South, Moreton Bay Central and Mount Cotton Road Fire and Rescue Stations.

Fleet management

During 2021–22, QFES implemented a multi-year approach to fleet procurement enabling the department to plan for, and the market to respond to, global and local supply and resource challenges.

The multi-year build program provides for the delivery of 147 RFS appliances (over two years commencing 2022–23) and 118 FRS appliances (over three years commencing 2022–23) bringing the total program to 265 appliances.

Although the department awarded contracts for the majority of the program prior to the commencement of 2022–23, suppliers experienced ongoing global and local supply and resource challenges which limited the planned deliveries in 2022–23.

Twenty RFS appliances were delivered in 2022–23 with an additional 20 delivered in 2023–24—of the remaining 107 RFS appliances, 77 are scheduled to be delivered in 2024–25 with 30 appliances carried over into 2025–26.

Six FRS appliances were delivered in 2022–23 with a further 25 delivered in 2023–24—of the remaining 87 FRS appliances, 45 are scheduled to be delivered in 2024–25, with 42 appliances carried over into 2025–26.

In addition to the multi-year build program (commenced 2022–23), a new three-year pipeline for 285 new and replacement RFS vehicles commenced in 2023–24 and the department is progressing a five-year build plan for QFR from 2025–26 which provides for an estimated 202 new and replacement appliances.

QFES continues to work proactively with suppliers and body build vendors to streamline program delivery and mitigate risks within their capacity to deliver the appliances.

QFES funded and delivered two additional RFS appliances above the existing fleet program valued at \$1.1 million in 2023–24. These builds were carried out in partnership with the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc. The additional appliances will enable staff and volunteers the opportunity to evaluate alternative fleet options as part of the department’s approach to long-term fleet planning and innovation.

The department continues to undertake research into fleet emissions reduction and decarbonisation strategies including alternative vehicle technologies and reduced carbon fuel options. This aligns with the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030* and will inform the identification of opportunities to consider lower carbon emission vehicles and fuel options where appropriate across the entire QFD fleet (pool cars, Emergency Response Vehicles and light, medium and heavy appliances for QFR and RFSQ).

QFES continued to introduce lower carbon emission vehicles into the department’s leased fleet, including a combination of hybrid and electric vehicles and continues to assess replacement options on a case-by-case basis.

Two new prime movers - an electric Volvo FMX prime mover and a Volvo FMX 6x4 prime mover – are scheduled to be delivered to QFD in early 2024–25. The prime movers, with the latest 13-litre Euro 6 technology, will be trialling fossil-fuel-free Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a drop-in diesel replacement—an Australian first. The 12-months trial will enable the department to measure the benefits of fully electric heavy vehicles and the application of alternative fuels such as HVO, with a view for further adoption across the wider fleet.

Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland Surveys

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

The annual surveys are a confidential forum enabling QFES to gain insight into its workforce and its performance as an employer in each division and region, and down to the work unit level to hear the views of the workforce, and for the results to be used as a key evidence base for decision-making at all levels in the department.

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

More than 2,400 staff and volunteers across the department (including SES staff and volunteers and disaster management staff) completed the surveys between 21 August and 17 September 2023.

The results from the 2023 workforce experience surveys demonstrate positive results with some areas for improvement.

Survey results continue to show that staff and volunteers have some of the sector's highest levels of pride in, and personal attachment to the department. Staff and volunteers also strongly believe that the department and their work have a positive impact on the lives of the people of Queensland.

At the workplace level, 96 per cent of QFES employee respondents understood what is expected of them in terms of workplace behaviour, as outlined in the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* (Code of Conduct), and 95 per cent understood the importance of behaving in a manner aligned to the department's values. Similarly, 94 per cent of volunteer respondents understood what is expected of them in terms of workplace behaviour and values alignment.

The surveys also highlighted some areas where the department needs to develop, including leadership, performance management and professional development.

A departmental action plan was developed to address the findings which identified areas of strength and areas for improvement. Following analysis of the survey results, the plan focuses on identified activities under three specific areas being: psychosocial safety, leadership and capability development. This is a change in approach to previous years where action plans were developed by each area and directorate. This will allow a targeted program of work, with the QFES ELT being accountable for delivery.

QFES' Climate Action Plan

In anticipation of a climate-challenged future and in line with the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030* (Queensland Climate Action Plan), the department continued to work to align its services with future needs and reduce its carbon footprint in 2023–24. The department's aim is to build resilience, manage risk, reduce emissions, and lead the emergency management sector's adaptation efforts in response to the challenges posed by a changing climate.

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

The department's action plan is available at www.fire.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-knowledge-centre/reports-plans-and-reviews

During the reporting period, the department:

- ✦ continued to enhance the year-round bushfire mitigation and preparedness program in response to more protracted bushfire seasons and often limited opportunities for hazard reduction burning
- ✦ published the *Queensland 2023 State Disaster Risk Report* following its review and updating as recommended in the *South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding February to March 2022 Review Report 1 2022–2023* (refer page 59). The report aims to enhance Queensland's understanding of disaster risk and provide information for all entities with disaster management responsibilities to support decision-making.

QFES is also continuing to explore emissions reduction with electric vehicles and alternative fuels while addressing fire safety concerns related to lithium-ion batteries and distributed energy.

Other key achievements include:

- ✦ continued activities which align with the principles of the **QFES Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2023–2028**, approved by Board of Management (BoM) on 20 September 2023. The strategy supports a fiscally responsible culture across the department. The strategy’s four pillars focus on: foundations of fiscal sustainability; sustainable business practices; investment planning; and a culture of financial capability and fiscal responsibility. Fiscal sustainability is an ongoing focus for the department and includes business-as-usual activities
- ✦ recruited 339 additional firefighters at 30 June 2024 under the 2020 Government Commitment to provide an **additional 357 frontline firefighters over five years** (commencing 2020–21), with 96 firefighters recruited in 2023–24 as planned. A further 18 firefighters will be recruited in 2024–25 delivering on this commitment. The additional firefighters will enhance crewing numbers in some existing locations and provide the additional resources to implement a new QFR Station Crewing Model to enable more contemporary crewing practices. The additional resourcing is also assisting with specialist operational roles including recruit instructors, firefighter development officers and live fire trainers at the SFEST. In addition, the department commenced planning for an additional 143 firefighter positions to be recruited by 30 June 2026. Recruitment of the additional 143 firefighters will commence in 2024–25 bringing the total commitment to 500 additional firefighters
- ✦ commenced 16 **Firefighter Recruit Courses** in 2023–24 resulting in 262 recruits commencing on course. Fifteen courses were held at the SFEST and one course was held at the Townsville campus
- ✦ continued to progress the **Capability functionality** across the department to support services and resource decision-making. Capability and its associated activities represent what the department does to deliver its services and legislative responsibilities to Queensland. A post-Disaster Management Reform evolution of the department’s Capabilities was completed in preparation for the 1 July 2024 commencement of the QFD. Further work progressed on a formal Capability Review and Investment Process that articulates three clear portfolios of investment.

The identified investment portfolios include ICT, business and operations, and building, fleet and capital. The process is influenced by the Fiscal Sustainability Strategy’s pillars and will operate using best practice in portfolio, program and project management to ensure the department has robust strategic oversight of its key programs of work

- ✦ continued to review **portfolio legislation** and progress legislative amendments to support the ongoing effectiveness of services delivered by the department (refer pages 9–10 for further information)
- ✦ provided extensive technical and operational advice in relation to the fire and life safety design of the **Cross River Rail project** to ensure that the station and tunnel designs will adequately facilitate safe and effective fire brigade intervention. This includes developing the emergency response capability and operational response procedures for the tunnels, in close consultation with key project stakeholders, including Queensland Rail (QR). QFR will oversee and execute all firefighting, technical rescue, heavy rescue, hazardous materials management and other necessary frontline emergency responses, and build on the existing interoperability between QR and FRS. In addition, a fire officer has been embedded into QR and the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority to assist in defining operational arrangements. This unique relationship represents an opportunity to develop an integrated interagency response system
- ✦ delivered a **transportable LPG flashover compartment fire behaviour training cell** making training more accessible for Queensland’s firefighters. The training cell was built using the expertise of FRS Live Fire instructors to be fit-for-purpose for their specialised training requirements. The cell allows firefighters to undertake compartment fire behaviour training including observing fire behaviour and analysing the effects of water application techniques. The first cells have been delivered to the SFEST Live Fire Campus in Brisbane and regionally to Townsville, where they will be used by recruits and experienced firefighters. The Townsville cell can be transported throughout the region to provide further training to permanent and auxiliary FRS firefighters. Three more cells will be delivered statewide by the end of 2024

- ✦ delivered 4,498 **firefighting helmets** to FRS regions for continued fitting and training of FRS firefighters as part of a staged process. The new firefighting helmets are fitted with handsfree communications to improve communication and safety for firefighters on the frontline. The helmet is paired with an audio device which allows hands-free communication and has noise cancelling capability, even while wearing BA. Dedicated training officers are based around the state
- ✦ upgraded the **Fire Communications training room** at SFEST with 12 communications consoles that replicate the functions of a communications centre, allowing students to translate theory into practical application of skills prior to their interactions with the community and operational staff in live emergency situations as Fire Communications Officers. The upgraded consoles include computer aided dispatch and radio equipment. Genesys telephony functionality will be included in the future. Upgraded audio visual displays provide improved visibility of instruction material and more interactive learning opportunities. An additional console gives instructors the ability to control multiple training displays and to initiate simulations as the recruits advance in their scenario-based training. Two recruit courses that commenced in February and May 2024 utilised the new facilities
- ✦ commenced an independent review of the department's **complaints management system** and associated processes. The review is expected to be completed by 31 August 2024 and will ensure best practice continues to be applied
- ✦ conducted four **corporate inductions** for approximately 150 new departmental staff from across the state. The inductions provide the opportunity for new staff to learn about the department, engage with senior leaders and make connections across the department. The two-day program includes a tour of the QFES State Fire Control Centre, Fire Communications and QPS State Disaster Coordination Centre. Presentations include topics such as Domestic and Family Violence (DFV), Code of Conduct, security, finance and procurement, development, and health and wellbeing
- ✦ conducted the first **QFES Senior Executive Support Officer conference** in Brisbane in April 2024. The conference brought together 30 executive officers, divisional liaison officers and staff officers from across the state with presentation topics including the Emergency Services Reforms, changes to governance arrangements and legislation, capability review and investment, and strategic planning and risk management. The conference provided an opportunity for staff to share information, resources and experiences
- ✦ continued to implement measures to proactively manage **Per- and Poly- Fluoro Alkyl Substances (PFAS)** issues associated with legacy use of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF). This includes human perfluorochemical testing, management of identified AFFF, appropriate environmental management of QFES sites and stakeholder engagement. The department is progressing PFAS investigations at six priority sites which are due for completion by December 2024. Further remedial works are expected to commence in 2025 at three of the six QFR stations. Funding of \$4 million is provided in 2024–25 for remediation works at Ayr Fire and Rescue Station associated with PFAS contamination, with further planning around the future of the site to be undertaken
- ✦ continued development of the **RPAS (drone) Capability** across the department. At 30 June 2024, there are 114 drones in service, with 123 operational pilots and nine authorised Senior Remote Pilots. The RPAS capability was used in departmental operations including bushfires, land search, mountain rescue searches, flood events, compliance and prosecution, fire investigation and damage assessments
- ✦ continued development of the **Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft (MSRC) Capability** with 430 trained swiftwater rescue technicians across Queensland that provide emergency response to affected communities in flood and swiftwater rescue incidents. All regions have the swiftwater rescue capability that is delivered from strategically located stations to provide regional and state level response. Of the 430 trained swiftwater rescue technicians, 131 are also trained in MSRC operations, providing an increased level of response capability to support community need. Queensland is the only state that provides this level of MSRC response to flood and swiftwater rescue incidents. There are 35 MSRC strategically located throughout Queensland to support operations
- ✦ continued participation with **fire safety research activities**, with various external stakeholders, aimed at increasing the department's knowledge and understanding of innovative and emerging building products, technologies and methods of construction. This included ongoing collaboration, and research and policy development relating to electric vehicles and battery energy storage systems, and fire safety principles

- ✦ engagement with **AFAC Research Groups** on topics such as Incidents Involving Electric Vehicles, Incidents Involving Photovoltaic Array and Battery Energy Storage Systems as well as Safety of Alternative and Renewable Energy Technology
- ✦ undertook further activities including attending webinars designed to enhance understanding of **new technologies** and consider the operational impacts and inform operational personnel. Webinars included Safe Design of Large-Scale Solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems, Fuel Cells – Preparing for Hydrogen Economy, and Fire Risks of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- ✦ continued the **Alternative Energy Systems Advisory Group**, established in 2022–23 within QFES, to generate an informed and coordinated whole-of-department position on matters relating to alternative energy systems
- ✦ provided expertise nationally and internationally to improve the preparation and response to **hazardous materials and chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incidents**. This included engagement with the CBRN Environments Science Technology and Research (STaR) Shot Community Advisory Group, Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee Technical Scientific Response Sub-Committee, and multi-national research projects addressing detection, destruction and decontamination of identified threat agents such as the decontamination and laundry effectiveness of personal protective equipment project led by QFES. These engagements improve QFES’ capability more broadly and globally across fire response agencies
- ✦ enhanced **fire investigation training** with a cohort of eight candidates from around the state beginning the nationally recognised qualification of Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Fire Investigation). The cohort will graduate in November 2024
- ✦ minimised firefighters’ **exposure to hazardous chemicals and contaminants during incidents** through initiatives implemented by the Firefighter Safety Working Group. These initiatives included integrating specialised firefighting appliances with the BA airline to shield operators from smoke exposure, as well as providing supplementary equipment and procedures to enhance decontamination, such as BA washing machines and additional BA backplates. The working group also focused on improving operational effectiveness by enhancing personal protective equipment, refining protocols, and establishing procedures for handling operational
- issues such as structural firefighting and incidents involving lithium-ion batteries
- ✦ established a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Collaboration Deed with the National Fire Authority of Fiji (NFA)** for the mutual sharing of information, technology, capacity, capability and resources, to advance management strategies to meet the challenges associated with Fiji’s fast-evolving construction, industrial, environmental and economic landscapes. Agreements such as these strengthen Queensland’s relationships in the Pacific region through the development of inter-service relationships with other emergency services organisations. As part of the relationship, the Deputy Commissioner, FRS is mentoring the NFA Deputy Fire Officer, while three NFA Divisional Fire Officers will be mentored by FRS Senior Officers
- ✦ maintained a **MoU with the Papua New Guinea Fire Service (PNGFS)** (commenced in 1992) to assist with development of capability and capacity in the PNGFS. The 2017 MoU expired in September 2022 and was reviewed and extended for a further five years on 23 August 2023. The renewal of the MoU will assist further development of capacity building initiatives in PNGFS to build on the success of previous activities such as the donation of five ex-service QFES fire appliances in 2020–21. The renewed MoU builds on and continues the long-standing partnership between the two fire services, improving community safety and emergency response in Papua New Guinea. During 2023–24, the 40 hour QFES Road Crash Rescue course was delivered to six PNGFS personnel to develop them as instructors in this capability. This training took place in Brisbane from 26 to 30 April 2024 and included the provision of the QFES Road Crash Rescue course material to PNGFS as a training base for further training in Papua New Guinea
- ✦ commenced the **German Interns Alumni Network**—a group of German fire and emergency services professionals who complete internships with FRS – creating a platform where past and present interns can connect, share experiences and learn from other interns bridging a gap between Germany and Australia enhancing capabilities and understanding of emergency services on a global scale
- ✦ continued to support **Fire and Emergency New Zealand** with the provision of expert advice for the safe management of hazardous materials

- ✦ continued to embed the **Queensland Protective Security Framework** and continued to progress the department's security risk assessment program, in line with the department's Strategic Security Plan, to ensure that the department adequately manages security risks. Assessments were undertaken at a number of the department's critical functions and assets with actions identified and/or addressed to increase the department's protective security. In addition, two foreign interference awareness packages were developed in consultation with the Department of Home Affairs, relating to foreign interference and espionage and the impact of foreign interference to the department's information and assets. The training packages are available to staff and volunteers on aXcelerate—the department's student management system. Security awareness training and information continued to be shared across the department and is available on the department's intranet site
- ✦ worked closely with the QPS Blue Card Team to transfer the **blue card management** function for approximately 5,000 SES staff and volunteers to the QPS following machinery-of-government changes. The planning and collaboration between departments facilitated a smooth transition maintaining the government's commitment to the safety of children and vulnerable individuals
- ✦ captured, designed and developed high quality **promotional materials** to support local auxiliary firefighter recruitment activities in the then QFES North Coast and Northern Regions and built local content creation capability through the construction of design templates for distribution across the state
- ✦ increased capability using body worn cameras and **live video broadcast solutions** enabling the livestreaming and transmission of high-value transmedia content from the field to support public information and intelligence functions
- ✦ established and developed the **Field Content Operator program** across the state through an official Expression of Interest to RFS volunteers. The selected volunteers were offered training in content creation and were given access to field content kits to capture and deliver high-value video and photograph content from the frontline, including from large scale events such as the Tara Bushfires in October 2023, for use in social and traditional media products, internal communications and training
- ✦ implemented a **cloud-based digital asset management system** called Content Depot to store, display and share high-value photograph, video and audio content. The system is available to stakeholders across QFES, QPS and the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management
- ✦ facilitated **livestreamed townhalls** to support the Emergency Services Reforms, enabling two-way communication between leadership and stakeholders across affected Services and regions
- ✦ continued a Service Agreement with the **Retired Firefighters Association of Queensland Inc.** (RFFAQ), a non-profit association that provides wellbeing and related services to retired firefighters. The department provides an in-kind contribution to the RFFAQ which supports the publication of its quarterly magazine *Afterburners*. The RFFAQ and QFES agreement provides retired QFES staff an avenue for social connectedness beyond their career with QFES.

Honouring our fallen

QFES pays tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Their passing is a stark reminder of the dangers first responders face every day while keeping the community safe.

On Firefighters Remembrance Day, at 10am on the 10th day of the 10th month, QFES members came together to remember and pay their respects to Queensland firefighters who lost their lives while on duty.

First Class Firefighter Izabella (Izzy) Nash was added to the QFES Honour Roll, after passing away due to injuries sustained while fighting a fire at Slacks Creek on 2 May 2023. There are now 60 names on the QFES Honour Roll.

Commemorative ceremonies were held around the state with a minute's silence observed and flags flown at half-mast.

The Commissioner accompanied Izzy's family to Canberra on 2 May 2024, the first anniversary of Izzy's passing, for the National Emergency Services Memorial in Canberra. Izzy's family was presented with an AFAC memorial medallion and Izzy's name was added to the National Emergency Services Memorial Wall.

In October 2023, QFES leaders met with Izzy's family and crewmates at the Acacia Ridge Fire and Rescue Station for an official appliance dedication and presentation of her National Medal which honours her service and unwavering devotion to duty. The station's appliance 510A is a permanent reminder that Izzy will always be with us. Izzy's life and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

On 4 November 2023, three people contracted by QFES to support the Queensland bushfire response were killed in a plane crash at Cloncurry. The crew members had close ties with Queensland, NSW and Victorian fire services and their tragic loss is deeply felt by all. The crew members were recognised with QFES Distinguished Service Medals and framed insignia for their demonstrated distinguished service and notable action to the Queensland community during the 2023 bushfire season.

QFES commemorated the 30th anniversary of the Southport Honda fire where two firefighters lost their lives. On 11 February 1994, when responding with Gold Coast crews, Sub-Station Officer Herbert (Herbie) Fennell and Firefighter Noel Watson paid the ultimate sacrifice. Every five years, staff on the Gold Coast hold a ceremony to honour the loss of these two brave men. In 2024, the FRS coordinated a memorial service at Cascade Gardens, next to the Surfers Paradise Fire and Rescue Station, with approximately 80 people in attendance. A memorial stone stands in the gardens, and memorial plaques are installed on the Southport Fire and Rescue Station and two of its trucks as a tribute to Herbert's and Noel's sacrifice.

25 February 2024 marked two years since the passing of SES volunteer Merryl Dray, who tragically died while responding to the 2022 Queensland floods. Merryl's memory will continue in the forefront of QFES' organisational history.

Celebrating our volunteers

QFES and the community recognise and celebrate the contribution of the approximately 27,500 volunteers that play an essential role in helping to build safer, more connected and resilient communities across the state.

QFES volunteers train year-round to prepare for any event and to support communities through the difficulties of response and recovery. Many volunteers work 'day jobs' as well as volunteering and the department also acknowledges the support of their employers who release volunteers in times of need.

QFES volunteers include RFS, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers and PSOs (refer pages 13–14).

During 2023–24, QFES celebrated:

- ✦ **National Volunteer Week** (20 to 26 May 2024)—an opportunity to recognise the diverse talents of volunteers. The theme of *Something for Everyone* highlights that no matter your background, interests, skills and abilities, there is a place for you to flourish in the world of volunteering
- ✦ **Peer Support Week** (11 to 17 March 2024)—to promote and recognise the valuable contributions of PSOs in supporting the mental wellbeing of QFES staff and their families. PSOs play a crucial role in practical and emotional support such as follow-up after critical incidents, providing information sessions on mental health, and assisting colleagues with work or personal challenges. During the week, the statewide QFES Olga Wilson PSO of the Year Award was presented to Tim Willis from the SES for his dedicated service in supporting QFES colleagues through a broad range of complex challenges
- ✦ **Yellow Ribbon Day** (12 September 2023)—a statewide celebration of RFS volunteers initiated by the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc. RFS volunteers provide a range of services from frontline firefighting to behind-the-scenes community education and support. Community members show their support by wearing a yellow ribbon or something yellow as a sign of support for, and acknowledgement of, the commitment and dedication of the RFS volunteer workforce

- ✦ **RFS Week 2023** (30 July 2023 to 5 August 2023)—activities were held across the state to recognise and acknowledge the dedication of RFS officers, staff and volunteers in helping keep Queensland communities safe while promoting RFS as an ideal volunteering opportunity. RFS Week was also an opportunity to formally recognise RFS volunteers who have demonstrated a special contribution to the service through the presentation of awards with seven recipients of the Regional Volunteer of the Year Award and six recipients of the Regional Young Volunteer of the Year Award. The State Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Benjamin Naday, First Officer of Tallebudgera Valley Rural Fire Brigade and the State Young Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Augustus (Gus) Grigg from the Brookfield Rural Fire Brigade. Planning is underway for **2024 RFS Week** to be held 28 July 2024 to 3 August 2024 recognising the dedication and commitment of RFSQ volunteers who give their time to help keep Queensland communities safe through a range of activities including community education, fighting fires, hazard mitigation, operational support, and managing the Permit to Light Fire system.

Information and Technology Directorate

The Information and Technology Directorate within QFES continued to stabilise and mature its internal ICT capability across strategy, project delivery, application management, information management and cyber security awareness.

ICT service delivery continued to be provided by the Frontline and Digital Division within QPS, however QFES has embedded robust planning, assurance, investment and governance activities related to QFES led projects and worked with Frontline and Digital Division to develop and deliver projects.

Significantly, this reporting period has seen the successful attainment of 10 independent assurance reviews of information technology projects affirming the projects' integrity and the optimal use of resources. The lessons gleaned from these reviews are fuelling continuous improvement efforts across the department.

- Key achievements during the reporting period include:
- ✦ completion of the annual review and update of the approved **ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap** to ensure technology remains relevant and appropriate to the department's needs
 - ✦ commenced automation of **ICT portfolio reporting and governance dashboards** enabling improved project oversight
 - ✦ integrated systems with the department's **Human Resource System** to provide real time information sharing and alleviate manual processing
 - ✦ identification of a solution for the replacement of the obsolete **Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) system** which will provide enhanced safety in the working environment. The new system is anticipated to be in place in 2025
 - ✦ delivered the **Frontline Activation Support Tool for Queensland (FAST Qld)** which revolutionises how personnel are notified and mobilised for incidents or events. This app has simplified processes, delivering real-time updates on RFS volunteer availability and response to events. At 30 June 2024, 53 rural fire brigades have been onboarded, with a further 118 rural fire brigades scheduled for onboarding throughout 2024–25
 - ✦ strengthened and matured the department's **Information Security Management System (ISMS)** with the appointment of a dedicated information security resource responsible for oversight of the ISMS
 - ✦ conducted exercise *Cyber Shield* to test, validate and document improvements to the department's **Cyber Management Response Plan**
 - ✦ participated in the **Queensland Government Cyber Security exercise Sky Scriber** to increase cyber security response across Queensland Government agencies
 - ✦ developed and deployed new **cyber security training and awareness packages** to all staff through aXcelerate—the department's student management system
 - ✦ continued the development of an action plan to strengthen the security posture to prevent a cyber-attack and data breach through the establishment of the **Personally Identifiable Information Project**
 - ✦ continued site visits in all QFES regions to maintain **engagement with frontline staff** about ICT issues and risks
 - ✦ **firmware upgrade** of over 5,500 handheld radios across Queensland to ensure continued safety of frontline staff
 - ✦ implemented changes in the **Community Safety Operations System** to support the *Fire Services Act 1990* effective 1 July 2024
 - ✦ replicated the organisational structure in the **Human Resource System** to align to the new QFD from 1 July 2024. This included manual validation of more than 3,000 records with further manual processing to be undertaken for rural fire brigades in 2024–25
 - ✦ commenced a pilot with a cohort of users within the department to develop use-cases for generative artificial intelligence tool, **QChat**
 - ✦ procured deployable **Starlink units** that will enhance voice (Teams) and data connectivity during significant operational events
 - ✦ go live of the **ExpenseMe Pro System** to replace a legacy system for corporate card administration.

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ICT Investment Plan

The ICT Investment Plan plays an important role in supporting and enabling operational and business requirements in the PPRR of fires, emergencies and disasters.

The investment process continued to significantly mature during the reporting period enabling the ongoing delivery of the five-year technology roadmap which aligns to the department's strategic direction and Queensland Government priorities.

The 2023–24 program of work, under the investment plan, had a budget of \$35 million and delivered an increase in capability for cyber security, stabilisation of the current Computer Aided Dispatch system, improved volunteer emergency dispatch, refresh of technology devices and internal business systems, and upgrades to communications infrastructure.

As at 30 June 2024, key initiatives underway include:

- ✦ Field Mobility for Emergency Services (FAST Qld)
- ✦ Fire Incident Management System
- ✦ Business Case for Computer Aided Dispatch and Station Alerting
- ✦ Alarm Signalling Equipment Replacement
- ✦ Personally Identifiable Information Project
- ✦ Nexus Continuous Improvement Project.

A total of 24 projects and initiatives were continued or stood up within the reporting period. These projects are multi-year projects with several expected to realise benefits during 2024–25.

Information and Technology Directorate Transition Project

Since the disestablishment of the former Public Safety Business Agency effective 1 July 2021, ICT services have largely been provided by Frontline and Digital Division within QPS on behalf of QFES, QAS and QPS.

The Information and Technology Directorate Transition Project was established in April 2022 to separate these functions from QPS and embed them into the individual agencies that consume the services (QFES, QAS and QPS). The QFES Information and Technology Directorate's ambition is to transition from a mostly traditional model heavily reliant on one service provider, to a more operations and business aligned, contemporary model. This includes:

- ✦ increasing the strategic value of information technology within the department
- ✦ aligning a future information technology operating model to the needs of the department's frontline and corporate services
- ✦ focusing information technology to be more customer centric for staff and volunteers
- ✦ greater interaction and partnership with the operations and business to deliver ICT outcomes
- ✦ assessing capability and capacity to deliver the ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap
- ✦ introducing agile practices and ways of working, focussing on delivering value earlier through iterations and regular feedback cycles.

Significant progress has been made towards the separation of these ICT functions to the individual agencies. People placement, agency hosting of services and integrated sequencing was agreed by the public safety agencies to deliver the transition outcomes in two tranches. The first tranche for those services not impacted by Triple Zero (000) functions will see completion by 31 August 2024 with the second tranche anticipated to transition in early 2025. Extensive consultation and communication were undertaken to ensure the transition is undertaken in a considered and supportive way for staff.

Rural Fire Service – Chief Officer priorities

The Chief Officer, RFS (Acting) set five initial priorities for the service in February 2024:

1. Recognising our volunteers and developing our people
2. Reform implementation and transition
3. Progressing key projects
4. Increasing collaboration and partnerships
5. Preparing for the 2024–25 bushfire season.

Key achievements in delivering these priorities include:

1. Recognising our volunteers and developing our people

- ◆ The Chief Officer (Acting) participated in an online townhall in February 2024 and addressed approximately 600 QFES staff and volunteers, including RFS staff and volunteers regarding the Emergency Services Reforms.
- ◆ The QFES ELT conducted 15 Regional Roadshows throughout April 2024 with large numbers of RFS volunteers and staff attending in person or online to further discuss the reforms.
- ◆ The Chief Officer (Acting) initiated two statewide online forums specifically for RFS volunteers to increase engagement across the state and understand and discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the RFS volunteer workforce. To ensure the forums provided the opportunity for maximum engagement they were conducted after hours to best meet the needs of the volunteer workforce.
- ◆ An online Future Directions Survey was conducted by RFS regarding the reforms and the establishment of the new RFSQ with over 370 volunteers responding. The responses in the survey were considered to ensure volunteer experiences are improved when shaping the RFSQ of the future.

2. Reform implementation and transition

- ◆ Direct face-to-face interactions between volunteers and RFS area offices increased through enhanced engagement involving over 8,000 RFS volunteers across the state between April and June 2024.
- ◆ The RFSQ Advisory Committee was established under new legislation commencing 1 July 2024 with membership including 10 volunteers from across Queensland to provide advice on matters relevant to rural fire brigades and volunteers including the administration and management of Queensland rural fire brigades.

3. Progressing key projects

- ◆ A frontline activation tool mobile phone application (known as FAST Qld) was implemented allowing RFS members to be notified and mobilised for incidents or events and to accept/attend depending on their availability. At 30 June 2024, 53 rural fire brigades have been onboarded, with a further 118 rural fire brigades scheduled for onboarding throughout 2024–25.
- ◆ Opened three new rural fire brigade stations at Ogmoo, Millaroo Dalbeg and Kunwarara.
- ◆ Delivered 20 new RFS appliances including:
 - one medium attack appliance
 - nine 7,000 litre tankers
 - eight 13,000 litre tankers
 - two heavy attack appliances.

4. Collaboration and partnerships

- ◆ Area Fire Management Groups established under the *Queensland Bushfire Plan* are made up of major landholders or land managers, government agencies (local, state and Australian), and community and industry groups. Area Fire Management Group meetings were held for 76 local government areas plus the Weipa Town Authority to discuss PPRR strategies to the effects of bushfire.

5. Preparing for the 2024–25 bushfire season

- ◆ 2024–25 Bushfire season—mitigation and preparedness: refer to pages 49–50.

2023–24 Bushfire season—Operation Melaleuca

QFES' response to the 2023–24 Queensland bushfire season was known as Operation Melaleuca with the key objective of minimising the impacts of bushfires on Queensland communities.

The Melaleuca is a group of native plants including the well-known paperbarks, which are generally well adapted and resilient to the impacts of fire. As such, the name reflects the department's mission of minimising the impacts and consequences of bushfires to Queensland communities during the bushfire season.

The 2023–24 bushfire season ran from 1 August 2023 to 1 February 2024.

Areas in Queensland's south east dried rapidly in September to December 2022 and during the first six months of 2023 leading to significant fires in the Darling Downs, Western Downs and some neighbouring areas, resulting in significant loss of structures as the season progressed.

For much of the rest of Queensland, the 2023–24 bushfire season commenced with a relatively low intensity due to the previous and continuing wet conditions under the influence of a declining La Niña climate driver.

The 2023–24 bushfire season was highly active from July 2023 to November 2023, however due to the increased rainfall received between December 2023 and February 2024, the bushfire risk was mitigated.

From 1 August 2023 to 30 April 2024, Queensland experienced over 7,500 bushfires, including over 100 significant bushfires. This resulted in nearly 30,000 responses from QFES ground crews to vegetation fires across the state, with almost 3.29 million hectares burnt.

Between 1 August 2023 and 1 February 2024, 72 houses had been destroyed across the state.

Throughout the 2023–24 bushfire season, the LAT and aerial firefighting fleet were utilised effectively. From 1 August 2023, the QFES aerial fleet conducted over 22,000 drops, totalling 40.5 million litres of suppressant and fire retardant, in their efforts to keep Queenslanders safe. Due to the forecasted weather conditions, QFES extended the contracted aircraft fleet into January 2024.

2024–25 Bushfire season—mitigation and preparedness

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

Coordination and interoperability between these partners are guided by the *Queensland Bushfire Plan*. The plan, developed in 2020, covers all phases of PPRR. It is a sub-plan of the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan* which connects bushfire management with QDMA, including various related groups and committees.

A specific Interagency Protocol for Fire Management between QFES and the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) to guide and support interoperability between the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) within DESI and QFES was revised and renewed in February 2024. The protocol clarifies how the agencies will work together in joint Incident Management Teams, how bushfire incidents can transfer from one agency to the other as they escalate and/or decrease, and how specialist capabilities such as air operations can be utilised effectively across the agencies.

On 15 January 2022, QFES and its partners transitioned to a year-round mitigation program known as Operation Sesbania which replaced Operation Cool Burn (a period of heightened mitigation activity generally held from the beginning of April to the end of August each year). This recognises that mitigation activities can be undertaken throughout the year depending on local conditions enabling greater flexibility for land managers and owners to conduct mitigation activities in a changing climate with limited windows for key activities such as hazard reduction burning. Mitigation activities include community education, hazard reduction burns, the preparation of fire breaks and the management of fire trails.

QFES held a debrief with the QPWS in April 2024 to discuss the effectiveness of arrangements between the two key bushfire management partners and identified improvements to interoperability before the 2024–25 bushfire season, commencing 1 August 2024, including bi-weekly meetings between key RFS, QPWS and HQPlantations staff. To address and embed learnings from the debrief, a similar pre-bushfire season meeting with key departmental and QPWS staff is planned to be held in Townsville in July 2024, with emphasis on:

- ✦ operationalising the interagency protocol
- ✦ improving communication across all levels—local, regional and state
- ✦ requirements regarding the documentation of transfer of control during incidents as intensity and threat escalates and/or decreases.

QFES actively engages with partners through its network of Area Fire Management Groups to plan mitigation activities, such as hazard reduction burns. Mapping continues to be used to identify areas of highest risk allowing for close collaboration with partners and stakeholders in the coordination of necessary mitigation activities.

QFES recognises the importance of the traditional fire management knowledge of First Nations people and undertakes training to support understanding of this knowledge and practice. To enhance this work, QFES has eight First Nations Mitigation Officer positions (formerly known as Bushfire Safety Officers) located in regions and state office. These officers engage with First Nations communities as well as rural fire brigades and other QFES personnel to support increased knowledge and understanding of traditional burning practices and engagement with First Nations communities.

QFES enables private landholders to undertake burning on their property for a variety of purposes, many of which will also reduce fuel loads, through its Permit to Light Fire system. These permits cover a variety of purposes and are provided free of charge through a network of over 2,000 local fire wardens with approximately 10,000 fire permits activated by landowners from 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2024 in the lead-up to the 2024–25 Queensland bushfire season, with over 1,000 attended by QFES personnel.

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QFES undertakes community engagement activities, directly and through media, to encourage bushfire preparedness in the general community. To support these preparation efforts, the RFS carried out over 170 community engagement activities from 1 January to 30 June 2024 to encourage bushfire awareness and preparation prior to the 2024–25 bushfire season. This included targeted community engagement at key risk locations through Operation Sesbania and more general community engagement through presence at community events.

QFES has further supported this community engagement through over 300 bushfire-related media articles and stories which were broadcast and/or published and 40 proactive social media posts since commencing preparedness messaging in March 2024 (to 30 June 2024). In addition, the Bushfire Safety campaign, which aims to change behaviours around risk identification and acceptance, bushfire preparedness and monitoring conditions, was launched on 2 June 2024 (refer page 63).

In addition to these mitigation activities, the department is preparing for the upcoming bushfire season with training, exercising, planning, and by ensuring resources such as specialist aircraft are available.

Training and professional development activities have included a variety of incident management roles which enhance incident management capability.

During 2023–24:

- ✦ 17 QFES personnel were trained as level 3 incident controllers, including one RFS volunteer member, eight RFS staff and eight FRS staff
- ✦ 59 QFES personnel were trained as level 2 incident controllers, including six RFS volunteer members, 22 RFS staff and 31 FRS staff
- ✦ 30 QFES personnel were trained as level 1 incident controllers, including 16 RFS volunteer members, 12 RFS staff and two FRS staff.

In addition, 51 RFS volunteer members, 18 RFS staff and 73 FRS staff were trained in other key incident management roles including Sector and Divisional Commander, logistics, planning, operations and public information functions.

Queensland has access to over 150 call-when-needed aircraft and NAFC contracted aircraft capable of performing water-bombing, airborne coordination, line scanning or intelligence gathering functions in support of ground crews during bushfires and other emergency events.

A total of 13 contracted services will be available for the 2024–25 bushfire season, positioned to support Queensland communities at both Bundaberg and Toowoomba airbases as well as within the south eastern corner of Queensland at Watts Bridge aerodrome.

During Queensland's bushfire season, the LAT and lead plane is based at Bundaberg due to the coverage area for an hour's flying time of a typical LAT. Coverage includes from the NSW border to Proserpine, and West to Tambo, allowing for support to most Queensland communities.

QFES receives regular weather briefings from the Bureau of Meteorology and continues to adjust preparedness according to forecasts and actual observations.

Severe weather season and preparedness

QFES' response to the 2023–24 Queensland severe weather season was known as Operation Mollitiam. The severe weather season ran from 1 October 2023 to 30 April 2024. Mollitiam is the Latin word for resilience.

The department's approach facilitated preparation, rapid planning, mobilisation, response during events and the reduction of impacts to communities' post event. The department works closely in partnership with its key stakeholders, including local governments and communities, to improve resilience and enhance operational capacity during times of emergency.

QFES planned for the severe weather season by undertaking high-level initiatives focussed on preparation and connecting with key disaster management stakeholders across Queensland ensuring they were adequately informed and prepared to help protect Queenslanders. This included pre-season briefings with internal and external stakeholders and Queensland Government and Australian Government partners. The briefings provided disaster management stakeholders with information on jurisdictional activities and operational capacity.

In preparation for the 2023–24 severe weather season QFES:

- ✦ facilitated an annual Bushfire and Severe Weather Preparedness Audit in July 2023, comprising of regional self-assessments, exercises and debriefs
- ✦ facilitated several concurrent hazard exercises with the Queensland Government's Leadership Board, the State Disaster Coordination Group and District Disaster Management Groups
- ✦ facilitated the training of personnel across government and non-government agencies in the use of the Situational Awareness Platform and training in the roles within the State Disaster Coordination Centre
- ✦ led the integration and enhancement of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (the Framework), supporting QDMA. The Framework helps enhance a shared understanding of disaster risk through collaborative and evidence-based risk assessments, advancing Queensland's preparation and planning for future disaster risk
- ✦ provided training in warnings and alerts, including specific training on Emergency Alerts to disaster management stakeholders through the Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework.

During the 2023–24 severe weather season, Queensland experienced significant storm and cyclone activity impacting communities including Tropical Cyclones KIRRILY and JASPER, and severe thunderstorms in South East Queensland.

Over the course of the events that impacted Queensland during the severe weather season, QFES deployed local and intra-regional personnel into the State Fire Control Centre to perform functional roles within the Incident Management Team including:

- ✦ State Coordinator
- ✦ Operations Officer
- ✦ Logistics Officer
- ✦ Planning Officer
- ✦ Intelligence Officer
- ✦ Interstate International Liaison Unit.

The QFES State Fire Control Centre remained at 'Stand-Up' for the entire period of operations for these three events, following on from an extended period of bushfires throughout the state during the last half of 2023.

Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY—January 2024

Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY formed in the Coral Sea on 24 January 2024 and tracked west southwest towards the north Queensland coast. Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY intensified to severe category 3 strength in the afternoon of 25 January 2024 before weakening to category 2 intensity as it crossed the coast that night near Balgal Beach, Rollingstone.

Heavy rainfall continued to be associated with the low as the system moved south over land and eventually into NSW on 5 February 2024 before merging with an existing trough on 6 February 2024.

QFES pre-deployed more than 200 personnel to Townsville before and during Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY, to support communities with deployed teams activated from 25 January 2024, in preparation for the cyclone to cross the coast as a category 3 event.

Initial damage from Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY was less than expected, however, the subsequent rainfall events resulted in flooding in some areas of central and South East Queensland.

As at 30 April 2024, 1,346 damage assessments had been conducted by FRS personnel that were attributed to Tropical Cyclone KIRRILY.

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South East Queensland Severe Thunderstorms— Christmas Day 2023 and New Year’s Day 2024

On Christmas Day 2023, severe storms hit the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim, with the Bureau of Meteorology confirming a tornado had passed through bringing winds of up to 160 kilometres an hour. Before residents had a chance to recover, the region was again heavily impacted by severe storms and flash flooding on New Year’s Day. The aftermath of both events was widespread and devastating with damage to buildings and infrastructure, with community isolation, loss of power to commercial and personal residences, flash flooding and tragically loss of life.

QFES deployed more than 100 local and inter-region personnel to the local government areas of Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim to undertake severe weather-related activities, including:

- ✦ FRS Swift Water Rescue Technicians
- ✦ FRS DART personnel to undertake damage assessments following the event
- ✦ QFES Incident Management Team personnel including incident control, logistics, intelligence, operations, planning and public information
- ✦ RPAS pilots and resources.

The QFES State Fire Control Centre Interstate Liaison Unit supported the coordination and movement of more than 250 personnel from Victoria and NSW, including personnel trained in chainsaw and storm damage operations and washouts, and liaison officers to operate from Regional Fire Control Centres and the State Fire Control Centre, in support of the regional delivery of response and recovery activities.

Seven local government areas were affected as a result of the Christmas Day storms and New Year’s Day flooding with FRS personnel conducting 3,946 damage assessments to assist the QRA and local governments to prioritise recovery operations across these locations.

The South East Queensland severe thunderstorm damage assessments reported holistic community impact to assist and inform a coordinated community recovery.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper—December 2023

Tropical Cyclone Jasper formed in the Coral Sea on 5 December 2023 and crept towards Queensland’s north coast. This was the first time a tropical cyclone had formed in Queensland waters in December during a declared El Niño.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper made landfall as a category 2 system on 13 December 2023 near Wujal Wujal, north of Cape Tribulation. As it moved across the Cape York Peninsula it was downgraded to a tropical low and over several days brought widespread, heavy and sustained rainfall resulting in significant damage to buildings, roads and infrastructure, with widespread community isolation and flash flooding.

QFES staff and volunteers were deployed into the far north of the state prior to Tropical Cyclone Jasper making landfall, including FRS DART personnel, FRS Swiftwater Rescue Technicians, QFES incident management specialists and technical support officers.

FRS personnel completed 5,247 Damage Assessments across multiple local government areas. Tropical Cyclone Jasper damage assessments reported holistic community impact to assist and inform a coordinated community recovery.

Supporting equity, inclusion and diversity

Queensland has an increasingly diverse population which QFES seeks to consider in the development and delivery of its programs and services to build safe and resilient communities and ensure community preparedness for disaster events. QFES values the inclusion of individuals, including staff and volunteers, and groups who contribute to the department through their diverse skills, knowledge and experience.

Highlights, during the reporting period, include:

Social Policy

- ✦ Finalised the **QFES Equity and Diversity Plan** in March 2024, following consultation with key internal and industrial stakeholders (refer page 91).
- ✦ Continued the **Allies of Inclusion** program. Within the program there are a number of Workforce Resource Groups made up of staff and volunteers with a shared set of interests, experiences and perspectives that help promote the values of QFES and support inclusivity within the department and the community. A QFES Ally of Inclusion contributes to respectful and inclusive workplaces where our people feel safe to share their perspectives. They are willing to challenge attitudes, words and behaviours which do not support an inclusive culture or which might compromise the way our services work together. The network promotes the positive benefits on inclusive leadership at all levels of the department. Since its inception in September 2018, over 500 staff and volunteers have registered as an Allies of Inclusion network member. The network has grown by 11 per cent since 30 June 2023.
- ✦ Delivered **Australian Warning System (AWS) Grassroots Community-led Warnings Awareness Pilot Programs** in collaboration with organisations that represent vulnerable communities, including youth, seniors, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), First Nations people and people with a disability, to ensure inclusivity and accessibility. Throughout the pilot programs, QFES engaged with communities to learn about barriers to accessing AWS warnings and to continue to actively support projects that promote warnings awareness (refer page 58).

Cultural Capability

- ✦ Established the **First Nations Strategy and Partnerships Branch** within the Strategy Directorate in late 2023. The branch is led by a First Nations identified Director. The branch is developing and implementing a program to align the department with national and state government First Nations policy and work to embed cultural capability across the department, including the development of a First Nations Framework to articulate the needs of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the department and the community.
- ✦ Developed and released on 27 May 2024 the **QFES Reframing the Relationship Plan 2024** during National Reconciliation Week. The plan outlines the actions the department is taking to build stronger relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The plan builds on the commitments in the department's previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2022–2025 and the Queensland Government Statement of Commitment to reframing the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the government.
- ✦ Participation by 22 QFES staff in a two-day **Building on the Strengths of our Stories** program in March 2024. This cultural awareness program focusses on truth telling regarding First Nations culture and is delivered by the Cultural Capability Unit, Department of Resources. The department will deliver a further program to 24 staff in July 2024.
- ✦ Participation by the QFES ELT in a one-day course in **cultural agility** in July 2023. The QFES ELT members were provided with an introduction to Indigenous peoples, culture and history while learning practical knowledge and skills to work more effectively with Indigenous peoples. The course provided opportunities for the ELT to increase their understanding around appropriate ways to discuss reconciliation and diversity in an inclusive way.

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- ✦ Continued delivery of the online *Starting the Journey* learning program, with 582 staff completing the training. The program provides insight into interpreting people's own culture as well as the lived experiences of First Nations peoples.
- ✦ Continued the Brisbane based **First People's Consultative Group** to improve communications between First Nations peoples, QFES and the community. The group meets monthly and supports the department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel to share their experience and knowledge and develop personnel's knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and support and empower regional staff and volunteers to engage with First Nations peoples in the community. The group designed two artworks depicting storytelling artistry regarding fire safety and carrying the message of an acknowledgement of country. One of the art works will be erected in the foyer of SFEST and one at the Roma Street Fire and Rescue Station in Brisbane. The artworks are made of stainless steel and are over one metre in diameter and will be a lasting feature of both sites.
- ✦ Designed a departmental **'Together' polo shirt** in preparation for a three-month trial commencing 1 July 2024. The polo shirt showcases the 'Together' artwork and honours the rich heritage and ongoing journey of First Nations peoples and the diversity of the department's workforce. The polo shirt will be worn for culturally significant dates and events, including NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week, relevant recruitment activities and year-round when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The trial will be followed by a survey to determine its introduction as part of the department's uniform allocation.
- ✦ Celebrated **NAIDOC week** (2 to 9 July 2023) with events held in various QFES locations across Queensland recognising the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with the theme *For our Elders*, recognising that across every generation, our Elders have played and continue to play an important role and hold a prominent place in our communities and families. QFES also participated in, or was represented at community events such as the Logan District NAIDOC event, Ipswich NAIDOC Family and Cultural Celebration and the Musgrave Park NAIDOC Celebration.
- ✦ Research was undertaken into the **administrative history of QFES** to identify the agency's historical interactions with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in the Treaty process. The department is continuing to take action to raise awareness and educate staff on the Queensland Government's Path to Treaty and Reframing the Relationship programs.
- ✦ Membership and participation in the **Queensland Government Treaty Readiness Committee** and working groups established to prepare for the commencement of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.
- ✦ Facilitated the department's **2024 Close the Gap Awards** coinciding with the National Close the Gap Day on 21 March 2024. Closing the Gap is an initiative that aims to reduce Indigenous disadvantage with respect to health, education, employment and social justice. QFES supports and endorses this innovative program and recognises the significant work and outcomes within the department that have contributed to Closing the Gap.
- ✦ Continued the department's relationship with **CareerTrackers**. CareerTrackers is a national not-for-profit charitable organisation that supports First Nations university students by connecting them with employers for internship opportunities. This partnership continues to have meaningful outcomes for the department and the student interns by building cultural capability and networks within the workforce and providing meaningful work-based placements, accelerating career opportunities in the interns' chosen field. For the 12-week 2023–2024 Summer program the department hosted two CareerTrackers interns, one of the interns returning for the five-week 2024 Winter program.
- ✦ A partnership between **NAB Foundation** and RFS through a grant that delivers workshops in traditional knowledge of fire ecology, traditional burning techniques and land management practices, led by the department's First Nations Mitigation Officers in conjunction with local Traditional Owners and First Nations people (refer pages 67–68).
- ✦ Completed three **FRS Indigenous Projects** that supported the *Queensland Government Building and Construction Training Policy*—Caloundra South, Moreton Bay Central and Mount Cotton Road Fire and Rescue Stations (refer pages 36–37).
- ✦ Continued the practice of **recognising Traditional Owners** on QFES naming plaques of QFES newly constructed facilities to recognise and increase knowledge and understanding of First Nations cultures.

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Gender Equity

- ✦ Continued the department's **Gender Equity Advisory Group** (refer page 91).
- ✦ Appointed a Principal Program Manager and a Senior Program Officer within the **Fire and Rescue Service Frontline Women's Network** (FRSFWN) for a 12-month period in March 2024. The FRSFWN was established in 2019 and consists of 65 permanent female firefighters. The role of the network is to progress key operational and policy initiatives to further promote firefighter safety, diversity initiatives and projects identified by the network. The network meets every two months and has established stakeholder relationships within QFES and has been contributing to the results of the department's business units such as Uniforms and Logistics, Talent Acquisition, the Firefighter Safety Working Group, Workforce Development and the Gender Equity Advisory Group.
- ✦ Established the **Rural Fire Service Frontline Women's Network** (RFSFWN). The RFSFWN Steering Committee, comprised of RFS staff and volunteers from each region, held its inaugural meeting on 5 March 2024 and continues to meet monthly. The steering committee is committed to establishing regional networks in the future to promote and facilitate opportunities for women to engage within the Service. The steering committee will provide ongoing mentoring and support to the regional hubs and will represent the membership on the Gender Equity Advisory Group at a state level.
- ✦ Delivered the first two-day **Girls Firefighter Experience Camp**, on 29 and 30 June 2024, an initiative of the FRSFWN and supported by the Department of Education. This pilot program provided 30 girls from years 9 and 10, from a mix of metro and regional areas, the opportunity to join FRS to experience a diverse range of activities that relate to being a firefighter. With a range of supervised activities including demonstrations of road crash rescue, urban search and rescue, and live fire demonstrations, led by firefighters, participants experienced what it would be like to have a career in firefighting. The program included a Careers Expo for parents, guardians, teachers and school careers guidance officers. The camp was held at SFEST and included overnight accommodation on-site. The camp was successfully delivered and well received by participants and their parents/guardians, and will be evaluated to determine the future of the program. The camp was initiated as part of the department's commitment to the ongoing development of a diverse workforce, representative of the community it serves, with gender, equity and inclusion a priority focus.
- ✦ Continued to support **Women and Firefighting Australasia** (WAFAs) with QFES representatives on the WAFAs Board and annual corporate membership.
- ✦ Celebrated **International Women's Day** on 8 March 2024 and **International Men's Day** on 19 November 2023 with events across the state. The QPS hosted the 2024 Leading Women International Women's Day event in Brisbane, with the theme *Invest in women: Accelerate progress*, which highlighted the role women play in shaping a better future. The event recognised the contributions and achievements of women across Queensland's public safety and integrity agencies. The event included the Women in Fire and Emergency Services Awards which recognise staff and volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to progressing gender equality and human rights. International Men's Day provided an opportunity to celebrate the positive contributions men make to society and their families and communities. QFES again supported the Movember campaign to work towards a world where men take proactive action to be mentally healthy and are supported by those around them. Approximately 110 QFES personnel and 14 teams participated with more than \$61,000 raised towards men's health initiatives. QFES placed first on the Australia-wide Movember First Responders leaderboard.
- ✦ Continued membership and support of the **Leading Women's Network** with Executive Sponsor, Change Champion and committee representation including participation in, hosting and livestreaming of network events. The purpose of the network is to promote a diverse and inclusive work environment through the representation of women at all levels.
- ✦ Celebrated **Brisbane PRIDE** on 23 September 2023 with QFES representatives attending the PRIDE March and Fair Day to acknowledge and support LGBTIQ+ staff, volunteers and communities.
- ✦ Completed production of a series of recruitment **videos and associated social and traditional media content** highlighting the unique qualities of a FRS firefighter for the purposes of building greater diversity within the Service, specifically increasing awareness of a career within under-represented groups whilst targeting female school students.

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- ✦ Continued the partnership with **Townsville Fire Women's Basketball Team** to help promote careers as a firefighter and volunteering in emergency services. As part of the partnership, and in addition to game-time recognition, QFES was included as an official off-court activity where academy participants could tour a fire station and have direct access to QFES officers to discuss employment or volunteering opportunities. QFES also engaged in off-season community activities with the team in female-focused camps, leadership development and networking opportunities.

Culturally and linguistically diverse

- ✦ Celebrated **Multicultural Queensland Month** in August 2023 with the theme of *Many Cultures, one Queensland* with events held in various QFES locations across Queensland. QFES also participated in or was represented at community events.
- ✦ QFES is a founding member of the **Ipswich CALD Disaster Management Collaboration Network** established in January 2023. The network includes representatives from Multicultural Australia, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, City of Ipswich, Red Cross Australia, QPS and the Polynesian African Cross-Cultural Advisory Group. The purpose of the network is for disaster management agencies and CALD communities in Ipswich to work together in a collaborative and coordinated way to support and deliver emergency and disaster resilience initiatives. Outcomes in 2023–24 included a bushfire safety information session delivered by RFS focusing on how network members can share information and help their communities to prepare for bushfire season. In November 2023, the network delivered a disaster preparedness workshop with the Ipswich Multicultural Leaders Network jointly facilitated by QFES and Multicultural Australia representatives. Through these connections, QFES was invited to speak on the 4EB ethnic community radio station during the *Samoan Tuesday segment* in December 2023.
- ✦ Delivered six **AWS mini workshops** in June 2024 with TAFE, Loganlea Adult English Language Program (Adult Migrant English Program) students. A total of 220 students participated in the workshops which aimed to build awareness of the AWS and local hazards risks within CALD communities in Logan.
- ✦ Continued to deliver and develop **inclusive community engagement resources** including community safety and preparation messaging; advertising campaigns; radio, social media and

Meta advertisements; and fact sheets translated into various languages including Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese, to build the resilience of vulnerable community members (refer pages 63–64)

www.fire.qld.gov.au/prepare/fire/resources

Supporting people with disability

- ✦ Continued to support and deliver **Fire Ed for Children with Neurodiversity**. This version of the Fire Ed program is targeted towards working with children with neurodiversity including autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia. The program introduces fire safety education to young audiences so they can better understand fire safety and participate in the Fire Ed program when they reach year one schooling. The program is delivered across the state in targeted learning facilities by firefighters in partnership with educators, parents and carers.
- ✦ Continued provision of assistance to members of the deaf community and people who have a hearing impairment to install specialised smoke alarms through the **Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme** managed by Deaf Connect. In 2023–24, a total of 150 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms were provided. More than 3,200 smoke alarms have been provided since the inception of this program in 2013.
- ✦ Provided **Auslan interpreters** when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information and included closed captions in video content and provisioned live broadcasting of emergency messaging with support from Auslan interpreters and utilised automated live captioning functions.
- ✦ Participated in Beach Day Out, an **annual all-ages, all-abilities beach party** at Emu Park in Central Queensland held in September 2023. The event brings together around 5,000 people living with disabilities, their families, carers and service providers. QFES, with Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council, Carers Queensland and Queenslanders with Disability Network joined forces to bring *Resilience Lane* to the event which showcased Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness, local hazards, the AWS, Fire Danger Ratings, home fire safety, severe weather preparedness and evacuation planning. Following participation at the event, Carers Queensland developed a regional pilot program aimed at enhancing the capacity of Rockhampton emergency services personnel to support people with disabilities before, during and after a disaster event.

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- ✦ Participated in the first **Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031** state and territory forum held on 19 June 2023 in Brisbane. The forum brought together people with disability, families, carers, advocacy organisations, disability and community service organisations, industry, business and all levels of government to discuss how we can work together to achieve an inclusive Queensland. The Queensland Government partnered with Queenslanders with Disability Network and the Department of Social Services to deliver the forum. People with lived experience of disability were involved in the forum’s planning and delivery.
- ✦ Visited **disability support service providers and carers** to demonstrate and provide advice on home fire safety.

Seniors

- ✦ Facilitated an **AWS Pilot Project** led by seniors for seniors in the Hervey Bay region. The project focused on increasing the comprehension and application of the AWS. The project included QFES facilitated focus groups with seniors in partnership with Halcro Street Community Centre as well as a QFES-led focus group with senior service providers around ways to better support their clients to understand and apply warnings.
- ✦ Attended **Seniors Expos** in partnership with the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services delivering home fire safety and bushfire safety static displays and presentations.
- ✦ Engaged with seniors and their families, including visits with seniors’ groups and retirement villages, delivering **home fire safety** information sessions including escape planning and smoke alarm requirements.

Youth

- ✦ Continued to deliver the **Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program** throughout Queensland and into more diverse areas and education settings, with delivery of the program into youth detention centres and in conjunction with youth justice programs such as Transition 2 Success and Project Booyah. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers facilitated by operational firefighters (refer pages 69–70).

- ✦ Continued delivery of the **FFF program** throughout Queensland to support parents and guardians with their efforts to educate children and young people (three to 17 years) who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident. The program teaches respectful fire behaviours and develops fire safety skills (refer pages 69–70).
- ✦ Continued the **RFS Young Volunteer of the Year Awards** initiative. The State and Regional Young Volunteer of the Year Awards are for RFS volunteers aged 16–25 years who demonstrate a special contribution to the Service (refer page 44).
- ✦ Developed the mascot *Captain Warnings* and associated resources to assist with **engaging younger audiences in warnings awareness**. The driving concept is anyone can be *Captain Warnings* by ‘watching for the warnings’. Corflute signage was developed and distributed to regions and partner agencies for use at community events.
- ✦ Continued to forge a strong relationship with **Iron Traks** delivering opportunities to young women to broaden their career pathways in areas that they may not have considered. In October 2023, 22 young women from Iron Traks visited North Stradbroke Island to learn about the importance of volunteering and becoming a part of their community, and staying fit in the process. The participants visited the local fire and rescue stations and received a traditional Welcome to Brown Lake. In April 2024, Iron Traks representatives received a QFES Close the Gap Award for its involvement and encouragement of vulnerable youth.

In addition, the Commissioner, in his role as **Queensland Government Community Champion** for the remote Indigenous township of Coen, advocated for the Far North Queensland Indigenous community where he meets with local Indigenous stakeholders, including the Coen Regional Aboriginal Corporation, and advocated for improved infrastructure and support for the community. During 2023–24, the Commissioner visited Coen on two occasions and worked with other government agencies to deliver outcomes in priority areas of mental health, housing, arts and culture, and improved services for government agencies in the community.

Further initiatives, activities and target group data are included in Strategic workforce planning and performance—refer pages 89–96.

Objective

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

Strategies

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

Australian Warning System - awareness programs

Warnings awareness is a key part of the AWS Grassroots Community Engagement strategy which has been specifically informed by the United Nation's World Meteorological Organization concept *Warnings for All*.

To ensure inclusivity and accessibility, pilot programs were delivered by the QFES Public Information and Warnings Unit in collaboration with local QFES staff and organisations that represent vulnerable communities, including youth, seniors, CALD, First Nations people and people with a disability. Communities from across the state were involved including remote and regional communities such as Mount Isa, Livingstone and Toowoomba.

QFES' approach was centred around the questions: 'How would your community best learn about warnings?' and 'How can we best work together to ensure public information and warnings gets to your community members during emergencies?'

Throughout the pilot programs, QFES engaged with communities to learn about barriers to accessing AWS warnings and to continue to actively support projects that promote warnings awareness.

This is an innovative approach which empowers community groups to discuss the best way to educate their own community. It also aims to establish warnings redistributors within these networks. These pilot programs provided a wealth of insight and feedback around community awareness, understanding and access to warnings, which will be invaluable for future public information planning.

For example, through the pilot program with Queensland African Communities Council, nine culturally appropriate videos for distribution on digital platforms have been developed and were launched as part of Africa Day celebrations in June 2024.

Media and social media

The department disseminates important safety messaging to the Queensland community through its social media channels.

During 2023–24, the QFES Facebook page reached more than 9.3 million people and received more than 4.4 million visits. The Facebook page also received more than 972,200 content interactions and gained 64,300 followers to reach a total of approximately 565,000 followers.

The QFES Instagram page reached more than 995,200 people during 2023–24. The platform gained 5,900 new followers to reach a total of approximately 50,100 followers with a total of 54,600 visits.

During the reporting period, the QFES X (formerly Twitter) account had 6.6 million impressions (the number of times the posts were viewed) and gained 5,800 new followers.

QFES also engaged with media outlets, including television, newspaper, online and radio, to promote messaging for key safety campaigns, including bushfire season, severe weather season and home fire safety.

During 2023–24, bushfire season messaging received coverage across more than 7,900 print, television, radio and online media items from July to December 2023 and March to June 2024. During these same periods, there were more than 320 proactive social media posts on QFES social media channels, which reached more than 10.7 million people and had more than 219,000 engagements, in support of this campaign.

Between November 2023 and April 2024, severe weather season messaging received coverage of more than 6,400 items in traditional media outlets. There were also more than 140 social media posts on QFES social media channels which reached more than 7.2 million people and had more than 221,000 engagements in support of the campaign.

For the home fire safety campaign from July to August 2023 and March to June 2024, there were more than 1,070 media items related to the campaign in traditional media outlets. There were also more than 40 proactive social media posts on QFES social media channels which reached more than 1.5 million people and had more than 24,000 engagements to support the campaign.

State disaster risk assessments

The *South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding February to March 2022 Review Report 1: 2022–2023* recommended that QFES review and update the State Disaster Risk Report including re-evaluating the risk of flooding by all types and that the updated State Disaster Risk Report should be published by 1 November 2023.

The *Queensland 2023 State Disaster Risk Report* (the Report), published 1 November 2023, addressed this recommendation by re-evaluating the risk from all types of flooding, as well as updating other hazard chapters including bushfire and critical infrastructure failure and incorporating information relating to the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) and updated climate information. The Report is available at

www.disaster.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/436070/2023-State-Disaster-Risk-Report.pdf

The Critical Infrastructure Disaster Risk Assessment (CInDRA) is a new state level risk assessment which assesses risk to four key critical infrastructure sectors (energy, transport, water and communications) from 12 priority hazards (10 hazards from the Report along with space weather and cybersecurity). The CInDRA was developed by QFES in consultation with responsible agencies, local government, critical infrastructure operators and subject matter experts.

The State Earthquake Risk Assessment (SERA) and the accompanying Tsunami Guide for Queensland (TGQ) were updated in 2024 by QFES. The update includes the 2023 National Seismic Hazard Assessment and learnings from the 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai eruption. The assessment and guide were developed in consultation with subject matter experts in the Australian and Queensland Governments and the research sector.

The CInDRA, SERA and TGQ are expected to be publicly released by 31 August 2024. The responsibility for the state disaster risk assessment function transferred to the QRA at 30 June 2024.

Intelligence services capabilities

The Intelligence Services Unit, within the State Fire Control Centre, was established in September 2023. The unit's primary function is to provide intelligence that enhances the strategic and operational decision-making processes within QFES.

The unit provides continuous, comprehensive intelligence gathering, analysis and reporting. This all-source intelligence capability has enhanced QFES' effectiveness and situational awareness throughout all stages of PPRR.

Key contributions of the Intelligence Services Unit include:

- ✦ contributing to 11 State Fire Control Centre activations, demonstrating its ability to adapt and respond swiftly in critical situations
- ✦ assisting with four separate deployments of Intelligence Services Unit officers to support Regional Fire Control Centres, thereby extending their strategic impact
- ✦ developing and distributing a range of intelligence products designed to guide the decision-making of State Fire Control Centre and Regional Fire Control Centre leaders, informing their outlook and planning strategies, and aiding in media communications, public information dissemination and issuing of warnings
- ✦ generating over 150 intelligence reports that have informed and shaped decision-making across all levels of QFES
- ✦ providing comprehensive support to AUS-1 DART prior to and during its deployment to Papua New Guinea in May 2024 including a detailed country briefing, event-specific intelligence reports and continuous daily intelligence updates that supported operational readiness and effectiveness.

Predictive services capabilities

The Predictive Services Unit continued the Fire Behaviour Analyst (FBAN) Capability Uplift project in 2023–24.

The implementation of the QFES Intelligence capability in September 2023, along with the integration of Predictive Services Intelligence Coordinators across each region since 2021–22, and the establishment of a Regional FBAN service delivery model, are all geared towards enhancing operational support. This multi-tiered support structure spans tactical, operational and strategic levels, marking a substantial improvement in bushfire intelligence resources for decision-makers at all levels.

Key contributions of the Predictive Services Unit during 2023–24 include 12 staff and volunteers received initial FBAN training; the annual FBAN pre-bushfire season workshop was conducted on the Gold Coast on 24 July 2023; and during the bushfire season, FBANs conducted predictions for 146 separate incidents and over 20 FBANs were deployed across the state.

AFAC annual conference

QFES hosted the AFAC annual conference (AFAC23) alongside the QPWS, in Brisbane from 22 to 25 August 2023. The theme for the conference was *Creating a sustainable future: the challenges and opportunities* and featured presenters and displays from industry leaders.

AFAC23 ran in collaboration with the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference, the Institution of Fire Engineers (Australia) National Conference and the WAFA 2023 Conference. The AFAC conference brought together local, interstate and international delegates from across the industry including emergency services, all levels of government, research and academia, as well as equipment and service businesses that support the sector. QFES presentations included heatwave impact forecasting, a hydrogen framework, the Karuk Women’s Training Exchange and creating psychological safety in the workplace.

QFES was a Platinum sponsor of the WAFA 2023 Conference. The conference theme *Sustaining Diversity* provided a focus on the need for diverse representation and viewpoints within fire and emergency service organisations to effectively represent and respond to community needs. The conference sessions included Hands on Training Day (HoT) at SFEST; Addressing the Gender imbalance; Managing Career transitions across professional stages; Imposter syndrome; Sustainable, respectful cultures; and Over-mentored and under-sponsored – getting women a seat at the table. QFES was represented by 42 staff and volunteers and the department supported the attendance of two women from PNGFS as part of the AFAC program of support for Pacific Island Nations by AFAC member agencies.

QFD officers will attend and participate in AFAC24 to be held in Sydney from 3 to 6 September 2024. A QFD presentation, to be co-presented with Victoria University, will focus on research observations from a work-based study in QFES: *Inclusive Leadership and the Adaptive Organisation*. QFD will also be represented with several personnel showcasing posters. Fifteen posters will be on display at the conference representing a broad cross-section of the department’s work from attending DFV situations as

first responders to moving towards a national approach to swiftwater and floodwater response.

Other key achievements include:

- ✦ responded to 82,917 **incidents including FRS and RFS response** (227 incidents per day on average):
 - ◆ 2,434 structure fires including 1,682 residential structure fires
 - ◆ 6,670 landscape fires
 - ◆ 16,425 mobile property crashes
 - ◆ 57,388 other incidents (includes other fires and explosions, rescues, hazardous conditions incidents, false alarms and good intent calls, storm and natural disaster response incidents and other situations)
- ✦ continued to deliver timely **response times to structure fires** including call taking time with 8.4 minutes at the 50th percentile and 12.7 minutes at the 90th percentile
- ✦ continued representation on the **Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum** following its transition to the QPS. The aim of the forum is to strengthen the Queensland Government’s commitment to engaging with emergency services volunteers and enables representatives to provide advice on issues impacting and emerging on the sector to the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. Membership of the forum consists of emergency service organisations across government and the not-for-profit sector
- ✦ continued to provide support to rural fire brigades to identify, plan, apply for and complete grant applications. During the reporting period, through the **annual RFS Grant Program**, RFS presented 31 grants to rural fire brigades totalling \$531,975. This funding provides for rural fire brigade station extensions, solar power installations and upgrades, station concreting and internal flooring, station insulations, and the purchase and installation of water tanks, generators, air-conditioning and equipment such as ride on mowers and trailers
- ✦ implemented 16 recommendations from five **Inspector-General of Emergency Management reviews** across governance and significant events including the Efficacy of recovery governance, 2019 Monsoon Trough Rainfall and Flood Event, the 2018 Queensland Bushfires Review and the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding 2022 events. The department continued to progress a further six recommendations during the reporting period with implementation being led or co-led by the department

- ✦ continued to lead a number of actions to deliver on the Queensland Government's response to the **Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report** (October 2020), and delivered 17 recommendations during the reporting period across a range of matters, including implementation of the AFDRS and AWS, communication of natural hazard risks to communities, vegetation management, and nationally consistent climate change projections and environmental data. The department is expected to deliver the remaining six of its allocated activities within 2024–25. The Queensland Government's implementation progress reports are available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au/publications
- ✦ celebrated the 50th edition of **RESPONSE, Queensland's official fire and emergency services magazine** in August 2023. First printed in June 2015, the bi-monthly magazine shares the stories and achievements of QFES members and is available to staff, volunteers and key stakeholders. The magazine is also publicly available on the department's website. Feature stories from 2023–24 include accounts of QFES deployments such as the Canadian wildfires, interviews with the recipients of the Higgins and Langley Memorial Award in Swiftwater Rescue, the 2023–24 bushfire season, and the response to Tropical Cyclones Jasper and Kirrily, along with other awards, training exercises and community initiatives. The June 2024 edition was a special edition of the magazine farewelling the SES as it transitioned to the QPS and marking the transition from QFES to QFD. The magazine will continue in 2024–25 with a refreshed design and a focus on QFR, RFSQ and corporate services stories
- ✦ amended the Kilcoy **Emergency Management Levy** district within the Somerset Regional Council to reflect property development within the area. The amendment commences 1 July 2024 with the expanded boundary including additional residential and industrial developments that are within the Kilcoy service area. QFES engaged with impacted property owners as part of the change process
- ✦ continued to work to eliminate, reduce and mitigate the risk to Queenslanders from building fires involving **external combustible cladding**. QFES continued to conduct operational risk audits on buildings containing combustible cladding and dependent upon the respective cladding type, evaluated the building fire safety systems and occupant evacuation planning. This allowed QFES to develop fire intervention strategies for combustible cladding affected buildings designed to be consistent with the available resources and capabilities of QFES to manage any potential fire incident at the sites. Additionally, QFES continued to provide referral agency cladding advice to private and government certifiers as part of the building development application process in Queensland
- ✦ launched the **RFS Volunteer to Career Program** in May 2024 with targeted information and resources supporting a pathway for volunteers seeking employment with RFS. The resources assist volunteers in writing an application, highlighting transferable skills, preparing for an interview and provide ongoing support via online materials. A series of three virtual seminars was well-received by volunteers with positive feedback reflecting the need for this program and the value of the support being provided to volunteers. A mentoring program has also enabled connections to be developed between staff and volunteers to provide one-on-one support for volunteers making applications and preparing for interviews
- ✦ partnered with New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS) for the provision of a standalone QFES only **Bushfire Investigation Training Course**. The NSWRFS Bushfire Investigation Training Course is a nationally recognised competency and consists of theory and practical components. The theory component is online distance education with a practical assessment. The first course with 10 candidates from QFES commenced in November 2023 and concluded in April 2024 with all participants successfully completing the course
- ✦ continued to support the **2024 Learner Drive Night program**—a road safety initiative led by QPS and a collaborative effort involving the FRS, QAS, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Raceway and Driver Safety Australia. The program equips learner drivers with the skills and confidence to respond to emergency lights and sirens through on-road simulations and provides insight into what to expect when interacting with emergency services personnel. The program is now in its second year. Six Learner Drive Night events were delivered in 2023–24 with between 80 to 120 students and their supervising drivers attending each event
- ✦ continued to **educate the community** to raise awareness about the services provided by QFES and promote action on improving home and personal safety. Methods of education included attendance at displays, schools, presentations and workshops at local community events. QFES personnel provided information to help residents better prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events, to help foster a more resilient community by discussing smoke alarm legislation, home fire safety, bushfire safety and severe weather safety

- ✦ prepared for and supported **major outback Queensland events** such as the Birdsville Races (September 2023) and the Big Red Bash (July 2023). To minimise risk to communities, QFES deployed personnel from FRS and RFS to create a surge capacity to manage the increased number of visitors to the communities. QFES crews ensure the safety of the community and its visitors and take the opportunity to engage with local stakeholders, conduct recruitment drives, undertake training and conduct building fire safety inspections
- ✦ facilitated the **live streaming** of 28 press conferences for QFES, QPS and in support of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, reaching more than two million people, across major bushfire, cyclone, storm and flooding incidents to relay live **public safety updates** to Queenslanders and up-to-date disaster and recovery plans from a state level
- ✦ produced 86 **livestreams** across QFES, the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management and QPS to **support internal and external communications** supporting the Leading Women's Network, official event coverage for QFES and QPS such as graduations and ceremonies in Brisbane and Townsville, and full-day livestreams of Inspector-General of Emergency Management disaster management events and presentations as part of the RFS online forums
- ✦ designed and delivered 88 **unique video projects** to clients across QFES, Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management and QPS. These consisted of campaign-oriented web series, social media content, breaking news, live news vision and live event coverage both external and internal. The following products were included within these productions:
 - ◆ recruitment video content for RFS staff for publication on the department's website
 - ◆ social media content for the promotion of prototype electric and biofuel FRS logistical trucks and new RFS medium attack appliances
 - ◆ video content to support the recruitment of QPS Emergency Management Control Centre personnel
 - ◆ a series of social media video content called *On Patrol*, highlighting efforts by QPS to actively address youth offending as well as professional photography for promotional material relating to *Jack's Law*.

Community safety advertising campaigns

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

Educating the community to increase its resilience and preparation for emergencies is vital in keeping Queenslanders safe during disasters.

These campaigns include:

- ✦ **Bushfire Safety:** the new bushfire safety campaign, *Respect it or Regret it*, launched on 2 June 2024 and will run through to September 2024. The campaign aims to change behaviours around risk identification and acceptance, bushfire preparedness and monitoring conditions. The goal of the statewide campaign is to build community capability and resilience, prevent loss of life, and minimise damage from bushfires. It encourages all Queenslanders to have a bushfire survival plan so everyone knows what to do in the event of a bushfire, including how to monitor the fire danger ratings and stay alert to any bushfire warnings. Advertisements aired on free-to-air and catch-up television, radio, digital, billboards, print and social media. Radio and social media advertisements were translated into Mandarin, Punjabi, Vietnamese and Arabic. The campaign directs people to the department's website for information to prepare a bushfire survival plan and for information about fire danger ratings and bushfire warnings (bushfire-survival-plan.qfes.qld.gov.au)
- ✦ **Home Fire Safety:** the 2024 Home Fire Safety campaign ran from 17 March to 8 June 2024. The campaign urged Queenslanders to *Plan to survive*, highlighting the importance of every Queensland household having interconnected, photoelectric smoke alarms and a well-practised fire escape plan so everyone can escape quickly should a fire start. The campaign ran on free-to-air and catch-up television, YouTube, radio, cinema, print, billboards, digital display and social media. Social media and radio advertisements translated into Chinese (simplified), Vietnamese, Punjabi and Arabic. The campaign encouraged behaviour change in Queensland residents asking them to create a Home Fire Escape Plan and install interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms. Campaign advertising linked to the department's website where people could complete an online home fire escape plan and check the smoke alarms legislation requirements (www.fire.qld.gov.au/plantosurvive)
- ✦ **Smoke Alarms:** as the primary provider of fire services throughout Queensland, QFES plays a vital role in community education in relation to smoke alarms, fire escape plans and fire education to reduce loss of life and impacts on the community. The smoke alarms campaign ran from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 by linking Queenslanders searching on Google to information about smoke alarm legislative requirements. The campaign enabled owner-occupiers, landlords, property managers and investors to take action to comply with the smoke alarms legislation as soon as possible, giving them a direct link to authoritative information about how to comply (www.fire.qld.gov.au/prepare/fire/smoke-alarms)
- ✦ **Rechargeable Lithium-Ion Batteries:** the *Take Charge* public safety campaign ran from 15 October 2023 to 30 December 2023 in the lead-up to school holidays and Christmas, encouraging safe charging behaviour during this high-risk time. The campaign highlighted the fire risks and charging dangers posed by Rechargeable Lithium-Ion Batteries (RLIB) across online video, billboards, digital display, radio, digital audio, Meta, and search channels. Meta advertisements were translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Punjabi and Chinese (simplified) and linked users to translated fact sheets. The campaign targeted young adults aged 18-34, tradespeople and families with older teenagers, as these groups are known regular users of RLIB devices such as tools and e-scooters. The campaign highlighted the danger of incorrectly charging RLIB devices and demonstrated how to charge them safely, directing people to the website to learn more about correct charging practices (www.fire.qld.gov.au/safety-education/battery-and-charging-safety/lithium-ion-battery-safety)

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- ✦ **Australian Fire Danger Rating System:** this campaign raised awareness of the AFDRS within Queensland as part of an agreed national action resulting from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. The AFDRS campaign ran from 4 June 2023 to 2 September 2023 to raise awareness of the AFDRS and encourage people to monitor and act on the fire danger ratings for their area. The campaign appeared on free-to-air television, radio, billboards, digital audio, digital video, Meta, YouTube and Google Search, directing people to the website to check the daily fire danger rating. The radio advertising was translated into Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Cantonese and Korean languages and aired on metropolitan and regional stations. A suite of engagement resources was produced to support the campaign and build community understanding of the fire danger ratings and the actions the public should take to prepare for and respond to bushfires. These included targeted resources for engaging in First Nations and CALD communities with fact sheets translated into 12 languages (www.fire.qld.gov.au/prepare/bushfire/fire-danger-ratings)
- ✦ **Australian Warning System:** In November 2023, Queensland implemented a new warning system for bushfire, flood, cyclone, storm and extreme heat, consistent with other state agencies across Australia. This change

prompted the need for a public safety advertising campaign to build awareness of the warnings system and the actions required at each stage. The *Watch for the Warnings* campaign promoted public awareness and use of warnings, so residents can take the actions recommended and, as a result, reduce the impact of hazard events and improve the recovery of communities. The campaign started on 12 November 2023 and ran until 10 February 2024 across catch-up television, billboards, digital audio, digital display, digital video, Meta, YouTube and Google Search. The radio advertising was translated into Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Punjabi, Hindi and Korean and was supported by social activity. The radio advertisement was also voiced by a First Nations voiceover artist and aired on eight First Nations radio stations across Queensland (www.fire.qld.gov.au/aws).

In addition, in support of the department's functions to educate the public, social media and traditional media content was developed and published highlighting:

- ✦ Bushfire and campfire safety, specifically in relation to camping on K'gari and in response to recommendations from the *K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review Report 1: 2020-21*
- ✦ Easter bushwalking safety messaging.

Exercises

Exercises are integral to training, developing and preparing QFES personnel to carry out functions during an emergency, recognising that exercising is a valuable learning tool and opportunity to practice interoperability and evaluate equipment, techniques and processes.

QFES personnel participate in a variety of exercise types to increase their competency levels—multi-agency exercises, multi-jurisdictional exercises, functional exercises and small discussion style exercises.

Exercises enable the development, practising, assessment, review, validation and demonstration of factors including:

- ✦ interoperability across QFES Services
- ✦ liaison and engagement with external agencies
- ✦ appropriate response and operational procedures
- ✦ communication plans
- ✦ response times
- ✦ suitability and effectiveness of equipment and personal protective equipment
- ✦ operational preparedness.

Exercises that QFES led, conducted or participated in include:

- ✦ **Exercise Squawk** involved a discussion exercise in March 2024 and a practical field exercise in May 2024 at the Brisbane Airport. The exercise brought together 91 participants from multiple agencies to test the emergency response arrangements relating to an unlawful interference incident at Brisbane Airport in accordance with the Aerodrome Emergency Plan. Objectives of both exercises concentrated on activation and deployment of resources, command and control arrangements and efficacy of response activities, and to test Brisbane Airport Corporation's support role in a multi-agency response. An after-action report was developed which includes improvement opportunities and recommendations for consideration
- ✦ **Operation Storm the Beach**, a large-scale multi-agency exercise was undertaken on South Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) on 24 March 2024 involving approximately 100 personnel. Vessels from the SES, Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland and Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association transported FRS and RFS crews and equipment from the Gold Coast to Stradbroke Island under simulated bushfire conditions. Crews constructed firebreaks using hand tools and blowers, used chainsaws to clear trails and portable pumps to combat simulated house and bush fires. An Incident Management Team was set up at the brigade station involving support crews and Fire Communication Centre operators.

The collaborative effort helped crews develop the skills to provide a swift response to protect the island's communities

- ✦ **Exercise Yakka**, a multi-agency emergency response exercise held in the Airport Link Tunnel in Brisbane in November 2023. The exercise brought together 40 participants from QFES, Translink, QAS and QPS to respond to a multi-vehicle crash and fire, which resulted in the operation of the tunnel deluge and ventilation system. The exercise showcased the importance of effective communication between the incident controller and Translink tunnel control for the management of the deluge system, traffic flow and evacuation control. An after-action review was conducted by the Transurban exercise coordinator
- ✦ **Exercise Minor**, a multi-agency emergency response exercise held on Thursday Island (Waiben), situated in the Torres Strait, in September 2023. The exercise brought together 15 participants from QFES, QPS and Queensland Health, including QAS and Retrieval Services Queensland, to address a multi-casualty incident, showcasing the importance of effective collaboration in remote settings. One of the primary learnings from the exercise was the significance and challenges of rapid response in isolated areas. Remote locations like Thursday Island lack immediate access to extensive medical facilities, which highlighted the need for well-coordinated multi-agency responses. FRS worked seamlessly with the participating agencies to provide real-time care to those affected by the simulated incident. Overall, the exercise demonstrated the importance of preparedness, adaptability and collaboration amongst various emergency response organisations to effectively address complex and challenging incidents in remote locations. This exercise also served as a valuable learning experience and an opportunity to strengthen relationships and coordination between agencies

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- ✦ **2023 Asia-Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise** (APERE), an international and multi-agency emergency response exercise (simulation) was held in Brisbane from 20 to 25 August 2023. QFES partnered with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), DFAT, and Fire and Rescue New South Wales to host the United Nations INSARAG APERE. The exercise was part of Australia's INSARAG commitment and NEMA's National Crisis Exercise Program. Over 250 participants attended, including international teams from Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the United States of America. With a scenario of a large-scale earthquake impacting Brisbane, the aim of the exercise was to strengthen the preparedness and response to a catastrophic earthquake, including concurrent and compounding events, in accordance with local, state and national plans, through an immersive, face-to-face simulation. The exercise focussed on the management and decision-making of state and national bodies, and the coordination of international assistance in response to a catastrophic national disaster
 - ✦ a major exercise held on 16 August 2023, attended by 29 participants including FRS crews, military firefighters from the **Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Amberley Fire Section** and QAS paramedics was held at the RAAF Base at Amberley. The exercise simulated a multi-vehicle road crash with multiple casualties. The purpose of the exercise was to integrate each service in a simulated emergency, testing capability and technical ability to work side-by-side in a challenging scenario-based environment. The exercise tested response protocols and organisation procedures enhancing cohesion and operational proficiency between the services
 - ✦ **Exercise Jaggery**, a multi-agency fire exercise held at the Bulk Sugar Terminal in Mourilyan Harbour within the Cassowary Coast Region in August 2023. The exercise brought together 50 participants from QFES, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Queensland Sugar Limited, Maritime Safety Queensland, Ports North and Innisfail Show Society. The aim of the exercise was to test the response capability of QFES with support of external stakeholders and agencies
 - ✦ **Exercise Ignis**, a bushfire exercise conducted under the auspice of the *Queensland Bushfire Plan* held in Brisbane on 27 July 2023. The exercise was based on several significant bushfires impacting different areas of Queensland triggering requests for local, district and state support, involving a multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional response. The exercise involved more than 200 representatives from local, state and interstate governments, and the Australian Government, including QPS, QAS, Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Defence Force and the NSW State Emergency Service. Non-government organisations such as Powerlink, Telstra and Queenslanders with Disability Network also participated. The aim of the exercise was to consider the impacts of several concurrent large-scale bushfires, operational relationships between stakeholders, communications pathways, the escalation of response arrangements, and reduce risks and keep the community safe. Each year, QFES reviews previous fire seasons and looks for lessons to be learnt for the season ahead.
- In addition, the annual **AUS-1 DART exercise** was held from 12 to 15 September 2023 at SFEST. This full-field deployment exercise involved participants from FRS and QAS, and volunteers including engineers, doctors and canine teams that make up AUS-1 DART. The field exercise involved mobilisation, set up of the Base of Operations, a 36-hour continuous earthquake rescue exercise and team demobilisation to international standards.

Partnerships and sponsorships

QFES engages government, corporate and community stakeholders to establish and strengthen partnerships and programs that deliver strategic, valued and sustainable benefits to its workforce and community. The department's Partnerships and Sponsorship Unit (PaSU) leads this work and develops, manages and provides strategic advice regarding partnerships to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes, and associated governance requirements to ensure fiscal sustainability and policy alignment. In November 2023, the PaSU received the Commissioner's Award for Excellence in the category of Interoperable to recognise team expertise to successfully deliver a significant and diverse portfolio of valued work for the department.

In 2023–24, the department managed and delivered key incoming partnerships and sponsorships worth more than \$1 million in cash and in-kind. This includes significant agreements with Suncorp, Energy Queensland, Powerlink Queensland, National Australia Bank (NAB) Foundation and QSuper, and smaller agreements with organisations that support FRS sporting teams. Additionally, the department managed outgoing partnerships worth more than \$200,000 in cash and in-kind, the most significant being a renewed arrangement with the Townsville Fire Women's Basketball Team and ongoing in-kind partnerships with Bike4Burns Inc, UNIQ You and Beef Australia.

In August 2023, the **NAB Foundation** partnered with RFS through a grant that delivers workshops in traditional knowledge of fire ecology, traditional burning techniques and land management practices, led by the department's First Nations Mitigation Officers in conjunction with local traditional owners and First Nations people. The program also supports a Jigija Indigenous Training Program led by Gangalidda and Garawa Traditional Owners in the remote coastline of the Gulf of Carpentaria, near Burketown. Investment by the NAB Foundation in the RFS First Nations Fire Training workshops is delivering highly valued benefits including building on existing education and relationships and establishing new local stakeholder relationships between local and state government agencies, property owners and RFS staff and volunteers.

The RFS partnership with **Energy Queensland**, now in its tenth year, provides a valuable opportunity to expand capability and safety through the provision of link sticks and hot sticks (a fibreglass rod that is long enough to maintain a safe distance from energized equipment), safety gloves, defibrillators and first-aid kits for rural fire brigades in remote areas, where volunteer work involves electrical safety handling for high voltage equipment, safeguarding both the user and the equipment from damage.

The **QSuper** (part of Australian Retirement Trust) partnership supports the delivery of the QFES Australia Day Awards which recognise staff and volunteers who have performed exceptional work above and beyond the normal course of duty. The 2024 Australian Day Awards recognised 88 people from around the state and 12 external recipients who received Certificates of Appreciation.

Partnership agreements with **Beef Australia** for Beef Week 2024 and **UNIQ You** presented opportunities for QFES to collaborate with other departments for whole-of-government arrangements with the sponsored organisation. The triennial Beef Week held in Rockhampton in May 2024 provided access to more than 100,000 event attendees over five days to provide important community engagement messages for disaster preparedness. UNIQ You promotes female talent within the department, including profiling women working in under-represented roles and available opportunities to high school-aged girls through online engagements and networking. In March 2024, QFES committed a further three years to the partnership with UNIQ You to continue awareness as an employer of choice through the promotion of diverse roles available to young people.

QFES' partnership with **Townsville Fire Women's Basketball** increased the profile of the department within the community and profiled employment opportunities and volunteering to target audiences, especially young female community members.

The department also supports **Bike4Burns**, a week-long 600 kilometre ride from Southport to Brisbane in May each year that raises funds for research to develop better methods for treating burns including reducing recovery time, scarring and pain, and conducting burns prevention campaigns. QFES provided administration support, equipment and vehicles to support the event with the 2024 team raising \$17,700 for the Children's Hospital Foundation. More than \$1 million has been raised by the Bike4Burns committee, sponsors and donors since 2007.

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PaSU also provides ongoing support to **FRS sporting teams** to assist with sponsorship governance for events in particular the 9/11 Commemorative Sports Day that involves 11 men's and women's events held in September each year.

A partnership was also activated in April 2024 with the **Department of Education** to support the Girls Firefighter Experience Camp through the provision of expertise and materials (refer page 55).

In addition, the department continued to engage with, and support the **PCYC Emergency Services Cadets program** through the provision of annual funding and facilities for cadet units, and support staff and volunteers where cadet units are located, following transfer for the responsibility of the management of the service level agreement with PCYC for the program to QPS. The Emergency Services Cadets program is aimed at building community resilience through the fostering of the next generation of emergency services personnel aged 12 to 17 years.

QFD will continue to contribute to the growth of the program into the future.

Community education programs

The department takes a proactive approach in providing a range of education programs to build community understanding and resilience, including Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP), Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) and Safehome.

The department also helps Queensland teachers facilitate age targeted learning in schools through the Fire Ed and Bushfire Ed programs.

During the reporting period, the department:

- ✦ continued to deliver the **RAAP program** with the delivery of 260 program presentations to approximately 27,500 young persons across Queensland schools and learning centres including 315 youth in the Queensland youth justice system.

RAAP is a free, road safety awareness and education program delivered in Queensland schools to Year 11 and 12 students. The program is delivered by specially trained firefighters who have extensive experience responding to road crashes. The program aims to address and mitigate the Fatal 5 as the primary factors associated with road trauma across the state.

As of 30 June 2024, there are 188 trained and active RAAP presenters located throughout Queensland. In May 2024, a total of 45 new RAAP presenters and three new RAAP trainers joined the program with a two-day intake workshop that prepares firefighters for delivering the RAAP program in a professional and compassionate manner. This is the first time the program has welcomed new presenters since 2022.

Due to overwhelming demand, the RAAP program continued to partner with other Queensland Government agencies to extend its program into alternative settings such as youth justice and young people learning outside of mainstream schooling.

RAAP presenters' involvement in the Youth Justice programs is predominantly delivering RAAP to Youth Justice Conferences and in youth detention centres. This involves multiple court-ordered participants, accompanied by a youth worker, speaking more factually regarding road safety in relation to crime.

RAAP presenters also work with Youth Justice case workers and QPS in Restorative Justice Conferences. RAAP presenters share real-life experiences and the consequences of trauma witnessed by firefighters attending road crash incidents.

To enhance delivery of RAAP programs across Queensland, \$2.6 million is provided over four years commencing 2023–24 and \$674,000 per annum ongoing, as part of the Department of Transport and Main Roads Camera Detected Offence Program which funds road safety initiatives.

The department is using the funding to expand the delivery of the RAAP program including alternate settings and conducting regional tours to reach more young drivers across the state. Two regional tours have been conducted since the introduction of the funding with one in Southwest Queensland (Oakey, Chinchilla, Roma, Charleville, Cunnamulla and St George) and one in north coast region area (Kingaroy). Further regional tours have been scheduled for 2024–25.

In addition, as part of the RAAP program, firefighters worked with young people at the Brisbane Youth Education and Training Centre and an Aboriginal artist to create a piece of art exploring the consequences of dangerous road behaviour, painting the artwork over several visits. The artwork is displayed at the Camira Fire and Rescue Station.

- ✦ continued to deliver the **FFF program** supporting parents and guardians with their efforts to educate children and young people (three to 17 years) who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident. The program teaches respectful fire behaviours and develops fire safety skills.

At 30 June 2024, 79 FFF cases were either completed or are in progress with 25 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Youth Justice.

At 30 June 2024, there are 69 trained and active FFF practitioners located throughout Queensland who receive ongoing, regular training and support to maintain effective education and engagement skills

continued over page

- ✦ continued to deliver the **Safehome program** with 326 Safehome visits conducted across the state.

Safehome is a free program where operational firefighters deliver personalised visits with Queensland residents to discuss fire safety hazards in and around their home. During a home visit, residents are provided with customised advice on eliminating or mitigating these hazards, including information on smoke alarm requirements and lithium-ion battery safety.

Queenslanders who are serviced by rural fire brigades are offered a property advice visit which includes a Safehome Kit and provides specific information to help build bushfire resilience.

- ✦ continued delivery of the **Fire Ed** program to year one students to develop an understanding of the dangers of fire, safety around fires and responding to fire emergencies and to establish trust with firefighters. The Fire Ed program is delivered in the classroom by operational firefighters, supported by continued learning delivered by teachers and parents.

In 2023–24, Fire Ed was delivered to approximately 45,500 students in 690 schools.

QFES also continued to support and deliver Fire Ed for Children with Neurodiversity (refer page 56).

- ✦ continued support of the **Bushfire Ed** program.

Bushfire Ed is an optional teacher-led program targeted at students in years 5 and 6. The program aims to assist students develop an understanding of the dangers of bushfires, their causes and effects, and to promote student awareness of bushfire safety.

Objective

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

Strategy

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

Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) went live on 1 September 2022 addressing a recommendation of the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report* (October 2020) which called for state and territory governments to expedite the development and implementation of the AFDRS.

The AFDRS is the primary source of fire danger forecasting in use within Queensland. The system has enhanced public safety and reduced the impacts of bushfires by improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions and improving how fire danger is communicated.

The AFDRS is a first of its kind nationally consistent system for communicating fire danger ratings to the community and forecasting fire behaviour for decision-makers.

The AFDRS has four warning levels:

- ✦ Moderate—plan and prepare
- ✦ High—be ready to action
- ✦ Extreme—take action now to protect life and property
- ✦ Catastrophic—for your survival, leave bushfire risk areas.

During the reporting period, community engagement resources including brochures, fact sheets, posters and fridge magnets were developed providing information about the AFDRS. QFES regions also provided information to the community through engagement activities in the lead-up to the bushfire season.

QFES also conducted a campaign to raise awareness of the AFDRS within Queensland encouraging people to monitor and act on the fire danger ratings for their area (refer page 64).

Under the AFDRS roadside sign program, QFES installed 130 new automatic electronic roadside signs across Queensland that are providing timely and accurate information to high-risk bushfire locations. This completes the first-round commitment made by the Queensland Government, at a total cost of approximately \$1.2 million.

The removal and installation of fire danger ratings signs was undertaken in line with permit requirements of local governments and the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Work is underway to install a further 170 signs across Queensland to provide increased information and awareness for communities in bushfire prone areas. The total cost of phase one, with the installation of 300 signs across Queensland, is forecast to be \$3.1 million.

QFES continued to work closely with AFAC jurisdictional partners to enhance the AFDRS system.

Community Insights Survey 2023

Each year, QFES surveys Queensland residents to measure the level of their preparedness for fire and emergency events. The QFES Community Insights Survey explores a range of emergency and disaster events, preparedness activities and service expectations of QFES. The survey provides important feedback and insights for us as a department so we are able to continue to improve and provide exceptional service to Queenslanders.

In September/October 2023, a total of 2,100 Queenslanders were surveyed across the then seven QFES regions.

The survey found North Queenslanders feel the most prepared for emergencies and the majority of Queenslanders take actions suggested in warnings and alerts.

Fire and hazard response was considered the most important service delivered by QFES, returning to the top position that it previously held in 2021. Warnings and alerts dropped to the second most important but retained its position as the service people were most satisfied with compared with other services, with fire and hazard response second. The 2023 survey also saw the inclusion of road crash rescue as a service for the first time—it ranked as the third most important service.

Queenslanders with installed interconnected smoke alarms was slightly higher in 2023 at 49 per cent (46 per cent in 2022), while awareness of interconnected smoke alarm legislation remained stable at 74 per cent (73 per cent in 2022).

For the full report refer to

www.fire.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-knowledge-centre/surveys

Lessons management

Lessons management drives organisational development through continuous improvement. The lessons management process provides valuable insights into how the department's Capabilities perform through the analysis of internal and external reviews.

A number of operational event and corporate program debriefs were undertaken across the department in 2023–24, where areas of good practice and opportunities for improvement were identified and provided to relevant Capability owners for action planning.

Following the 2022–23 Queensland bushfire season that significantly impacted the then QFES South Western Region, a case study was developed for the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) *Major Incidents Report 2022-23*. AIDR Major Incidents Reports are publicly available at knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/major-incidents-report/

Other key achievements include:

- ✦ continued to promote the legislative changes that require all **domestic dwellings** to install interconnected, photoelectric **smoke alarms** in all bedrooms, hallways and on every storey by 1 January 2027
- ✦ progressed amendments to the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, which will come into effect from 1 July 2024, where a **caravan or motorised caravan** (commonly known as a motorhome) is either registered in Queensland for the first time or its registration is being transferred, is required to have a **compliant smoke alarm**. From 1 January 2027, all registered caravans and motorhomes in Queensland will require a compliant, photoelectric smoke alarm attached to the ceiling of the vehicle. This measure has been progressed to address safety in caravans and motorhomes following a number of fires. Linking the requirement for a smoke alarm to registration provides an opportunity, at a time when people have a touchpoint with government, to target education and encourage compliance. QFES is working with a number of government agencies through a cross agency working group to determine whether smoke alarm requirements should be extended to other moveable dwellings where people sleep
- ✦ developed a range of **merchandise and promotional materials** educating the community on the AWS implemented 1 November 2023 to support engagement at more than 100 community events across Queensland, including emergency services expos, regional shows, food festivals and school holiday events. The AWS has a nationally consistent approach to warnings, including warning levels, icons, colours and action statements, for every community for bushfire, flood, storm, cyclone and extreme heat. The new warnings focus on clear actions people in the warning area should take to stay safe.

Governance

Executive management

As at 30 June 2024

Board of Management profiles

Stephen Smith (Steve)

AFSM EMPA MLshipMgt GAICD

Commissioner

The Commissioner is responsible for leading and managing the efficient and effective functioning of the FRS and RFS. During 2023–24, the Commissioner also led the QFES Reform Implementation Team Support Directorate to support the Emergency Services Reforms.

The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums including as a member of AFAC, the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee, and a member on the national Champions of Change Fire and Emergency Group.

Steve Smith was appointed Commissioner on 17 May 2024 following his appointment as Commissioner (Acting) in October 2023.

As Commissioner, Steve is the Chair of the QFES BoM.

Steve began his career in 1994 progressing through to the rank of Assistant Commissioner in 2015 and has served in various regional and state roles in a variety of specialist areas. Steve has extensive knowledge, skills and experience in emergency and crisis management, domestically and internationally, with a particular interest in leadership and capability development.

Steve was the Assistant Commissioner, South Western Region for more than three years prior to commencing in the position of Assistant Commissioner, QFES People (now known as People and Culture Directorate) where he served the department for over three years.

Steve subsequently acted in all QFES Deputy Commissioner roles at various times, with the most recent extended periods being as the then Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services Division at its inception; and Deputy Commissioner, FRS.

Steve was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) in 2011 for distinguished service and success in technical rescue with outstanding commitment and drive in improving the profile and capability of the Queensland Urban Search and Rescue Taskforce. Steve has completed an Executive Master of Public Administration, a Master of Leadership and Management, and is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Steve has a particular interest in organisational level change, leadership influence, and the human factors that influence organisational behaviour.

Kevin Walsh

AFSM EMPA MLshipMgt

Deputy Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Service (Acting)

The Deputy Commissioner, FRS (formerly Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services) is responsible for providing strategic leadership and control of the FRS which consists of one state directorate and four regions.

The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for the strategic direction of the key functions of fire prevention, preparedness and response services to fire in the built and landscape environments, as well as scientific and specialist rescue capabilities to Queensland communities.

Kevin Walsh was appointed as the Deputy Commissioner, FRS (Acting) in November 2023 to lead the FRS as QFES transitioned to the QFD.

Kevin is committed to strengthening the FRS by focusing on operational excellence with a greater emphasis on training and exercising to enhance firefighter safety.

Kevin began his career in 1992 progressing through the ranks to Assistant Commissioner in January 2018. He led the establishment of the former Emergency Management and Community Capability Directorate before being appointed to the role of Assistant Commissioner, South Eastern Region in July 2019. Kevin has held a range of diverse roles at the regional and state level and has been involved in numerous organisational change initiatives. In the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Debbie in 2017, he was appointed as the Deputy State Recovery Coordinator for North Queensland where he supported recovery operations for local governments and impacted communities.

Kevin has led disaster response teams during major disasters in Queensland and on overseas deployments.

During 2023–24, Kevin was a member of the BoM and Strategy and Budget Committee, and Chair of the Capability and Service Delivery Committee.

Kevin has a Master of Leadership and Management and an Executive Master of Public Administration. In 2012, he was awarded the National Emergency Medal and the AFSM.

Ben Millington

Chief Officer, Rural Fire Service (Acting)

The Chief Officer, RFS (formerly Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services) is responsible for providing strategic leadership and control of the RFS which consists of one state directorate and four regions.

The Chief Officer is responsible for the strategic direction of the key functions of bushfire prevention, preparedness and response services, as well as specialist capabilities including data science and mapping, to ensure the ongoing safety of Queensland communities.

Ben Millington commenced with QFES on 12 February 2024 as Chief Officer, RFS (Acting).

During 2023–24, Ben was a member of the BoM, Chair of the People Committee, and a member of the Strategy and Budget Committee and ARCC.

Ben has a rich background leading volunteer-based emergency services. Ben's previous role was Assistant Commissioner State Operations for NSWRFES. Over the years, Ben has held senior leadership positions in emergency management, state operations and aviation.

In 2016–17, Ben was seconded to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community as a Disaster Management Specialist. His role was to enhance regional capacity and coordination of disaster preparedness in collaboration with Pacific nations.

Ben has extensive operational and change management experience having served as the State Operations Controller during the NSW 2019–20 bushfires. He also played a crucial role in the NSW COVID-19 operational response. Ben's achievements include overseeing the implementation of the LAT program and Computer Aided Dispatch arrangements.

Before joining the NSWRFES in 2011, Ben served in the New South Wales Police Force for over 10 years. In 2013, he undertook a Churchill Fellowship to study mass evacuations and supporting arrangements following significant disasters in New Zealand, Japan, the United States of America and Canada.

Ben has received numerous awards for his work in emergency services, including the National Emergency Medal, National Medal, NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation and Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal.

Adam Stevenson

BEC, EMPA

Chief Operating Officer, Strategy and Corporate Services

The Chief Operating Officer (formerly Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services) is responsible for leading the department's integrated framework and vision, and driving performance and strategic capability across the department. The division works closely with the department's portfolio partners to ensure the planning, policy and capability of its people, services and equipment are at their optimum in readiness for service delivery to the communities of Queensland.

Adam Stevenson commenced with QFES in early 2017 and was appointed Chief Operating Officer on 23 October 2023 following his appointment as Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting) on 8 July 2019.

Adam began his career in the private finance sector prior to joining the Queensland Government in 1993. Throughout his public sector career, Adam has held a series of government executive leadership positions across a range of Queensland Government departments in areas including employment service delivery; ICT strategy; Indigenous economic participation; corporate services; strategic policy and planning; industrial relations and training; and workplace health and safety.

During 2023–24, Adam was a member of the BoM and Chair of the Strategy and Budget Committee.

Adam has a Bachelor of Economics and an Executive Master of Public Administration.

Jennifer Robertson

LLB GradCertBus FAICD FGIA

Independent member

Ms Jennifer Robertson was appointed to the BoM in December 2018 and was QFES' first independent member. With the transition to the QFD on 1 July 2024, Jennifer's term of appointment to the QFES BoM ended on 30 June 2024.

Jennifer is the Managing Director of Board Matters, an Australia-wide corporate governance consulting firm. With a 20-year history, Board Matters is recognised throughout Australia for its leadership and commitment to the highest standards of governance.

Jennifer is a practising lawyer and for more than 18 years has sat on or chaired a number of Boards throughout Australia. These include statutory bodies, public authorities, an Australian Prudential Regulation Authority regulated superannuation fund, an Australian Securities and Investments Commission regulated financial planning entity and many not-for-profit organisations. Many of Jennifer's Board roles combine the complexity of large and diverse businesses whilst overseeing many millions of dollars in a highly accountable, transparent and regulated reporting environment.

Jennifer has a Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Certificate in Business from the Queensland University of Technology. She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Governance Institute of Australia. Jennifer also holds a Certificate in Foundations of Neuroscience with Distinction from the NeuroLeadership Institute.

Board and committees

At 30 June 2024, the QFES governance structure comprises the:

- ✦ Board of Management (BoM)
- ✦ Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC)
- ✦ Strategy and Budget Committee
- ✦ Capability and Service Delivery Committee
- ✦ People Committee.

The QFES governance committee structure at 30 June 2024 is as follows:



The department's committees support the Commissioner and BoM in managing their responsibilities of accountability, strategy, monitoring, policies, communication and resourcing. Each committee has a clear purpose that aligns with delivery of the strategic plan and is charged with monitoring performance of QFES in designated areas

During the reporting period, the governance committees underwent continuous improvement processes. The identified areas for improvement focus on the committees assisting the BoM to achieve the department's objectives as outlined in the strategic plan.

The governance committee structure is underpinned by the executive leadership influence, QFES Capabilities, strategic and organisational plans, support mechanisms and enablers, and explicit authority aligned with accountability and culture.

The governance structure is supported by the ELT comprised of the Commissioner; Deputy Commissioner, FRS; Chief Officer, RFS; Chief Operating Officer, Strategy and Corporate Services; and Assistant Commissioners and Executive Directors. The ELT cohesively drives achievement and actions towards the vision and priorities set by the Commissioner and drives direction, delivery and performance for the department. The ELT collectively provides information, advice and support on strategy development, innovation and risk identification and raises implementation issues for discussion that are of a high enterprise risk or strategic consequence to the department.

Queensland Fire Department – governance committee structure

A review of the QFES Corporate Governance Framework was conducted including the governance committee structure. Through collaboration with the QFES ELT, a new governance structure was designed to improve the business needs of the QFD from 1 July 2024. The changes include the establishment of:

- ✦ a **QFD Executive Leadership Team** to enhance organisational health and holistic interoperability providing the opportunity for the QFD ELT to be involved in developing strategic options for operational priorities.

Membership of the QFD ELT includes:

- Commissioner, QFD
- Deputy Commissioner, QFR
- Chief Officer, RFSQ
- Chief Operating Officer, Strategy and Corporate Services.

Standing invitees include the Chief Fire Officer, Chief Human Resource Officer and Chief Finance Officer.

- ✦ three second-tier committees:
 - **Work Health and Safety Management Committee**—this committee provides advice and makes recommendations to the QFD ELT on the strategic approach to safety, health and wellbeing across the department. It assists in ensuring QFD meets its obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

- **People and Culture Committee**—this committee provides alignment between culture and strategy in addition to providing recommendations and oversight of the departmental people and culture strategy as set by the QFD ELT.
- **Budget Committee**—this committee supports the QFD ELT by providing advice on fiscal management and sustainability and appropriate investment that best serve the department’s objectives and its capabilities.
- ✦ **Service Committees**—QFR; RFSQ; and Strategy and Corporate Services. Each Service committee will be a decision-making body with the responsible Deputy Commissioner/Chief Officer/Chief Operating Officer accountable for operational and strategic agendas within their remit. The organisational governance will be

underpinned by a Capability Review and Investment Process which provides delivery of integrated planning, responsible investment and strategic service delivery. This enables Service committees to develop strategic options and plans at an operational/service level.

The new framework will result in the disestablishment of the QFES Strategy and Budget Committee, Capability and Service Delivery Committee and People Committee effective 30 June 2024.

The **Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee** will continue to form a part of the QFD Corporate Governance Framework.

The QFD governance structure is supported by the **Senior Leadership Team** (formerly QFES ELT).

Board of Management	
Role	The BoM provides stewardship of QFES by providing advice and information to the Commissioner as the accountable officer for the department. The BoM assists the Commissioner with strategic leadership to meet QFES’ objectives including the vision and purpose, and direction setting to ensure compliance and to improve performance. The Board provides direction and guidance along with oversight of the department’s governance committees.
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Stephen Smith (Steve), Commissioner (Chair) ✦ Kevin Walsh, Deputy Commissioner, FRS (Acting) (appointed November 2023) ✦ Ben Millington, Chief Officer, RFS (Acting) (appointed 12 February 2024) ✦ Adam Stevenson, Chief Operating Officer, Strategy and Corporate Services ✦ Jennifer Robertson, independent member. • <i>Stephen Smith was a member of BoM as the former Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting) for the period 5 March 2022 to 7 September 2022 and as Deputy Commissioner, FRS (Acting) commencing 27 February 2023, prior to being appointed Commissioner (Acting) and Chair of the BoM in October 2023. Mr Smith was subsequently appointed Commissioner on 17 May 2024.</i> • <i>Greg Leach, former Commissioner, was a member of the BoM for the period 2 December 2019 to 27 October 2023.</i> • <i>Mike Wassing, Chief Officer, RFS, was a member of the BoM for the period 21 September 2015 to 19 December 2023.</i> • <i>Joanne Greenfield, former Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting), was a member of BoM from 1 September 2022 to 12 November 2023. The then Acting Deputy Commissioner Stephen Smith provided a handover to Acting Deputy Commissioner Greenfield from 1 to 7 September 2022.</i>
Remuneration	The independent member, Jennifer Robertson, was paid \$21,600 (excluding GST) in remuneration for BoM member services including \$9,000 (excluding GST) for BoM member services provided in 2022–23 which was paid in 2023–24 due to delayed processing.
Meetings	The BoM meets every six weeks with additional meetings convened as required. During 2023–24, the BoM met on eight occasions, including extra-ordinary meetings and workshops.

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

Role	<p>The ARCC provides independent assurance and advice to the Commissioner and BoM in discharging responsibilities under the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i>, <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990</i>, <i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i> and subordinate legislation, in relation to the department's risk, internal controls, audit, performance management and compliance frameworks and systems.</p> <p>In addition, ARCC assists in the discharge of annual financial management responsibilities as required under the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> and the <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i>.</p>
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Debbie Best, independent Chair (appointed 1 September 2023) ✦ Karen Prentis, independent member (appointed 1 October 2023) ✦ Greg Chemello, independent member (appointed 1 October 2023) ✦ Ben Millington, Chief Officer, RFS (Acting) (appointed 12 February 2024) ✦ David Hermann, Assistant Commissioner, South Western Region (appointed 1 April 2021). • <i>Sue Ryan was the independent Chair from July 2017 to 31 August 2023.</i> • <i>Debbie Best was appointed independent Chair following her membership as an independent member from 24 August 2022 until 31 August 2023.</i> • <i>Mike Wassing, former Chief Officer, RFS was a member for the period 1 July 2020 to 19 December 2023.</i> • <i>Joanne Greenfield, former Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting), was a member for the period 2 September 2022 to 26 January 2024.</i>
Remuneration	<p>Sue Ryan and Debbie Best were paid \$6,900 and \$10,050 (excluding GST) in remuneration respectively for services provided in 2023–24, and independent members Karen Prentis and Greg Chemello were both paid \$3,150 (excluding GST) in remuneration for services provided in 2023–24.</p>
Meetings	<p>In 2023–24, the committee met on five occasions with an additional meeting held in August 2023 regarding the 2022–23 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement, and a special meeting was held in August 2023 to consider the QFES Information Security Annual Return 2022–23.</p>
Key achievements	<p>In 2023–24, the committee's key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ overseeing implementation of the Emergency Services Reforms and associated activities and transition from QFES to the QFD from 1 July 2024 including the development of the QFD Corporate Governance Framework ✦ overseeing the internal audit program including endorsing and monitoring delivery of the internal audit plan and reviewing the findings and recommendations of internal audits and assessing the adequacy of QFES' management response ✦ monitoring the external audit plan (Queensland Audit Office (QAO)) including oversight of the findings and recommendations ✦ overseeing the implementation of agreed recommendations from internal and external audit activities with a continued focus on the implementation of overdue and ageing recommendations ✦ overseeing the implementation of recommendations made by regulatory authorities such as the Crime and Corruption Commission, Coroner and the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management ✦ reviewing and endorsing the 2022–23 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement and providing recommendations to improve clarity and transparency ✦ noting and monitoring the 2023–24 Financial Statements project plan and preparation

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (cont'd)

Key achievements (cont'd)

- ✦ noting current and future accounting standard changes, impacts and disclosure enhancements relating to the *Queensland Treasury Financial Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*
- ✦ monitoring and reviewing financial controls and accounting matters
- ✦ reviewing and endorsing the QFES 2022–23 ISMS attestation for Commissioner approval (Information security policy IS18:2018: Policy Requirement 5)
- ✦ overseeing key areas of compliance such as business continuity management and risk management, and providing recommendations to ensure departmental officers are aware of their responsibilities under relevant legislation
- ✦ considering the appropriateness of the department's performance management, reporting systems and measures, and providing recommendations to enhance metrics and insights enabling informed decision-making
- ✦ overseeing security risk assessments of QFES' critical assets and operations as part of the department's security governance requirements under the *Queensland Protective Security Framework*.

In addition, as a result of a recommendation by the committee, Karen Prentis, independent member, provided advice and guidance to departmental officers regarding the program of risk transformation work for QFD.

Strategy and Budget Committee

The Strategy and Budget Committee provides stewardship of finance, investment and budgetary related matters and oversees the relevance and integration of strategy development and strategic alignment within QFES.

The committee oversees the department's financial and strategic investment planning and budget performance, and provides advice on effective strategy development, and the coordination of financial management and budget policy while seeking to foster a culture of fiscal responsibility.

Capability and Service Delivery Committee

The Capability and Service Delivery Committee provides stewardship of the appropriate QFES capability and capacity to ensure service delivery is being responsive to the current and future community needs and expectations. The role of the committee includes fostering strategies and activities that promote a positive organisational culture, while seeking to achieve the objectives in the department's strategic plan whilst managing appropriate risk.

People Committee

The People Committee assists the BoM in fulfilling its statutory, corporate governance and oversight responsibilities relating to the people, safety and culture of the department. The committee fosters strategies and activities that promote a positive, diverse and safe organisational culture, aligned to the department's values of respect, integrity, courage, loyalty and trust.

Public Sector Ethics

Public sector employees are bound by the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, and the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (Code of Conduct)*.

The Code of Conduct applies to all QFES personnel, whether permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time or casual, including volunteers, contractors and consultants or anyone who works with the department in any capacity.

The Code of Conduct is based on the ethics, principles and their associated set of values prescribed in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. It also contains standards of conduct for each of the ethics principles:

- ✦ Integrity and impartiality
- ✦ Promoting the public good
- ✦ Commitment to the system of government
- ✦ Accountability and transparency.

Education, training and policy

The QFES *Think. Say. Do.* awareness package promotes awareness of, and provides information about positive workplace behaviour. The package combines workplace behaviour and Code of Conduct awareness training into one, easy to follow interactive package. All staff and volunteers are required to complete this training. Modules include:

- ✦ Code of Conduct
- ✦ Ethical decision-making
- ✦ Positive workplace behaviours
- ✦ Complaints management and reporting
- ✦ Financial management
- ✦ Conflicts of interest (COI)
- ✦ Diversity and inclusion
- ✦ Social media.

The *Think. Say. Do.* awareness training is embedded in the department's corporate induction program, base grade programs such as FRS permanent and auxiliary recruit firefighter training, and the Rural Fire Development Framework—a training structure for RFS staff and volunteers.

At 30 June 2024, the QFES ELT members have completed the Foundations of Policy and Governance Navigating the Political-Administrative Interface course. The online course, delivered by the Griffith Policy Innovation Hub, clarifies expectations, responsibilities and accountabilities for effective public service leadership consistent with Westminster-style principles and best practice. Newly appointed ELT members will complete the course as soon as practicable on commencement with the QFD.

In line with recommendations in the *Let the sunshine in Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector Final Report 28 June 2022*, the Commissioner, senior executives and other key departmental staff met with the Minister and ministerial staff to undertake joint training that builds on the Code of Conduct to ensure there is a clear, shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, and an effective and respectful working relationship.

During the reporting period, the Relations and Standards Branch, within the People and Culture Directorate, delivered a suite of training as part of a pilot program, including training by the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, relating to complaints management, ethical decision-making in complaints, internal review, and managing unreasonable complainant conduct. As part of the pilot program, recognising and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace training was delivered by the Queensland Human Rights Commission. There were 150 places across the suite of programs that were attended by departmental staff across the state. The pilot program collected valuable feedback that will assist in the revision and development of ethics and conduct related training under a QFD People and Culture workforce development framework.

The ethics and conduct related training will be underpinned by a QFD mandatory training policy. This policy will include a schedule of courses and will indicate what training is mandatory for each cohort within QFD, when it needs to be initially undertaken and when refresher training is required. The policy will also articulate who is accountable and responsible to ensure the training is completed in line with the policy.

Work was also undertaken to ensure the mandatory training and any subsequent refresher training is captured by the department's learning management system. The system will enable reminders to be sent to supervisors and individuals to ensure the training is undertaken when required. It will also enable completion reporting to inform managers and executive leaders of completion data within their respective areas.

The Relations and Standards Branch also commenced a project, under the department's Fraud and Corruption Control Mitigation Program, to review and implement training products and policy regarding COI and fraud and corruption control. In addition to this project, the branch revised the COI declaration form. Completed COI forms are captured in a database managed by the branch and processes are in place to ensure declarations made by staff and volunteers remain current. The database and process are also used to capture secondary employment notifications which are checked to ensure they are current within 12 months of being lodged.

Human Rights Act 2019

On 1 January 2020, respecting human rights became the law for all Queensland Government departments under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act). The Act respects, protects and promotes the human rights of all people in Queensland. It requires agencies to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights. Human rights can only be limited in certain circumstances and after careful consideration.

The purpose of the Act is to:

- ✦ protect and promote human rights
- ✦ help build a culture in the Queensland public sector that respects and promotes human rights
- ✦ help promote a dialogue about the nature, meaning and scope of human rights.

The department is committed to its obligations under the Act to respect, protect and promote human rights. The department will continually monitor, evaluate and report on how it has achieved the Act's objectives.

During 2023–24, the department continued to **further the objectives of the Act** and build a culture of human rights into its operations. Highlights include:

- ✦ departmental officers participated in online training hosted by the Queensland Human Rights Commission for Queensland Government employees who are new to working with the Act or require a refresher on the basics
- ✦ more than 1,000 members of the department's workforce (staff and volunteers) completed the Queensland Human Rights Awareness Training. This online training course, available through aXcelerate—the department's student management system, was developed specifically for the department's workforce
- ✦ the department continued its membership and support of the Human Rights Interdepartmental Committee (HRIDC) led by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The HRIDC is comprised of representatives from Queensland Government departments with a key focus to help drive the development of a human rights culture and to provide a forum and opportunity for regular communication and information sharing. As part of its involvement on the HRIDC, departmental officers participated in sessions with Professor Susan Harris Rimmer, independent reviewer of the Act, and her review colleagues about the experience of departments with the Act

- ✦ departmental officers participated in sub-working group meetings of the HRIDC relating to section 28 of the Act which deals with the distinct cultural rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first people to build greater awareness and understanding of that section of the Act. The sub-working group considers the practical implementation of section 28 and its consideration in policy and program development and delivery
- ✦ the department continued to consider human rights in the development of legislative proposals
- ✦ the department continued to ensure human rights are central to the development of new and updated doctrine (policy, procedures, standards, role manuals and operations doctrine) as part of business-as-usual activities
- ✦ the department acknowledged Human Rights Day on 10 December 2023 with the Commissioner promoting whole-of-government Human Rights Day activities and highlighting the obligations of public sector employees to deepen their understanding of the Act and to properly consider human rights in all decisions.

The department is committed to ensuring that all employees act and make decisions in a manner that is compatible with human rights. The department's corporate induction program includes a session specifically focused on human rights and a guide and decision-making checklist are available on the staff intranet.

The department conducts annual workforce experience surveys such as WfQ and VfQ surveys to measure and monitor staff and volunteer experiences. The annual surveys are a confidential forum enabling the department to gauge its performance collectively and in each division, region and branch. The WfQ 2023 results indicate that 74 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement '*I understand how the Human Rights Act 2019 applies to my work*'—an increase of two per cent from the 2022 survey. The equivalent question in the VfQ survey '*I understand how the Human Rights Act 2019 applies to my volunteering*', also showed an increase of two per cent from the 2022 survey—from 62 per cent to 64 per cent.

The QFES strategic plan 2022–2026 (reviewed/updated 2023) included the department’s commitment to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in decision-making and actions, and the QFD’s strategic plan 2024–2028 will include the department’s ongoing commitment.

The department’s complaints management processes are conducted in a manner compatible with participants’ human rights and complaint assessment processes consider the provisions under the Act; ensuring relevant conduct matters are addressed or relevant referral processes undertaken.

A **human rights complaint** is defined in the Act (section 63) as: *a complaint about an alleged contravention of section 58(1) by a public entity in relation to an act or decision of the public entity.*

During 2023–24, two human rights complaints were lodged with the QHRC. One matter was finalised and one matter is ongoing. In addition, two matters were received by the department and were assessed as suitable for management action. One matter was not substantiated and the complainant was provided with outcome advice, and one matter was discontinued as the matter occurred outside of the department’s jurisdiction with outcome advice provided.

Accountability and risk management

External scrutiny

A number of state bodies have been established by legislation to provide independent views and/or assurance of the government's performance including the Queensland Audit Office (QAO), Ombudsman, Coroner, Crime and Corruption Commission and Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management.

During 2023–24, the QAO examined the operations and performance of QFES, or other agencies with findings or issues requiring consideration by, or impacting on, QFES.

Queensland Audit Office

The QAO supports the role of the Auditor-General of Queensland in providing Parliament with an independent assessment of financial management and reporting, and performance activities of public sector entities.

QAO reports are accessible at www.qao.qld.gov.au

Responding to and recovering from cyber attacks Report 12: 2023–24

The report discusses how prepared Queensland public sector entities, including local governments, are to deal with cyber security incidents. The QAO directed six recommendations to public sector entities relating to their role in managing cyber incidents. QFES is implementing the recommendations.

State entities 2023 Report 11: 2023–24

Most public sector entities prepare annual financial statements. The Auditor-General is responsible for providing Parliament with an independent assurance of the financial management of public sector entities by auditing these financial statements.

The report summarises the QAO's assessment of the financial position, performance and assurance process of the Queensland Government, and the timeliness and quality of financial reporting by public sector entities for 2022–23.

QFES received an unmodified audit opinion with the legislative deadline achieved.

Risk management

Risk management is an essential component in achieving the department's vision, purpose and objectives and the department's risk management approach is in accordance with the obligations outlined in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The QFES Risk Management Framework is based on the international standard ISO 31000:2018 *Risk management – Guidelines* and ensures that risk management is integrated with all management responsibilities such as strategic, operational and program/project level planning to enhance decision-making.

To ensure risk management is at the forefront of strategic decision-making as QFES transitions to the QFD, a full review of Enterprise Risks commenced to ensure they are relevant and aligned to the vision, purpose and objectives in the QFD strategic plan 2024–2028. This includes updating the Risk Management Framework, Risk Appetite Statement and a refreshed reporting approach driven by the accountable and responsible officers for each enterprise risk.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit operates independently and provides risk-based assurance and advisory services to the Commissioner, the ARCC and senior management.

Internal Audit plays a critical role in:

- ◇ managing and mitigating risks
- ◇ enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of internal control systems
- ◇ monitoring compliance with regulations, legislation, policies and procedures
- ◇ providing assurance on the design adequacy and operating effectiveness of controls
- ◇ improving governance and oversight activities
- ◇ encouraging a culture of continuous improvement by identifying opportunities for process enhancements and operational efficiencies
- ◇ detecting and preventing fraud and misconduct through proactive auditing and monitoring activities.

Systems are in place to ensure the effective, efficient and economical operation of the audit function, including:

- ◇ performing work in line with the department's approved Internal Audit Charter
- ◇ an annual internal audit plan and a three-year strategic internal audit plan that sets the direction for Internal Audit
- ◇ consultation with various stakeholders within the department to identify areas of significant operational and financial risk during the annual internal audit planning stage
- ◇ various types of reviews to manage identified risks including compliance, performance, financial management and information technology
- ◇ performing special audits requested by management in areas identified as being at-risk.

Achievements for 2023–24 include:

- ◇ successfully executed the annual internal audit plan to address key and emerging risks and provided final audit reports to the ARCC and BoM
- ◇ monitored and reported on the status of the implementation of internal and external (QAO and Crime and Corruption Commission) audit recommendations to the ARCC and BoM
- ◇ supported management by providing advice on corporate governance and related issues including fraud and corruption prevention programs and risk management.

Information systems and recordkeeping

The QPS Information Management Unit (IMU) operates and manages information and recordkeeping systems to support specific recordkeeping functions for public safety agencies and Queensland Shared Services including QFES. In addition, the IMU provides strategic recordkeeping advice to QFES.

During the reporting period, the QPS IMU records management team provided advice and assistance to QFES, resulting in improved efficiencies, including:

- ◇ providing advice on recordkeeping and training in the use of the RecFind records management system, ensuring new users were made aware of, and understood, their broader recordkeeping responsibilities
- ◇ promoting effective digital recordkeeping governance including the provision of advice on technologies and concepts, and the development of suitable approaches to facilitate continued progression to more efficient electronic information management practices
- ◇ commencing a body of work to enable transition of digitised FRS Greater Brisbane Region building fire safety records from the electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS) managed by IMU, to the business system utilised by Regional Community Safety and Resilience Branch staff. Once the migration process is completed, access to current and historical building fire safety records will be via a single system, significantly reducing access time to these records
- ◇ creating 1,150 electronic and hardcopy files and more than 540 new archive boxes using the RecFind records management system for QFES business units.

Public records are kept for the periods specified in the whole-of-government and agency retention and disposal schedules. Public records are only destroyed once retention period timeframes are satisfied, the business owner confirms there are no other lawful or business requirements to retain the records and approval is received from the authorised QFES nominee.

There were no known breaches of information security with respect to records managed within the RecFind records management system during the reporting period.

No transfers of public records to Queensland State Archives were made during the reporting period.

The QFES Information and Technology Directorate undertook the following activities to support improved information and records management:

- ❖ the Personally Identifiable Information Project was established. This project aims to reduce the risk profile associated with the capture, use, disclosure, storage and retention of personally identifiable information in core organisational structured and unstructured systems
- ❖ the eDRMS project commenced and delivered an agreed set of business requirements. The business requirements will inform a solution which will support the department's goal of building organisational information management capabilities and enable it to maximise the value of documents and records with consistent and timely capture and compliance management.

The department anticipates a number of benefits from the new system including improved accessibility, and a reduction in duplication and information-sharing across the department. An eDRMS will also enhance life-cycle management of records by automating controls governing information security and disposal. The timing of this project's delivery will be considered in alignment with the ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap.

QFES also continued to maintain currency of policies and standards that comprise the department's Information Management Framework. Policies and standards, including the Information Management Roles and Responsibilities Standard, are available on the staff intranet and are communicated at the department's corporate inductions.

Information security attestation statement

QFES is committed to embedding strategic, consistent and structured enterprise-wide information security practices that align with the Queensland Government *Information security policy (IS18:2018)*. The policy requires that all agencies must implement and operate an Information Security Management System (ISMS) based on ISO/IEC 27001:2013 ISMS - requirements. The function of an ISMS is to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information.

The Queensland Government ISMS Assurance Maturity Model consists of five levels ranging from level 1 (Pre-implementation) to level 5 (Certified), with each stage representing a department's progression in establishing and enhancing their ISMS.

Throughout 2023–24, QFES significantly progressed rolling out its ISMS, advancing from the initial phase of 'Implementing' to level 3 stage 'Developing'. This demonstrates the department's commitment to continuous improvement of its information security posture.

The progress made in refining the ISMS has led to QFES being recognised with a notable achievement against the *Queensland Protective Security Framework*. The QFES ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap highlights the department's strategic commitment to modernising ICT and safeguarding information, forming part of a holistic approach to reinforcing information security across the department.

The department's annual independent audit for 2023–24 against ISO/IEC 27001:2013 prompted initiatives for ongoing refinement of the ISMS. Progress in addressing the initiatives will be tracked through the department's ISMS Corrective Action and Improvements Register. ISMS assurance activities are guided by a three-year roadmap.

Furthermore, the QFES ISMS complements the Frontline and Digital Division, QPS ISMS. The QPS Frontline and Digital Division provides ICT and cyber security services to QFES under a shared services arrangement. The QPS Frontline and Digital Division is operating a certified ISMS and the scope includes critical assets such as physical, information and data.

Information security risk management activities were uplifted during the reporting period by establishing security working groups with key QPS Frontline and Digital Division and QFES Information Management; Risk and Business Continuity Management; and Security Management Units, focusing on risk identification and mitigation, and improving risk assessment procedures internally and for third-party partners.

In line with IS18:2018 policy requirements, during the mandatory annual information security reporting process, the Commissioner attested to the appropriateness of the information security risk management within QFES. Formal notification will be provided to the Queensland Government Chief Information Security Officer by 30 September 2024 in accordance with IS18:2018, noting that appropriate assurance activities have been undertaken to inform this opinion and the department's information security risk position.

Open data

QFES is committed to releasing data to the community, aligning with the principles contained in the Queensland Government Open Data Policy Statement.

Open data is non-sensitive data that is freely available, easily discovered and accessed, published in ways and with licenses that allow easy reuse by anyone, anywhere, at any time.

In lieu of inclusion in this report, the following information, relevant to QFES, is available on the Queensland Government Open Data website (www.data.qld.gov.au):

- ✧ consultancy expenditure
- ✧ overseas travel expenditure
- ✧ *Queensland Language Services Policy* performance measures.

Human resources

Strategic workforce planning and performance

Workforce profile

	FTE	Headcount
Total paid staffing for QFES as at 30 June 2024	3,846.84	5,598

The increase of 20.92 FTE from 2 July 2023 (3,825.92) to 30 June 2024 is mainly attributed to the 2020 Government Commitment to recruit additional paid firefighters to strengthen Queensland's frontline emergency response for fire and emergency services, and the RFS Uplift to support volunteer emergency services. This increase may seem lower than expected due to the transitioning of disaster management and SES staff to QPS during the reporting period.

The workforce profile FTE data at 30 June 2024 was provided by the Public Sector Commission in line with the Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies. The FTE figure of 3,859 reported in the 2023–24 Financial Statements is drawn from QFES workforce data which may include on-boarding of new staff and separations not captured in the Public Sector Commission data at the corresponding time.

Occupation Types by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Corporate	11.51
Frontline and Frontline Support	88.49
Appointment Type by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Permanent	90.33
Temporary	4.00
Casual	5.17
Contract	0.49
Employment status by Headcount	Percentage of total workforce based on Headcount
Full-time	64.74
Part-time	1.54
Casual	33.73

Notes:

1. The FTE figure is calculated using the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) aligned methodology.
2. FTE and headcount data is as at fortnight ending 30 June 2024 as per MOHRI reporting.
3. FTE and headcount includes active, paid employees only.
4. Due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters they are represented as 0.1 of an FTE.

Target group data

Workforce profile data	Number (headcount)	Target 2023–2026 (percentage)	Percentage of total workforce based on headcount unless otherwise indicated
Gender			
Woman	1,087	N/A	19.42
Man	4,494	N/A	80.28
Non-binary	17	N/A	0.30
Diversity groups			
Women	1,087	N/A	19.42
Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples	145	4.0	2.59
People with disability	73	12.0	1.30
CALD—Speak a language at home other than English including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Australian South Sea Islander languages	165	12.0	2.95
Women in leadership roles			
Senior Officers (Classified and s155 equivalent)	13	50.0	43.33 <i>Women as a percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives (Classified and s155 equivalent)	3	50.0	13.04 <i>Women as a percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>

Notes:

1. Headcount and percentage data is as at fortnight ending 30 June 2024 as per MOHRI reporting.
2. Headcount, percentage of total workforce and percentage of the leadership cohort is calculated on active, paid employees only.
3. Women in leadership roles are considered those positions that are Senior Officer and equivalent, and above. For QFES this includes Chief Executive Officer, Senior Executive Service, Senior Officer, Section 155 *Public Sector Act 2022* Senior Executive Service/Senior Officer equivalent, and Chief Superintendent classifications.
4. Target percentages are Public Sector Governance Council approved as at 17 April 2023.
5. N/A – not applicable.

Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

No early retirement, redundancy or retrenchment packages were paid to QFES staff during 2023–24.

Workforce planning and performance

Strategic Workforce Planning Framework

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

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

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

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

Equity and diversity

The QFES Equity and Diversity Plan (the plan) was finalised in March 2024. The plan outlines QFES’ commitment to promoting and fostering equity, diversity and inclusion, and aims to create a safe, capable and inclusive workforce that is representative of the communities we serve and where individuals from all backgrounds can thrive and contribute to our collective success. The plan is designed to support the new QFD and is available on the department’s website at www.fire.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-knowledge-centre/reports-plans-and-reviews

During 2023–24, QFES undertook an equity and diversity audit to fulfil the Commissioner’s obligations to progress equity, diversity, respect and inclusion in accordance with the *Public Sector Act 2022*. The audit utilised analysis of the September 2023 MOHRI data and QFES’ WfQ results that identified several areas for improvement.

The data and information contained in the audit will be used to inform further analysis, inquiry and empirical research to inform the annual review of the department’s strategic workforce plan and the forthcoming QFD 2025 Equity and Diversity Plan.

The Gender Equity Advisory Group, established in 2021–22, continued to support the empowerment, development and retention of women and others within the paid and volunteer workforce who are from under-represented groups. The advisory group, which has representatives from across QFES, achieves this by:

- ✦ encouraging and connecting the QFES workforce to support women
- ✦ providing training and development in relation to gender equity
- ✦ advocating and advising on issues affecting women and gender equity
- ✦ promoting initiatives that support diversity and inclusion.

Attraction and recruitment

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

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

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

QFES continued its partnership with *Job Access*—a disability employment service provider—to work with QFES to ensure all recruitment processes are being driven through a disability employment lens.

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

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

The forthcoming QFD 2025 Equity and Diversity Plan will outline key measures to support candidates in a recruitment process who identify as Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, people with CALD backgrounds, and women applying for leadership positions.

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

Employee performance management framework

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

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

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

accessibility to all personnel and includes links to nomination forms.

Industrial and employee relations framework

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

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

In compliance with IR Act provisions, consultative arrangements for QFES employees and their respective unions are outlined in Certified Agreement provisions (in either the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Certified Agreement 2022* or in the *State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2023*). These arrangements provide for regularity of consultative committee meetings (bimonthly or quarterly with each union) and terms of reference outline the nature of matters which can be tabled for discussion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The department's staff intranet provides employees with ready access to policies and procedures pertaining to Human Resource Management and Industrial/Employee Relations topics.

QFES Leadership Framework

The QFES Leadership Framework and Leadership Foundation Programs align to the themes of the Queensland Government's *3-year Human Capital Strategic Roadmap 2022* and *Leadership Competencies for Queensland*.

The Leading Self and Leading Others programs continue to be delivered across the state to QFES employees and volunteers. The Leading Leaders program, relevant to senior officers, is continuing to be developed and will be informed by contemporary leadership development methodology and trials of program components with the workforce. The fourth of the department's Leadership Foundation Programs, Leading Organisations, is relevant to the ELT and commenced in May 2024.

Aligned to the Leadership Foundation Programs, QFES successfully developed and delivered four Connecting Women programs in the reporting period with approximately 90 participants from across the department. The Connecting Women program, held over two-days, aims to develop a leadership and capability pipeline of future leaders and is designed to support female staff and volunteers who are in a leadership role or wanting to step into a leadership role.

Through the utilisation of internal resources and existing whole-of-government programs, such as those provided by the Public Sector Commission through the Queensland University of Technology and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, current and emerging leaders have access to leading practice content and concepts.

Health, safety and wellbeing

Enhancing the department's health, safety and wellbeing performance continues to be the department's focus. This commitment has been demonstrated with the implementation of the *QFES Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2024* and was fostered throughout 2023–24 with clear strategies.

Health, safety and wellbeing is delivered across the department by the following services:

- ✦ safety alerts and bulletins
- ✦ facilitation of work health and safety (WHS) risk assessments and task analyses
- ✦ development of contemporary draft medical standards to inform recruitment, rehabilitation and return to work activities. These standards will be subject to extensive consultation prior to being published in 2024–25
- ✦ subject matter input into WHS investigations, findings and reports
- ✦ workplace safety inspections and audits
- ✦ analysis of WHS-related data
- ✦ coordinated responses to WorkCover Queensland, Workers' Compensation Regulator and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland
- ✦ involvement in multi-disciplinary working groups or advisory groups related to WHS issues
- ✦ training related to WHS
- ✦ safety leadership and culture interventions
- ✦ health and wellbeing advice and programs
- ✦ injury and illness management advice, case management and support
- ✦ research related to WHS and wellbeing.

During the reporting period, the department:

- ✦ collaborated with other government agencies on legislation to expand the list of presumptive cancers for firefighters
- ✦ developed and implemented the Ill Health Transfer Procedure that supports ill or injured employees to be redeployed into alternate roles rather than being medically retired. The procedure was developed in consultation with stakeholders including industrial bodies
- ✦ conducted a noise measurement and mitigation program on the most recent series of Type 2 and 3 appliances. Following support, collaboration and engagement with QFES Fleet Unit, FRS and industrial bodies, the appliances were accepted into service
- ✦ initiated engagement with Energy Queensland and the Electrical Safety Office to collaborate on the development of an electrical safety handbook for first responders with consideration given to the level of SWER (Single Wire, Earth Return) lines in remote and regional areas, the growing number of green energy generation and storage facilities, and the different response capabilities in remote and rural areas covering a large geographical area

- ✦ completed a review of the QFES Work Health and Safety Management System against requirements of *ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management System* to enhance its integrity and evaluate its implementation and effectiveness to enable and support continual improvement. The results of the assessment will be used to develop an improvement plan for 2024–25.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing

FESSN provides a broad range of support services for the department’s staff and volunteer workforce to promote mental health and wellbeing. The network delivers support services to assist with managing personal or work-related challenges including:

- ✦ confidential professional counselling is available to all QFES staff and volunteers, and their immediate families—delivered by a network of independent, external professional mental health practitioners in various locations across the state
- ✦ 24-hour telephone counselling for after-hours support is available to all QFES staff and volunteers and their immediate families. This is a pager service with calls returned by the on-call counsellor within two hours
- ✦ Peer Support Program—a network of specially trained QFES PSOs who voluntarily assist colleagues with personal or work-related difficulties
- ✦ a Critical Incident Response and Management program that ensures support for QFES members involved with emotionally challenging experiences
- ✦ a disaster mental health service that provides education, resources and support for managing the challenges of disaster operations
- ✦ leadership advice services to inform and assist all leaders in managing the mental health of their people as they carry out the duty of care for QFES
- ✦ a broad range of training, education and resources to promote mental health awareness and support services available to staff and volunteers.

The support services within QFES include the Chaplaincy Service Support Network which provides personal support services to the department’s staff and volunteers, current serving and retired, and their families, on religious, spiritual, moral, ethical, cultural and welfare matters. QFES contracts chaplaincy services through The Salvation Army and comprised 15 Chaplains in the network during the reporting period.

During 2023–24, FESSN was allocated new positions of Manager, Mental Health Services in each Corporate Services Hub and a Program Manager for Disaster Mental Health Services. With seven of the nine proposed positions onboarded at 30 June 2024, recruitment will continue in 2024–25 to fill the remaining Manager, Mental Health Services positions to ensure that each region has a dedicated support to promote mental health.

The QFES Mental Health Strategy outlines the risk and resilience profile of the department and the approaches to achieve improved outcomes for QFES members’ mental health across the ‘whole-of-career life’. The strategy has adopted the four key principles of Prevent, Prepare, Respond and Recover. During the reporting period, in progressing the objectives of the strategy, QFES participated in several organisational initiatives and campaigns to raise awareness of mental health including *Are they Triple OK?* and *R U OK?* which specifically recognises the mental health challenges faced by first responder agency members. *R U OK? Day* events included a livestream discussion on the importance of mental health for QFES members and how QFES can take further steps to encourage open conversations.

QFES hosted and participated in the Movember event which raised \$60,000 in support of men’s mental and physical health.

Proactive Resilience Services

QFES has adopted a ‘stepped care approach’ and implemented a range of initiatives tailored to the department’s specific needs to achieve the objectives of the QFES Mental Health Strategy including the QFES Active Resilience Engagement (QARE). QARE is an individual wellbeing check-in program utilising QFES counsellors that can be provisioned preventatively. QARE sessions are routinely scheduled for high-risk teams or reactively targeted for teams with recent high exposure. The QARE program broadens the network of support and reduces stigma by providing check-ins to all teams. QARE sessions are particularly beneficial for providing escalated support options during significant operational events. In 2023–24, FESSN provided more than 705 QARE sessions over 83 sites across the state.

Peer Support Services

The QFES Peer Support program consists of 177 active PSOs at 30 June 2024 from a range of roles across the state, who volunteer to assist colleagues with work or personal challenges. PSOs play a crucial role in providing practical and emotional support such as post critical incidents, providing information sessions on mental health, and assisting colleagues with work or personal challenges.

During the reporting period, PSOs provided more than 4,290 hours of support to over 4,500 members. In addition, FESSN delivered two PSO foundation training courses onboarding 46 new PSOs across the state.

Counselling Support Services

The QFES counselling service, consisting of 124 Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registered psychologists and accredited mental health social workers with experience and expertise in trauma and first responder agencies, continued to support QFES' staff, volunteers and families. During the reporting period 14 counsellors joined the counselling network. In 2023–24, FESSN counsellors delivered 3,919 individual support sessions.

Critical Incident Services

During 2023–24, FESSN responded to an average of 62 critical incidents each month across Queensland. As at 30 June 2024, 116 PSOs have been trained and approved for Peer Support Response following a critical incident including 21 who completed the additional training in 2023–24.

FESSN conducted an internal review as part of the ongoing regular evaluation of Critical Incident Management systems and practices. The purpose was to:

- ✦ understand the current process for how support is activated following a critical incident
- ✦ review the functions of different roles in the department in activating, reporting and providing ongoing support
- ✦ understand where the gaps are in providing psychological support to staff and volunteers through critical incidents
- ✦ better support QFES people to prevent psychological harm, mentally prepare them for the role, and respond proactively following exposure to potentially traumatic events.

The review process incorporated a desktop analysis of doctrine and guidelines, followed by a department-wide questionnaire tailored to understand the potential challenges, gaps, areas for improvement, and what is working well, from several perspectives including:

- ✦ members who have been exposed to critical incidents through their work with QFES
- ✦ leaders who support others during incidents
- ✦ Critical Incident trained PSOs
- ✦ Regional Supervision Counsellors who support the PSOs.

Outcomes identified have been discussed with relevant regional leaders and regionally specific initiatives have been undertaken in collaboration between regional leaders and regional managers of Mental Health Services to address potential areas for improvement.

Disaster Mental Health Services

The role of Manager, Disaster Mental Health Services was introduced to QFES during 2023–24 and is building the framework and processes to support the ongoing program governance. Key stakeholders have been consulted on identifying specific needs to address challenges of disaster operations and FESSN has contributed to policy development on addressing psychosocial risks related to disaster events. The Disaster Mental Health Strategy has been designed with PPRR objectives.

A range of support services are provided to support QFES members involved with disaster events including:

- ✦ continued provision of QARE sessions for key personnel involved with high risk or prolonged disaster events
- ✦ the provision of education and resources on Disaster Mental Health Awareness continued to be delivered to specific areas and an online information session was presented through the QFES 'Lunch Bytes' format in February 2024
- ✦ the provision of information sessions and resources on adaptive coping strategies to manage disaster operations, including online access to services for those directly impacted by events and FESSN services information incorporated into deployment packs
- ✦ the provision of resources and communications for family members of QFES deployees regarding available support services
- ✦ the deployment of PSOs and counsellors to impacted areas to provide practical and immediate support for disaster operations.

The department also provides follow-up mental health support to assist recovery of personnel who support disaster events as required.

Training Services

To increase understanding of mental health and foster a culture of resilience, FESSN provides tailored training services to meet the unique challenges experienced by QFES personnel. FESSN Training Services provided more than 400 hours of training in 2023–24 through presentation of the following areas:

- ✦ Critical Incident Response and Management Training
- ✦ Connecting Women
- ✦ Disaster Mental Health Resilience
- ✦ FESSN Services Awareness
- ✦ Mental Health Awareness
- ✦ Mental Health Leadership
- ✦ Power of Resilience
- ✦ PSO Training
- ✦ Recruit Training.

The CareFULLeaders Mental Health Leadership program aims to meet the needs of staff and volunteers from day-to-day challenges through to the application of the QFES Tactical Directive *Incident Ground Support FESSN – Critical Incident Response and Management Activation* in large scale response. During 2023–24, 700 QFES leaders completed the CareFULLeaders Mental Health Leadership program and FESSN delivered 72 hours (21 sessions) statewide of Mental Health Leadership training through the CareFULLeaders program.

The training was delivered in a mixed model of internal and external psychologists. External training providers were contact psychologists who have ongoing roles as part of the QFES preferred provider network and are familiar with QFES, its culture and people, as well as the challenges faced by its leaders, personnel and the broader QFES community.

Mental health awareness and trauma preparedness training was also provided to permanent and auxiliary FRS recruits (17 intakes) and Fire Communications Officer recruits (two intakes).

Not Now, Not Ever to domestic and family violence

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

During the reporting period, the department:

- ✦ presented DFV awareness sessions to new staff at corporate inductions
- ✦ continued its participation in the Domestic Violence Safe Phone initiative that collects unused and replacement mobile phones and gives them to people who experience DFV and are in need of a mobile phone
- ✦ promoted the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, leading up to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November 2023, with information and resources for practical help, including supporting Zephyr Education Australia in providing children in DFV shelters with educational supplies
- ✦ participated in DFV Prevention Month during May 2024, with the theme *It's in our control to end coercive control*. This annual initiative aims to raise awareness of DFV and coercive control, highlighting the support services available and sending a clear message that violence in Queensland communities will not be tolerated. Departmental initiatives included:
 - ◆ promotion to staff and volunteers of the department's online training course *Recognise, Respond, Refer: domestic violence and the workplace*. This training course, available through aXcelerate—the department's student management system, enables information to be turned into action. The training aims to increase bystander confidence to report or respond to violence, as well as encouraging people using violence to recognise their actions and seek help to change their behaviour
 - ◆ an event organised by the Leading Women's Network and attended by QFES staff, either in person or online, titled *Tackling Domestic and Family Violence by raising awareness and building resilience*
 - ◆ participation in the 2024 Darkness to Daylight challenge throughout the month of May, for the eleventh year, with the Darkness to Daylight live event held on 30 May 2024. QFES members from across the state supported bringing an end to DFV and raising awareness of DFV and coercive control through building awareness and fundraising including challenging themselves to run or walk 110 kilometres in the month of May in honour of those who have died. The QFES Every Step Counts team raised more than \$8,500
 - ◆ promotion of DFV Prevention Month including the production of social media videos for QPS and promotion of QFES' involvement with the 2024 Darkness to Daylight Challenge.

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Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Financial Statements For the year ended 30 June 2024

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Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of comprehensive income
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Income from continuing operations			
Appropriation revenue	4	262,193	202,940
User charges and fees	5	56,774	60,504
Emergency management levies	6	659,628	625,202
Grants and other contributions	7	37,116	35,869
Other revenue		11,569	9,219
Total revenue		1,027,280	933,734
Gains on disposal and remeasurement of assets	8	552	1,939
Total income from continuing operations		1,027,832	935,673
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee expenses	9	628,755	572,751
Supplies and services	11	324,691	237,363
Grants and subsidies	12	18,291	23,043
Depreciation and amortisation	16-18	51,610	50,776
Interest on lease liability		1,169	476
Other expenses	13	15,725	13,663
Total expenses from continuing operations		1,040,241	898,072
Operating result for the year *		(12,409)	37,601
Other comprehensive income not reclassified to operating result			
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	17	28,340	43,311
Total other comprehensive income		28,340	43,311
Total comprehensive income		15,931	80,912

* 2023-24 operating result is due to additional expenditure from bushfire and severe weather deployments with reimbursement under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to occur in 2024-25.

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of financial position
As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		101,408	150,239
Receivables	14	76,824	106,553
Inventories		8,318	6,961
Prepayments		4,120	6,925
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	15	7,728	-
Total current assets		198,398	270,678
Non-current assets			
Intangible assets	16	151	377
Property, plant and equipment	17	1,050,286	956,600
Right-of-use assets	18	27,128	29,530
Total non-current assets		1,077,565	986,507
Total assets		1,275,963	1,257,185
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Payables	19	54,300	48,174
Lease liabilities	18	1,992	3,014
Accrued employee benefits	20	24,287	39,965
Other current liabilities		748	351
Total current liabilities		81,327	91,504
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	18	25,878	26,800
Total non-current liabilities		25,878	26,800
Total liabilities		107,205	118,304
Net assets		1,168,758	1,138,881
Equity			
Contributed equity		853,145	839,199
Accumulated surplus		204,735	217,144
Asset revaluation surplus		110,878	82,538
Total equity		1,168,758	1,138,881

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of changes in equity
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Contributed equity			
Opening balance		839,199	833,423
Transactions with owners as owners:			
Appropriated equity adjustments	4	13,946	7,472
Net transfers from/(to) other Queensland Government entities	3	-	(1,696)
Closing balance		853,145	839,199
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)			
Opening balance		217,144	179,543
Operating result		(12,409)	37,601
Closing balance		204,735	217,144
Asset revaluation surplus			
Opening balance		82,538	39,227
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	17	28,340	43,311
Closing balance *		110,878	82,538
Total equity		1,168,758	1,138,881

* Asset revaluation surplus is comprised of: Land \$42.542m (2022-23: \$24.776m) and Buildings \$68.336m (2022-23: \$57.762m).

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Service appropriation receipts	298,761	166,658
User charges and fees	52,640	59,636
Emergency management levies	655,895	648,562
Grants and other contributions	22,829	20,714
GST input tax credits from ATO	43,653	30,675
GST collected from customers	4,841	5,095
Other	5,784	4,268
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Employee expenses	(639,465)	(557,207)
Supplies and services	(324,967)	(218,165)
Grants and subsidies	(18,291)	(23,043)
GST paid to suppliers	(43,690)	(31,176)
GST remitted to ATO	(4,841)	(5,095)
Other	(2,154)	(1,931)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	50,995	98,991
Cash flows from investing activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Sales of property, plant and equipment	986	8,322
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(114,820)	(72,533)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(113,834)	(64,211)
Cash flows from financing activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Equity injections	21,329	9,181
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Equity withdrawals	(3,138)	(3,138)
Lease payments	(4,183)	(3,074)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	14,008	2,969
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(48,831)	37,749
Cash at beginning of financial year	150,239	112,490
Cash at end of financial year	101,408	150,239

Accounting Policy - Cash

Cash assets include cash on hand, and all cash and cheques receipted but not banked as at 30 June.

The department has an overdraft facility with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) with an approved limit of \$110m (2022-23: \$180m). This facility is utilised periodically and is available for use in the next reporting period. As at the reporting date the facility remains unutilised.

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities		
Operating result	(12,409)	37,601
Non-cash items included in operating result:		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	51,610	50,776
Contributed assets received	(3,589)	(4,843)
Assets donated	4	-
Assets written on	(5,295)	(1,935)
Losses on disposal of property, plant and equipment	506	509
Work in progress written off	1,889	-
Gains on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(552)	(1,549)
Revaluation decrement reversal	-	(390)
Impairment losses	(32)	(116)
Lease interest expense	1,169	476
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	28,338	(18,363)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(1,357)	1,103
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	2,805	(856)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	3,189	17,521
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	(15,678)	20,822
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	397	(1,765)
Net cash from operating activities	50,995	98,991
Reconciliation of liabilities arising from financing activities		
Opening balance	29,815	9,182
New leases	-	23,688
Other adjustments	1,069	(457)
Non-cash changes:		
Interest	1,169	476
Cash flows:		
Lease liability repayments	(4,183)	(3,074)
Closing balance	27,870	29,815

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

1 Basis of financial statement preparation

(a) General information

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is a Queensland Government department under the *Public Sector Act 2022* and is controlled by the State of Queensland, which is the ultimate parent.

QFES is a not-for-profit entity and has no controlled entities.

(b) Statement of compliance

The department has prepared these financial statements in compliance with section 38 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations applicable to not-for-profit entities. In addition, the financial statements comply with Queensland Treasury's Minimum Reporting Requirements for the reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2023.

(c) Taxation

The department is a State body as defined under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* and is exempt from Commonwealth taxation with the exception of Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and Goods and Services Tax (GST).

(d) Basis of measurement

The historical cost convention is used unless fair value is stated as the measurement basis.

(e) Accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements necessarily requires the determination and use of certain accounting estimates, assumptions, and management judgements that have the potential to cause a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. Such estimates, judgements and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in future periods as relevant.

Estimates and assumptions that have a potential effect on the financial statements are outlined in the following financial statement notes:

- Depreciation and Amortisation - Note 16, 17 and 18
- Revaluation of property, plant and equipment - Note 17

(f) Presentation matters

Amounts included in the financial statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where that amount is less than \$500, to zero, unless disclosure of the full amount is specifically required. Amounts shown in these financial statements may not add to the correct sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current reporting period.

(g) Future impact of accounting standards not yet effective

AASB 2022-10 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities*, which is applicable from 1 January 2024 has been assessed as having no material impact to the department due to its alignment with existing departmental policies.

All other Australian accounting standards and interpretations with future effective dates are either not applicable to the department or have no material impact.

2 Principal activities of the department

QFES is the primary provider of fire and rescue, emergency services and disaster management capability services throughout Queensland. QFES encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), disaster management services, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), and the State Emergency Service (SES). Through service agreements, QFES also supports other volunteer groups that provide emergency response. During 2023-24 responsibility for Disaster Management, SES, and service agreements transferred from QFES to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) (refer note 3).

QFES' purpose is to deliver contemporary and effective fire, emergency and disaster management services that meet Queensland communities' needs.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

3 Machinery-of-Government changes and program transfers

During 2023-24 Machinery-of-Government changes resulted in the following:

- Responsibility for disaster management functions transferred to the QPS on 30 October 2023 as set out in the Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2023. No appropriation funding, assets or liabilities were transferred.
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) administrative funding arrangements transferred from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) to QFES on 18 December 2023 as set out in the Administrative Arrangement Order (No.2) 2023. The effective date of transfer for financial reporting purposes is 1 January 2024.
- SES transferred to the QPS on 3 June 2024 as set out in the Public Service Department Arrangements Notice (No.2) 2024. 2023-24 appropriation funding of \$4.536m and equity funding of \$2.816m was transferred to the QPS as at 30 June 2024. The effective date of transfer for financial reporting purpose is 1 July 2024.

During 2023-24 the following programs were transferred:

- Service Level Agreements for the Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ), Royal Life Saving Society Queensland (RLSSQ), Police Citizen Youth Clubs (PCYC), Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ) were transferred to the QPS as at 1 October 2023. 2023-24 appropriation of \$8.403m was transferred.

4 Appropriation revenue

Reconciliation of payments from Consolidated Fund to appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Original budgeted appropriation revenue	213,506	150,466
Supplementary amounts:		
Transfer from other headings (variation to headings)	471	-
Unforeseen expenditure	84,784	16,192
Total appropriation receipts (cash)	298,761	166,658
Less: Opening balance of appropriation revenue receivable	(36,805)	(523)
Plus: Closing balance of appropriation revenue receivable	237	36,805
Net appropriation revenue	262,193	202,940
Appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income	262,193	202,940
Variance between original budgeted and actual appropriation revenue	48,687	52,474

Unforeseen expenditure: Additional appropriation revenue is mainly due to funding for the 2020 Government Election Commitment (GEC) for 357 additional firefighters and enterprise bargaining outcomes.

Reconciliation of payments from Consolidated Fund to equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity

Original budgeted equity adjustment appropriation	18,662	3,296
Transfer to other headings (variation to headings)	(471)	-
Unforeseen expenditure	-	2,747
Equity adjustment receipts	18,191	6,043
Less: Opening balance of equity adjustment receivable	(1,429)	-
Plus: Closing balance of equity adjustment receivable	-	1,429
Less: Closing balance of equity adjustment payable	(2,816)	-
Equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity	13,946	7,472
Variance between original budgeted and actual equity adjustment appropriation	(4,716)	4,176

Accounting Policy - Appropriation revenue

Appropriations provided under the *Appropriation Act 2023* are recognised as revenue when received. Where appropriation revenue has been approved but not yet received, it is recorded as appropriation revenue receivable at the end of the reporting period. Where the department has an obligation to return unspent (or unapplied) appropriation receipts to Consolidated Fund at year end (a deferred appropriation repayable to Consolidated Fund), a liability is recognised with a corresponding reduction to appropriation revenue, reflecting the net appropriation revenue position with Consolidated Fund for the reporting period. Capital appropriations are recognised as adjustments to equity.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
5 User charges and fees		
Alarm maintenance and monitoring	20,809	23,976
Attendance charges	16,288	14,295
Building and infrastructure fire safety	17,806	20,155
Sale of goods and services	1,871	2,078
Total	56,774	60,504

Accounting Policy - User charges and fees

User charges and fees are recognised as revenues when the related services are provided and can be measured reliably with sufficient degree of certainty. This occurs upon delivery of goods to the customer or completion of the requested services at which time the invoice is raised. Accrued revenue is recognised if the revenue has been earned but not yet invoiced.

6 Emergency management levies

Gross emergency management levies	671,179	636,186
Less: Pensioner discount	(11,551)	(10,984)
Total	659,628	625,202

Accounting Policy - Emergency management levies

Emergency management levies are recognised at the amounts collected and due as advised by each local government in their annual returns in accordance with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*.

7 Grants and other contributions

Commonwealth contributions *	2,562	2,298
Contributed assets **	3,589	4,843
Grants from other Queensland Government entities ***	15,137	13,178
Motor Accident Insurance Commission	3,294	2,482
Services received below fair value ****	11,032	10,499
Other	1,502	2,569
Total	37,116	35,869

* In accordance with *AASB15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* Commonwealth contributions of \$0.611m is recognised as a contract liability at 30 June 2024.

** Contributed assets is comprised of: Buildings \$1.930m and Plant and Equipment \$1.659m.

*** Grants from other Queensland Government entities include:

- Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements assistance from QRA of \$14.410m
- Sponsorships and contributions for RFS of \$0.228m
- Sponsorships and contributions for SES of \$0.413m
- Tsunami Risk Assessment funding from Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) of \$0.086m

**** Services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR).

Accounting Policy - Grants and other contributions

Grants, contributions and donations are non-reciprocal transactions where the department does not directly give approximately equal value to the grantor.

Where the grant agreement is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations for the department to transfer goods or services to a third-party on the grantor's behalf, the transaction is accounted for under *AASB15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. In this case, revenue is initially deferred (as a contract liability) and recognised as or when the performance obligations are satisfied.

Otherwise, the grant is accounted for under *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-profit Entities*, whereby revenue is recognised upon receipt of the grant funding.

Accounting Policy - Services received free of charge below fair value or for nominal value

Contributions of services are recognised only if the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated and their value can be measured reliably. Where this is the case, an equal amount is recognised as a revenue and an expense in the Statement of comprehensive income.

Volunteer services are only recognised where a fair value can be reliably measured and the services would have been purchased if not donated. QFES has not recognised the value of volunteer services, including RFS and SES, as the fair value of their services cannot be measured reliably.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
8 Gains on disposal and remeasurement of assets		
Gains from disposal of property, plant and equipment	552	1,549
Revaluation decrement reversals of property, plant and equipment	-	390
Total	552	1,939
9 Employee expenses		
Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries - General	390,706	354,870
Wages and salaries - Overtime	47,737	38,981
Annual leave levy	62,718	62,872
Employer superannuation contributions	64,089	59,036
Long service leave levy	11,965	10,848
Employee related expenses		
Training expenses	5,253	5,154
Workers' compensation premiums	22,612	20,910
Other employee related expenses	23,675	20,080
Total	628,755	572,751

The number of employees as at 30 June, including full-time employees, part-time employees and casual employees, measured on a full-time equivalent basis, reflecting Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI), is:

Full-Time equivalent employees (number)	3,859	3,825
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Accounting Policy - Employee expenses

Wages, salaries and sick leave

For unpaid entitlements expected to be paid within 12 months of the reporting date, the liabilities are recognised at their undiscounted values.

As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

Annual leave and long service leave

The department is a member of the Queensland Government's Annual Leave and Long Service Leave Central Schemes. A levy is payable to cover the cost of employees' annual leave (including leave loading and on-costs) and long service leave. The levies are expensed in the period in which they are payable. Amounts paid to employees for annual leave and long service leave are claimed from the scheme quarterly in arrears.

Superannuation

Post-employment benefits for superannuation are provided through defined contribution (accumulation) plans or the Queensland Government's defined benefit plan (the former QSuper defined benefit categories now administered by the Government Division of the Australian Retirement Trust) as determined by the employee's conditions of employment.

Defined contribution plans - Contributions are made to eligible complying superannuation funds based on the rates specified in the relevant Enterprise Bargain Agreement (EBA) or other conditions of employment. Contributions are expensed when they are paid or become payable following completion of the employee's service each pay period.

Defined benefit plan - The liability for defined benefits is held on a whole-of-government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*. The amount of contributions for defined benefit plan obligations is based upon the rates determined on the advice of the State Actuary. Contributions are paid by the department at the specified rate following completion of the employee's service each pay period. The department's obligations are limited to those contributions paid.

Workers' compensation premiums

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee and volunteer compensation. Workers' compensation insurance is a consequence of employing staff, but is not included in an employee's total remuneration package.

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for current and former employees and volunteers in firefighting roles for latent onset diseases in accordance with the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2015*.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

10 Key management personnel disclosures

(a) Details of Key management personnel (KMP)

The department's responsible Minister is identified as part of the department's KMP, consistent with additional guidance included in the AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures*. The Minister is the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services.

The other non-Ministerial KMP personnel include those positions that form the Board of Management and had authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department. Further information on these positions can be found in the body of the Annual Report under the section relating to Executive Management.

Current Positions	Position Responsibility
Commissioner	Leading and managing the efficient and effective functioning of the FRS, RFS and SES. The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums.
Chief Operating Officer - Strategy and Corporate Services (Renamed 13.11.2023)	Delivering the department's organisational enabling capabilities through the provision of efficient and effective corporate service functions including finance, procurement, assurance, strategy, asset services, information and technology and people and culture.
Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service	Providing strategic leadership and control of the FRS which consists of one state directorate and four regions. The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for the strategic direction of the key functions of fire prevention, preparedness and response services to fire in the built and landscape environments, as well as scientific and specialist rescue capabilities to Queensland communities.
Chief Officer - Rural Fire Service (Established 25.10.2023)	Providing strategic leadership and control of the RFS which consists of one state directorate and four regions. The Chief Officer is responsible for the strategic direction of the key functions of bushfire prevention, preparedness and response services, as well as specialist capabilities including data science and mapping to ensure the ongoing safety of Queensland communities.
Abolished Positions	Position Responsibility
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services (Ceased 13.11.2023)	Providing strategic leadership and coordination of regional disaster management functions and regional operations for the FRS, RFS and SES across the state's former seven regions.
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services (Ceased 13.11.2023)	Providing overall strategic leadership and coordination for the development and maintenance of state capability, strategy and policy for the RFS and SES service streams of QFES. The Deputy Commissioner has oversight of disaster and emergency management including the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework, operational response and emergency management planning before and after disasters, volunteerism, and strengthening community partnerships to build safe, healthy, confident and connected communities across Queensland.

An independent external member is appointed to the QFES Board of Management. The independent external member received \$21,600 in remuneration (2022-23: \$6,900).

(b) Remuneration policies

Ministerial remuneration entitlements are outlined in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland's Members' Remuneration Handbook. The department does not bear any cost of remuneration of Ministers. The majority of Ministerial entitlements are paid by the Legislative Assembly, with the remaining entitlements being provided by Ministerial Services Branch, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. As all Ministers are reported as KMP of the Queensland Government, aggregate remuneration expenses for all Ministers are disclosed in the Queensland General Government and Whole of Government Consolidated Financial Statements, which are published as part of Queensland Treasury's Report on State Finances.

Remuneration policy for the department's other KMP is set by the Queensland Public Sector Commission as provided for under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. The remuneration and other terms of employment for the KMP are specified in employment contracts.

No KMP remuneration packages provide for performance or bonus payments.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
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For the year ended 30 June 2024

10 Key management personnel disclosures (continued)

(b) Remuneration policies (continued)

Remuneration expenses for KMP comprise the following components:

- Short term employee expenses include:
 - salaries, allowances and leave entitlements earned and expensed for the entire year, or for that part of the year during which the employee was a key management person;
 - non-monetary benefits - may include provision of a motor vehicle and applicable fringe benefits tax.
- Long term employee benefits include amounts expensed in respect of long service leave entitlements earned.
- Post employment benefits include amounts expensed in respect of employer superannuation obligations.
- Termination benefits include payments in lieu of notice on termination and other lump sum separation entitlements (excluding annual and long service leave entitlements) payable on termination of employment or acceptance of an offer of termination of employment.

(c) Remuneration Expenses

1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Long Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Post Employment Expenses \$'000	Total Expenses \$'000
Commissioner (acting 28.10.2023 - 16.05.2024; appointed 17.05.2024)	330	5	33	368
Commissioner (to 27.10.2023)	129	5	32	166
Chief Operating Officer - Strategy and Corporate Services (acting to 12.11.2023; appointed 13.11.2023)	264	7	36	307
Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service (acting from 13.11.2023)	214	5	26	245
Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service (acting 01.07.2023 - 27.10.2023)	96	3	14	113
Chief Officer - Rural Fire Service (acting from 12.02.2024)	125	3	13	141
Chief Officer - Rural Fire Service (appointed 13.11.2023 to 15.01.2024)	27	1	4	32
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services (to 12.11.2023)	83	3	19	105
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services (acting to 12.11.2023)	111	3	27	141

1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Long Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Post Employment Expenses \$'000	Total Expenses \$'000
Commissioner	505	11	55	571
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy and Corporate Services	265	7	30	302
Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service (acting from 27/02/2023)	127	2	9	138
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	290	7	33	330
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services (acting from 01.09.2022)	245	6	24	275
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services (acting to 04.10.2022)	65	2	6	73

(d) Related party transactions with people/entities related to KMP

There were no related party transactions associated with the department's KMP during 2023-24 (2022-23: nil).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
11 Supplies and services		
Advertising expenses	5,870	5,373
Aircraft related costs *	46,617	13,779
Communications	27,094	25,302
Computer expenses	12,058	11,142
Contractors and professional services **	46,482	25,287
Emergency management levy administration fees	7,249	7,173
Employee housing	83	72
Lease expenses	304	1,012
Minor equipment purchases	22,826	15,382
Motor vehicles - QFleet	5,131	4,655
Motor vehicle expenses	22,938	18,480
Office accommodation	4,758	4,853
Property expenses	9,229	7,993
QPS provided ICT services	45,607	42,102
Queensland Shared Services fees	8,186	7,300
Repairs and maintenance	21,806	19,836
Travel and accommodation	17,431	12,311
Other	21,022	15,311
Total	324,691	237,363

* Aircraft related costs have increased due to operational response to disasters.

** Contractors and professional services have increased due to additional support required to progress the significant emergency services reforms.

Accounting policy - Lease expenses

Lease expenses include lease rentals for short-term leases, leases of low value assets and variable lease payments. Refer to Note 18 for breakdown of lease expenses and other lease disclosures.

12 Grants and subsidies

Air sea rescue, coast guard and life saving organisations	5,146	13,338
Local governments	8,231	3,404
QPS - capital grant	50	852
Rural fire brigades	444	717
State emergency service groups	2,487	2,321
Other	1,933	2,411
Total	18,291	23,043

13 Other expenses

Assets donated	4	-
Audit fees *	396	233
Insurance premiums - QGIF	1,630	1,457
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	506	509
Services received below fair value **	11,032	10,499
Special payments ***	272	130
Other	1,885	835
Total	15,725	13,663

* Total audit fees quoted by Queensland Audit Office for the financial statements are \$320,250 (2022-23: \$312,500). The 2023-24 audit fees include \$186,962 relating to the 2022-23 financial statements.

** Refer Note 7

*** Special payments in 2023-24 include:

- Ex-gratia payments made to operational staff related to workers' compensation claims and expenses not covered by WorkCover Queensland which includes payments to twenty-five (25) staff of amounts over \$5,000 (2022-23: eleven (11) staff with payments over \$5,000);
- Settlement related to separation of a staff member.

Accounting Policy - Insurance

The majority of the department's non-current physical assets and other risks are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund (QGIF), with premiums being paid on a risk assessment basis.

For litigation purposes, under the QGIF policy, the department is able to claim back, less a \$10,000 deductible, the amount paid to successful litigants.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
14 Receivables		
Emergency management levies	44,552	38,379
Trade debtors	9,560	5,492
Less: Allowance for impairment loss	(52)	(84)
	<u>54,060</u>	<u>43,787</u>
GST receivable	3,410	3,581
GST payable	208	-
	<u>3,618</u>	<u>3,581</u>
Accrued debtors	675	609
Annual leave reimbursements	14,884	17,134
Appropriation revenue receivable	237	38,234
Long service leave reimbursements	2,663	2,226
Other	687	982
	<u>19,146</u>	<u>59,185</u>
Total	<u>76,824</u>	<u>106,553</u>

Accounting Policy - Receivables

Emergency management levies are recognised at the amounts due as advised by each local government in their annual returns in accordance with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*.

Trade debtors are recognised at the amounts due at the time of sale or service delivery, that is, the agreed purchase or contract price. The department's standard settlement terms are 30 days from the invoice date.

Other receivables generally arise from transactions outside the usual operating activities of the department and are recognised at their assessed values. Settlement terms depend on the nature of the receivable.

No interest is charged on receivables other than for overdue emergency management levies and no security is obtained.

Disclosure - Credit risk exposure of receivables

The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date for receivables is the gross carrying amount of those assets. No collateral is held as security and there are no credit enhancements relating to the department's receivables.

The department uses a provision matrix to measure the expected credit losses on trade and other debtors. Loss rates are calculated for groupings of customers with similar loss patterns. The department has determined only one material grouping for measuring expected losses. The calculations reflect historical observed default rates calculated using credit losses experienced on past sales transactions during the last nine (9) years preceding 30 June 2024. The historical default rates are then adjusted by reasonable and supportable forward-looking information for expected changes in macroeconomic indicators that affect the future recovery of those receivables. A change in the Government Indexation Rate (GIR) is determined to be the most relevant forward-looking indicator for receivables. The historical default rates are adjusted based on expected changes to that indicator.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
15 Non-current assets held for sale		
Land	7,728	-
Total	<u>7,728</u>	<u>-</u>
16 Intangible assets		
Gross value	25,163	25,163
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(25,012)	(24,786)
	<u>151</u>	<u>377</u>
Reconciliation		
Opening balance	377	1,254
Amortisation	(226)	(877)
Closing balance	<u>151</u>	<u>377</u>

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
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17 Property, plant and equipment

	Land	Buildings	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross value	248,362	786,232	553,616	92,055	1,680,265
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(311,717)	(318,262)	-	(629,979)
	248,362	474,515	235,354	92,055	1,050,286
Reconciliation					
Opening balance	232,810	434,475	235,277	54,038	956,600
Acquisitions	2,646	8,284	8,376	93,745	113,051
Assets written on	539	4,756	-	-	5,295
Donations made	-	-	(4)	-	(4)
Contributed assets	-	1,930	1,659	-	3,589
Transfers between asset classes	2,392	37,153	16,183	(55,728)	-
Disposals	(63)	(346)	(535)	-	(944)
Assets reclassified as held for sale	(7,728)	-	-	-	(7,728)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	17,766	10,574	-	-	28,340
Depreciation	-	(22,311)	(25,602)	-	(47,913)
Closing balance	248,362	474,515	235,354	92,055	1,050,286
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross value	232,810	706,892	532,702	54,038	1,526,442
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(272,417)	(297,425)	-	(569,842)
	232,810	434,475	235,277	54,038	956,600
Reconciliation					
Opening balance	205,343	399,298	236,753	42,637	884,031
Acquisitions	292	866	6,894	70,262	78,314
Assets written on	-	1,935	-	-	1,935
Contributed assets	2,076	2,134	633	-	4,843
Transfers from/(to) other agencies	-	-	-	(1,696)	(1,696)
Transfers between asset classes	4,205	36,756	16,204	(57,165)	-
Disposals	(4,272)	(2,628)	(381)	-	(7,281)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	24,776	18,535	-	-	43,311
Revaluation decrement reversal recognised in operating surplus/(deficit)	390	-	-	-	390
Depreciation	-	(22,421)	(24,826)	-	(47,247)
Closing balance	232,810	434,475	235,277	54,038	956,600

Accounting Policy - Acquisitions of assets

Historical cost is used for the initial recording of all property, plant and equipment acquisitions. Historical cost is determined as the value provided as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition and costs incurred in getting the asset ready for use.

Where assets are received free of charge from another Queensland Government department (whether as a result of a Machinery-of-Government change or other involuntary transfer), the acquisition cost is recognised as the gross carrying amount in the accounts of the transferor immediately prior to the transfer together with any accumulated depreciation.

Accounting Policy - Recognition thresholds for property, plant and equipment

Basis of capitalisation and recognition thresholds

Property, plant and equipment with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of the following thresholds are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition:

Land	\$1
Buildings	\$10,000
Plant and equipment	\$5,000

Items purchased or acquired for a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

17 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Accounting Policy - Measurement of property, plant and equipment using fair value

Land and buildings assets are measured at fair value as required by Queensland Treasury's Non-Current Asset Policies for the Queensland Public Sector. These assets are reported at their revalued amounts, being the fair value at the date of valuation, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and impairment losses where applicable.

The cost of items acquired during the financial year has been judged by management of the department to materially represent their fair value at the end of the reporting period.

Accounting Policy - Measurement of property, plant and equipment using cost

Plant and equipment is measured at cost in accordance with AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*. The carrying amount for such plant and equipment at cost has been assessed as not materially different from their fair value.

Accounting Policy - Revaluations of property, plant and equipment measured and fair value

Property, plant and equipment classes measured at fair value are revalued on an annual basis either by appraisals undertaken by an independent professional valuer or by the use of appropriate and relevant indices.

Revaluations for land and buildings assets using an independent professional valuer are undertaken on a rolling basis over a four year period.

The fair values reported are based on appropriate valuation techniques that maximise the use of available and relevant observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs.

Where assets have not been specifically appraised in the reporting period, their previous valuations are materially kept up-to-date via the application of relevant indices. The department ensures that the application of such indices results in a valid estimation of the assets' fair values at reporting date. Australis Asset Advisory Group (AAAG) supply the indices used for the land and buildings assets. Such indices are either publicly available, or are derived from market information available. AAAG provides assurance of their robustness, validity and appropriateness for application to the relevant assets. Indices used are also tested for reasonableness by applying the indices to a sample of assets, comparing the results to similar assets that have been valued by an independent professional valuer, and analysing the trend of the changes in values over time. Through this process, which is undertaken annually, management assesses and confirms the relevance and suitability of indices provided by AAAG based on the department's own particular circumstances.

Any revaluation increment arising on the revaluation of an asset is credited to the asset revaluation surplus of the appropriate class, except to the extent it reverses a revaluation decrement for the class previously recognised as an expense. A decrease in the carrying amount on revaluation is charged as an expense, to the extent it exceeds the balance, if any, in the revaluation surplus relating to that asset class.

Revaluation methodology

During 2023-24 independent revaluations were performed by AAAG for land and buildings in the QFES Central Region, as part of the four year rolling program. The revaluation was completed as at 31 March 2024. The fair value as at 30 June 2024 is materially the same as the valuation completed as at 31 March 2024.

Land

Land not subject to market specific appraisal were revalued using indices supplied by the AAAG based on individual factor changes for each property as derived from a review of market transactions and having regard to the review of land values undertaken for local government locations.

Buildings

Buildings assets not subject to market specific appraisal were revalued using the most appropriate method of indexation, determined by the type of asset, as provided by the AAAG. AAAG calculates indices by a weighted matrix based on various sources for both a cost approach and market approach. The indices data for the built asset classes are based on construction movement as well as other factors intrinsic to the construction process. These indices were determined to be the most appropriate when considering the department's asset types and were accepted and applied by management on the basis they resulted in a materially accurate representation of the fair value of buildings as at 30 June 2024.

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17 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Accounting Policy - Fair value measurement

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date under current market conditions (i.e. an exit price) regardless of whether that price is directly derived from observable inputs or estimated using another valuation technique.

Observable inputs are publicly available data that are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Observable inputs used by the department include, but are not limited to, published sales data for land and general office buildings.

Unobservable inputs are data, assumptions and judgements that are not available publicly, but are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Significant unobservable inputs used by the department include, but are not limited to, subjective adjustments made to observable data to take account of the characteristics of the department's assets/liabilities, internal records of recent construction costs (and/or estimates of such costs), assets' characteristics/functionality, and assessments of physical condition and remaining useful life. Unobservable inputs are used to the extent that sufficient relevant and reliable observable inputs are not available for similar assets/liabilities.

A fair value measurement of a non-financial asset takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use.

Fair value measurement hierarchy

All assets and liabilities of the department for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within the following fair value hierarchy, based on the data and assumptions used in the most recent specific appraisals:

Level 1 - represents fair value measurements that reflect unadjusted quoted market prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities;

Level 2 - represents fair value measurements that are substantially derived from inputs (other than quoted prices included within level 1) that are observable, either directly or indirectly; and

Level 3 - represents fair value measurements that are substantially derived from unobservable inputs.

None of the department's valuations of assets or liabilities are eligible for categorisation into level 1 of the fair value hierarchy.

Categorisation of fair values recognised as at 30 June

	Level 2		Level 3		Total	
	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Land	248,362	232,810	-	-	248,362	232,810
Buildings	2,106	1,360	472,409	433,115	474,515	434,475

Level 3 fair value reconciliation

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Buildings		
Opening balance	433,115	381,425
Acquisitions	8,287	867
Assets written on	4,756	1,935
Contributed assets	1,775	2,134
Transfers to/(from) level 3	-	17,101
Transfers between asset classes	36,553	36,093
Disposals	(346)	(2,628)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	10,300	18,541
Depreciation	(22,031)	(22,353)
Closing balance	472,409	433,115

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17 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Accounting Policy - Depreciation of property, plant and equipment

Land is not depreciated as it has an unlimited useful life.

Property, plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis so as to allocate the net cost or revalued amount of each asset, less its estimated residual value, progressively over its estimated useful life to the department.

Assets under construction (work-in-progress) are not depreciated until construction is complete and the asset is put to use or is ready for its intended use, whichever is earlier. These assets are then reclassified to the relevant class within property, plant and equipment.

Any expenditure that increases the originally assessed capacity or service potential of an asset is capitalised and the new depreciable amount is depreciated over the remaining useful life of the asset to the department.

For each class of depreciable asset the following depreciation rates are applied:

Class	Rate (%)
Buildings	1% to 25%
Plant and equipment	2% to 50%

18 Leases as lessee

Right-of-use assets

	Land 2024 \$'000	Buildings 2024 \$'000	Total 2024 \$'000
Gross Value	209	37,669	37,878
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(41)	(10,709)	(10,750)
	168	26,960	27,128

Reconciliation

Opening balance	182	29,348	29,530
Other adjustments	-	1,069	1,069
Depreciation	(14)	(3,457)	(3,471)
Closing balance	168	26,960	27,128

	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Gross Value	209	36,599	36,808
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(27)	(7,251)	(7,278)
	182	29,348	29,530

Reconciliation

Opening balance	-	8,951	8,951
New leases	209	23,479	23,688
Other adjustments	-	(457)	(457)
Depreciation	(27)	(2,625)	(2,652)
Closing balance	182	29,348	29,530

Lease liabilities

Current

Lease liabilities	1,992	3,014
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Non-Current

Lease liabilities	25,878	26,800
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Total

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
	27,870	29,814

Accounting Policy - Recognition of Right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets with a lease term greater than 12 months and with a value equal to or in excess of \$10,000 are capitalised.

The right-of-use asset will initially be recognised at cost, consisting of the initial amount of the associated lease liability, plus any lease payments made to the lessor at or before the effective date, less any lease incentive received, the initial estimate of restoration costs and any initial direct costs incurred by the lessee.

Right-of-use assets are recognised and carried at their cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses, adjusted for any re-measurement of the lease liability in certain circumstances.

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18 Leases as lessee (continued)

Accounting Policy - Depreciation of right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Accounting Policy - Impairment of right-of-use assets

All right-of-use assets are assessed for indicators of impairment. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, the department determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Accounting Policy - Lease liability

Lease liabilities are initially recognised at the present value of lease payments over the lease term that are not yet paid. Lease payments include fixed payments, variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, option payment (if reasonably certain) and expected residual value guarantees. The present value of lease payments is discounted using the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) fixed rate applicable to the term of the lease. Subsequently, the lease liabilities are increased by the interest charged and reduced by the amount of lease payments.

Disclosures - Leases as lessee

(i) *Details of leasing arrangements as lessee*

Category / class of lease arrangement	Description of arrangement
Land	The department has a 5-year lease with two further extension options of 5 years each, for land from Logan City Council for the Jimboomba Fire and Rescue Station.
Buildings	The department enters into leases for buildings and office accommodation as required. Some of these leases are short-term leases or leases of low value assets. Lease terms can range from 3 to 25 years. A number of leases have renewal or extension options. The options are generally exercisable at market prices and are not included in the right-of-use asset or lease liability unless the department is reasonably certain it will renew the lease.

(ii) *Office accommodation, employee housing and motor vehicles*

The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works (DHLGPPW) provides QFES with access to office accommodation, employee housing, and motor vehicles under government-wide frameworks. These arrangements are categorised as procurement of services rather than as leases because DHLGPPW has substantive substitution rights over the assets. The related services expenses are included in Note 11.

(iii) *Amounts recognised in profit or loss*

Interest expense on lease liabilities

Breakdown of 'Lease expenses' included in Note 11

- Short-term leases

- Leases of low value assets

Total

(iv) *Total cash outflow for leases*

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Interest expense on lease liabilities	1,169	476
Breakdown of 'Lease expenses' included in Note 11		
- Short-term leases	237	984
- Leases of low value assets	67	28
Total	304	1,012
(iv) <i>Total cash outflow for leases</i>	4,183	3,074

19 Payables

Accrued creditors

Trade creditors

Equity adjustment payable

Other

Total

Accrued creditors	35,045	29,763
Trade creditors	16,239	18,277
Equity adjustment payable	2,816	-
Other	200	134
Total	54,300	48,174

Accounting Policy - Payables

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the nominal amount i.e. agreed purchase/contract price, gross of applicable trade and other discounts. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

20 Accrued employee benefits

Annual leave levy payable

Long service leave levy payable

Salaries and wages outstanding

Other

Total

Annual leave levy payable	17,629	18,529
Long service leave levy payable	3,274	3,185
Salaries and wages outstanding	2,080	17,679
Other	1,304	572
Total	24,287	39,965

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20 Accrued employee benefits (continued)

Accounting Policy - Employee benefits

No provision for annual leave or long service leave is recognised in the department's financial statements as the liability is held on a whole-of-government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

21 Related party transactions with other Queensland Government-controlled entities

The department's primary ongoing sources of funding from Government for its services are appropriation revenue and equity injections, both of which are provided in cash via the Consolidated Fund. Refer Note 4 and the Statement of changes in equity.

Services below fair value transactions with other departments are disclosed in Note 7 and Note 13.

Operating expense include fair value transactions with other departments disclosed in Note 11.

22 Commitments

Capital expenditure commitments

Capital expenditure commitments inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits at the reporting date are payable as follows:

Class of asset	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Buildings	22,569	11,915
Plant and equipment	48,387	49,042
Total	70,956	60,957
Not later than one year	68,105	53,945
Later than one year and not later than five years	2,851	7,012
Total	70,956	60,957

Capital commitments reflect contracts for both RFS and FRS fleet appliances and station builds.

23 Financial instruments

Financial instruments categories

The department has the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities:

Financial assets

Cash		101,408	150,239
Financial assets measured at amortised cost:			
Receivables	14	76,824	106,553
Total financial assets		178,232	256,792

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost:			
Payables	19	54,300	48,174
Lease Liabilities	18	27,870	29,814
Total financial liabilities at amortised cost		82,170	77,988

No financial assets and financial liabilities have been offset and presented net in the Statement of financial position.

Accounting Policy - Financial instruments

Recognition

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised in the Statement of financial position when the department becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

23 Financial instruments (continued)

(a) Financial risk management

Financial risk management is implemented pursuant to Government and departmental policies. These policies focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and seek to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the department.

The department activities expose it to a variety of financial risks as set out in the following table:

Risk exposure	Definition	Exposure
Credit risk	Credit risk exposure refers to the situation where the department may incur financial loss as a result of another party to a financial instrument failing to discharge their obligation.	The department is exposed to credit risk in respect of its receivables (Note 14).
Liquidity risk	Liquidity risk refers to the situation where the department may encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset.	The department is exposed to liquidity risk in respect of its payables (Note 19).
Market risk	The risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk.	The department does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to commodity price changes or interest rate risk.

(b) Risk Measurement and Management Strategies

Risk exposure	Measurement Method	Risk Management Strategies
Credit risk	Ageing analysis, earnings at risk	The department manages credit risk through the use of a credit management strategy. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to credit default by ensuring that the department invests in secure assets and monitors all funds owed on a timely basis. Exposure to credit risk is monitored on an ongoing basis.
Liquidity risk	Sensitivity analysis	The department manages liquidity risk through the use of a liquidity management strategy. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to liquidity risk by ensuring the department has sufficient funds available to meet employee and supplier obligations as they fall due. This is achieved by ensuring that sufficient funds are available within the department's bank account so as to match the expected duration of the various employee and supplier liabilities.

(c) Credit risk

Certain contractual obligations expose the department to credit risk in excess of the carrying amount of any asset or liability recognised from entering the transaction.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial asset is the gross carrying amount of those assets inclusive of any provision for impairment (refer Note 14).

Financial liabilities	Note	<1 Year	1-5 years	>5 years	Total
		2024 \$'000	2024 \$'000	2024 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Payables	19	54,300	-	-	54,300
Lease liability	18	1,992	4,221	21,657	27,870
Total		56,292	4,221	21,657	82,170

Financial liabilities	Note	2023	2023	2023	2023
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Payables	19	48,174	-	-	48,174
Lease liability	18	3,014	4,982	21,818	29,814
Total		51,188	4,982	21,818	77,988

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

24 Contingencies

Litigation in progress

As at 30 June 2024, there were twenty-six (26) litigation matters in progress which may result in a financial settlement. It is not possible to make a reliable estimate of the final amount payable, if any, in respect of the litigation at this time. However, in all cases the QFES liability is limited to the QGIF excess amount of \$10,000 (refer to Note 13).

Per-fluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

The department works with state authorities to ensure historical use of firefighting foams that included PFAS is appropriately managed. This PFAS body of work includes risk-based testing of QFES sites throughout Queensland. The department has engaged an independent contractor to conduct on-site and off-site investigations at six Fire and Rescue Stations – Ayr, Home Hill, Airlie Beach, Proserpine, Gladstone and Toowoomba (Anzac Ave). It is not practicable to measure the financial effect, including any land remediation costs, of these six Fire and Rescue Stations or any other sites across Queensland.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
25 Administered items		
Administered income		
Appropriation revenue *	962,623	-
Fees and fines	52	112
Total	962,675	112
Administered expenses		
Grants	962,623	-
Transfer of administered income to government	52	112
Total	962,675	112
Operating result	-	-

* The responsibility for the administration of the grant funding for the QRA was transferred from DSDILGP to QFES (refer to Note 3).

QFES does not hold any administered assets or liabilities.

Reconciliation of payments from Consolidated Fund to administered Income

Budgeted appropriation	-	-
Transfer from/(to) other departments - redistribution of public business	948,751	-
Unforeseen expenditure	13,872	-
Total administered receipts	962,623	-

Unforeseen expenditure: QFES received additional appropriation revenue being funding for the QRA relating to disaster events.

Accounting Policy - Administered transactions and balances

The department administers, but does not control, certain activities on behalf of the Government. In doing so, it has responsibility for administering those activities and related transactions and balances efficiently and effectively, but does not have the discretion to deploy those resources for the achievement of the department's own objectives.

While these transactions and balances are significant in comparison to the department's overall financial performance and financial position, the nature of the transactions is such that they do not have a material impact on these financial statements.

Accounting policies applicable to administered items are consistent with the equivalent policies for controlled items.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

26 Trust transactions and balances

QFES can appoint four of the seven trustees and provides administrative support to manage transactions and balances for the Queensland Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades Donations Fund. The fund was formed on 1 January 2013 for the charitable purpose of supporting the volunteer based emergency service activities of the rural fire brigades.

Mazars (QLD) Pty Ltd are the auditors of the fund.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance	533	747
Donations received during the year	275	209
Donations paid during the year	(232)	(423)
Closing balance	576	533

Accounting Policy - Trust transactions and balances

The department undertakes certain trustee transactions and maintains related balances on behalf of various parties and also performs certain agency transactions.

As the department acts only in a custodial role in respect of these transactions and balances, they are not recognised in the department's financial statements.

27 Events occurring after balance date

(a) Machinery-of-Government changes

QPS Frontline and Digital Division information and communication technology services relating to the Queensland Fire Department (QFD) transferred from QPS to QFD as at 19 August 2024 as set out in the Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 6) 2024. At the time of preparation the financial effect on the department's statements is yet to be determined.

(b) Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024

The *Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* commenced 3 June 2024. As part of the amendment, from 1 July 2024 Rural Fire Brigades will cease to operate as unincorporated entities, and instead will be embedded within the Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) under the QFD. Accordingly, from 1 July 2024 all revenue and expenditure of the Rural Fire Brigades will be received and managed by the department with expenditure used for the benefit of the individual Rural Fire Brigades. Existing funds held by the Brigades at 30 June 2024 will remain the property of the unincorporated Brigade until these funds have been depleted. At the time of preparation the financial effect on the department's statements is yet to be determined.

28 Climate risk disclosure

Whole-of-Government climate-related reporting

The State of Queensland, as the ultimate parent of the department, has published a wide range of information and resources on climate related risks, strategies and actions accessible via <https://www.energyandclimate.qld.gov.au/climate>.

The Queensland Sustainability Report (QSR) outlines how the Queensland Government measures, monitors and manages sustainability risks and opportunities, including governance structures supporting policy oversight and implementation. To demonstrate progress, the QSR also provides time series data on key sustainability policy responses. The QSR is available via Queensland Treasury's website at <https://www.treasury.qld.gov.au/programs-and-policies/queensland-sustainability-report>.

Departmental accounting estimates and judgements – climate-related risks

The department considers climate-related risks when assessing material accounting judgements and estimates used in preparing its financial report. Key estimates and judgements identified include the potential for changes in asset useful lives, changes in the fair value of assets, impairment of assets, the recognition of provisions or the possibility of contingent liabilities.

No adjustments to the carrying value of assets were recognised during the financial year as a result of climate-related risks impacting current accounting estimates and judgements. No other transactions have been recognised during the financial year specifically due to climate-related risks impacting the department. The department continues to monitor the emergence of material climate-related risks that may impact the financial statements of the department, including those arising under the Queensland Government Climate Action Plan 2020-2030 and other Government publications or directives.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

29 Budgetary reporting disclosures

Explanation of major variances - Statement of comprehensive income

	Variance Note	2024 Budget \$'000	2024 Actual \$'000	2024 Variance \$'000
Income from continuing operations				
Appropriation revenue	29(a)	208,386	262,193	53,807
User charges and fees		53,100	56,774	3,674
Emergency management levies		660,010	659,628	(382)
Grants and other contributions	29(b)	16,008	37,116	21,108
Other revenue		2,950	11,569	8,619
Total revenue		940,454	1,027,280	86,826
Gains on disposal and remeasurement of assets		-	552	552
Total income from continuing operations		940,454	1,027,832	87,378
Expenses from continuing operations				
Employee expenses	29(c)	575,611	628,755	53,144
Supplies and services	29(d)	252,245	324,691	72,446
Grants and subsidies	29(e)	39,172	18,291	(20,881)
Depreciation and amortisation	29(f)	43,905	51,610	7,705
Interest on lease liability		58	1,169	1,111
Other expenses		12,854	15,725	2,871
Total expenses from continuing operations		923,845	1,040,241	116,396
Operating result for the year *		16,609	(12,409)	(29,018)
Other comprehensive income not reclassified to operating result				
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	29(g)	-	28,340	28,340
Total other comprehensive income		-	28,340	28,340
Total comprehensive income		16,609	15,931	(678)

29(a) Appropriation revenue

Variance mainly due to additional funding received for the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the 357 firefighter government election commitment (\$45.622m), adjustments to funding transferred to the QPS for Marine Rescue related service level agreements (\$5.145m), additional National Aerial Firefighting Contract related funding (\$4.847m), public sector wages policy adjustments (\$3.411m), additional superannuation entitlements (\$2.912m) partly offset by the transfer of funding to the QPS associated with the transfer of SES (\$4.536m), and transfer of the 'If its flooded, forget it' campaign to the QRA (\$2.146m).

29(b) Grants and other contributions

Variance mainly due to Rural Fire Brigade contributed assets (\$3.589m) which are partly or wholly funded by the brigades but become assets owned by QFES, QRA reimbursements for disaster events (\$14.410m) as QFES does not budget for extraordinary disaster events and recovers eligible expenditure from the QRA, and sponsorships and donations received for the RFS and SES which exceeded expectation.

29(c) Employee expenses

Variance mainly due to the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the 357 firefighter government election commitment (\$38.348m), additional overtime expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and shift coverage for firefighter vacancies (\$19.402m), public sector wages policy adjustments (\$3.411m), and increases to superannuation entitlements (\$2.912m), partly offset by FTE vacancies.

29(d) Supplies and services

Variance mainly due to expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments (\$47.349m) as QFES does not budget for extraordinary disaster events and recovers eligible expenditure from the QRA, increased supplies and services cost with the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the 357 firefighter government election commitment (\$7.274m), and additional contractor and professional service resources to support the emergency services reform activities.

29(e) Grants and subsidies

Variance mainly due to lower than expected funding provided to the QPS for information and communication technology programs and projects, with a greater portion of projects undertaken by QFES instead of QPS during 2023-24 and the transfer of funding for service level agreements to the QPS (\$8.403m) as per Note 3.

29(f) Depreciation and amortisation

Variance is due to a higher than estimated increase in asset values associated with asset revaluation and accelerated depreciation for building assets following changes to the planned asset replacement program.

29(g) Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus

Variance is due to a higher than estimated increase in land and buildings asset values following the asset revaluations undertaken during the year.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

29 Budgetary reporting disclosures (continued)

Explanation of major variances - Statement of financial position

	Variance Note	2024 Budget \$'000	2024 Actual \$'000	2024 Variance \$'000
Assets				
Current assets				
Cash	29(h)	54,338	101,408	47,070
Receivables	29(i)	86,238	76,824	(9,414)
Inventories		8,064	8,318	254
Prepayments		6,068	4,120	(1,948)
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	29(j)	-	7,728	7,728
Total current assets		154,708	198,398	43,690
Non-current assets				
Intangible assets		150	151	1
Property, plant and equipment	29(k)	1,000,180	1,050,286	50,106
Right-of-use assets	29(l)	6,455	27,128	20,673
Total non-current assets		1,006,785	1,077,565	70,780
Total assets		1,161,493	1,275,963	114,470
Liabilities				
Current liabilities				
Payables	29(m)	24,985	54,300	29,315
Lease liabilities		2,641	1,992	(649)
Accrued employee benefits	29(n)	19,142	24,287	5,145
Other current liabilities		2,115	748	(1,367)
Total current liabilities		48,883	81,327	32,444
Non-current liabilities				
Lease liabilities	29(o)	4,180	25,878	21,698
Total non-current liabilities		4,180	25,878	21,698
Total liabilities		53,063	107,205	54,142
Net assets		1,108,430	1,168,758	60,328
Equity				
Contributed equity			853,145	
Accumulated surplus			204,735	
Asset revaluation surplus			110,878	
Total equity	29(p)	1,108,430	1,168,758	60,328

29(h) *Cash*

Variance is due to larger than expected opening cash position in 2023-24 resulting from prior year program and projects delays associated with the global supply chain challenges and limited availability within the contractor and professional services market.

29(i) *Receivables*

Variance is due to the timing of payments from trade debtors and limited end of financial year appropriation adjustments required.

29(j) *Non-current assets classified as held for sale*

Variance is due to one asset being under contract as at reporting date.

29(k) *Property, plant and equipment*

Variance is due to a higher than estimated increase in asset values associated with asset revaluation, as well as increased investment in capital works programs with accelerated strategic land acquisitions.

29(l) *Right-of-use assets*

Variance is due to a new lease for the northern region headquarters late in 2022-23 which was recognised after the finalisation of the 2023-24 budget.

29(m) *Payables*

Variance is due to the timing of payments to trade creditors and recognition of services received but not yet invoiced.

29(n) *Accrued employee benefits*

Variance is due to the increased cost of employee expenses due to public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining related increases.

29(o) *Lease liabilities*

Variance is due to a new lease for the northern region headquarters late in 2022-23 which was recognised after the finalisation of the 2023-24 budget.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

29 Budgetary reporting disclosures (continued)

29(p) *Total equity*

Variance is mainly due to larger than expected opening cash position in 2023-24 from prior year program delays and higher than estimated increase in asset values associated with asset revaluation. This was partially offset by an increase in payables due to the timing of payments to trade creditors and recognition of services received but not yet invoiced.

Explanation of major variances - Statement of cash flows

	Variance Note	2024 Budget \$'000	2024 Actual \$'000	2024 Variance \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Service appropriation receipts	29(q)	213,506	298,761	85,255
User charges and fees		52,580	52,640	60
Emergency management levies	29(r)	660,010	655,895	(4,115)
Grants and other contributions		5,790	22,829	17,039
GST input tax credits from ATO		24,572	43,653	19,081
GST collected from customers		6,545	4,841	(1,704)
Other		2,950	5,784	2,834
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Employee expenses	29(s)	(580,731)	(639,465)	(58,734)
Supplies and services		(252,245)	(324,967)	(72,722)
Grants and subsidies		(39,172)	(18,291)	20,881
GST paid to suppliers		(24,572)	(43,690)	(19,118)
GST remitted to ATO		(6,545)	(4,841)	1,704
Other		(2,116)	(2,154)	(38)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		60,572	50,995	(9,577)
Cash flows from investing activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Sales of property, plant and equipment		500	986	486
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Payments for property, plant and equipment	29(t)	(125,004)	(114,820)	10,184
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(124,504)	(113,834)	10,670
Cash flows from financing activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Equity injections		21,800	21,329	(471)
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Equity withdrawals		(3,138)	(3,138)	-
Lease payments		(1,264)	(4,183)	(2,919)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		17,398	14,008	(3,390)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash		(46,534)	(48,831)	(2,297)
Cash at beginning of financial year		100,872	150,239	49,367
Cash at end of financial year	29(u)	54,338	101,408	47,070

29(q) *Service appropriation receipts*

Variance is due to the timing of funding received for the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the 357 firefighter government election commitment.

29(r) *Emergency management levies*

Variance is due to the timing of remittance of funds collected by local government, with a large portion of 2022-23 related payments occurring in 2023-24.

29(s) *Employee expenses*

Variance is mainly due to the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the 357 firefighter government election commitment, additional overtime expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and firefighter vacancies, and public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining related expenses.

29(t) *Payments for property, plant and equipment*

Variance is due to capital program delays mainly associated with additional funding received for RFS facilities and support vehicles, with the program expected to be completed in 2024-25.

29(u) *Cash*

Variance is due to larger than expected opening cash position in 2023-24 resulting from prior year program and projects delays associated with the global supply chain challenges and limited availability within the contractor and professional services market.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Management Certificate for the year ended 30 June 2024**

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), section 38 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with section 62(1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

- (a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects;
- (b) the statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for the year ended 30 June 2024 and of the financial position of the department at the end of that year; and

The Commissioner, as the Accountable Officer of the Queensland Fire Department, formerly Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, acknowledges responsibility under s.7 and s.11 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* for the establishment and maintenance, in all material respect, of an appropriate and effective system of internal controls and risk management process with respect to financial reporting throughout the reporting period.



S. Smith
AFSM

**Accountable Officer
Commissioner**

23 August 2024



S. Lowth
**B Commerce
FCPA**

Chief Finance Officer

23 August 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Accountable Officer of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including material accounting policy information, and the management certificate.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- (a) gives a true and fair view of the department's financial position as at 30 June 2024, and its financial performance for the year then ended
- (b) complies with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 and Australian Accounting Standards.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report.

I am independent of the department in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key audit matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial report of the current period. I addressed these matters in the context of my audit of the financial report as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Specialised building valuation (\$474.515 million) and depreciation expense (\$22.311 million)

Refer to note 17 in the financial report.

Key audit matter	How my audit addressed the key audit matter
<p>Except in rare circumstances where a market price in an active market exists, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) derives the fair value of its buildings using the current replacement cost method that comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross replacement cost, less • Accumulated depreciation. <p>QFES values its buildings each year through a combination of specific appraisals for selected regions on a rolling basis, with the remainder of buildings revalued by applying relevant indices in the years between specific appraisals.</p> <p>QFES derived the gross replacement cost of its buildings at balance date using unit prices that required significant judgements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying whether the existing building contains obsolescence or less utility compared to the modern substitute, and if so, estimating the adjustment to the unit rate required to reflect this difference. • buildings not specifically appraised in the current year, indexing unit rates for increases in input costs. <p>The measurement of accumulated depreciation involves significant judgements for estimating the remaining useful lives of assets. The significant judgements required for gross replacement cost and useful lives are also significant for calculating annual depreciation expense.</p>	<p>My procedures included, but were not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing management's controls over the valuation process. • Assessing the appropriateness of the process used for measuring gross replacement cost with reference to common industry practices. • For unit rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assessing the competence, capability and objectivity of the experts used by QFES to develop the unit rate models. – Obtaining an understanding of the methodology used and assessing its appropriateness with reference to common industry practices. – For building specific appraisals in the current year, evaluating on a sample basis the relevance, completeness and accuracy of source data used to derive the unit rate of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ modern substitute (including locality factors and on costs) ▪ adjustment for excess quality or obsolescence. – For buildings revalued through indexation, recalculating the index with reference to the current year's specific appraisal. • Reviewing management and the expert's assessment and application of asset componentisation and the consequential impact on depreciation expense. • Evaluating useful life estimates for reasonableness by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reviewing management's annual assessment of useful lives. – Assessing whether assets still in use have reached or exceeded their useful life. • Where changes in useful lives were identified, evaluating whether the effective dates of the changes applied for depreciation expense were supported by appropriate evidence.

Responsibilities of the accountable officer for the financial report

The Accountable Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 and Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Accountable Officer is also responsible for assessing the department's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the department or to otherwise cease operations.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at:
www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar6.pdf

This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Statement

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 30 June 2024:

- (c) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- (d) I consider that, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.

Prescribed requirements scope

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, any other Act and the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly record and explain the department's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.



28 August 2024

David Adams
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Acronyms

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	FBAN	Fire Behaviour Analyst
AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	FESSN	Fire and Emergency Services Support Network
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System	FFF	Fight Fire Fascination
AFFF	Aqueous film forming foam	FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
AFSM	Australian Fire Service Medal	FRSFWN	Fire and Rescue Service Frontline Women's Network
ANZEMC	Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee	FTE	Full-time equivalents
APERE	Asia-Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise	HRIDC	Human Rights Interdepartmental Committee
ARCC	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	HVO	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
AWS	Australian Warning System	ICT	Information and communication technology
BA	Breathing apparatus	IMU	Information Management Unit
BoM	Board of Management	INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse	ISMS	Information Security Management System
CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear	LAT	Large air tanker
CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive	LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
CInDRA	Critical Infrastructure Disaster Risk Assessment	MOHRI	Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information
COI	Conflicts of interest	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
CONOPS	Concept of Operations	MSRC	Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team	NAB	National Australia Bank
DESI	Department of Environment, Science and Innovation	NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
DFV	Domestic and family violence	NFA	National Fire Authority of Fiji
eDRMS	electronic Document and Records Management System	NSW	New South Wales
ELT	Executive Leadership Team	NSWRFS	New South Wales Rural Fire Service

Acronyms (cont'd)

OAG	Operational Advisory Group	RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
PaSU	Partnerships and Sponsorship Unit	RAAP	Road Attitudes and Action Planning
PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Club	RFFAQ	Retired Firefighters Association of Queensland Inc.
PFAS	Per- and Poly- Fluoro Alkyl Substances	RFS	Rural Fire Service
PNGFS	Papua New Guinea Fire Service	RFSFWN	Rural Fire Service Frontline Women's Network
PPRR	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	RFSQ	Rural Fire Service Queensland
PSO	Peer Support Officer	RLIB	Rechargeable Lithium-Ion Batteries
QAO	Queensland Audit Office	RPAS	Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems
QARE	QFES Active Resilience Engagement	SERA	State Earthquake Risk Assessment
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service	SES	State Emergency Service
QCESA	Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy	SFEST	School of Fire and Emergency Services Training
QDMA	Queensland's disaster management arrangements	TAFE	Technical and Further Education
QFD	Queensland Fire Department	TGQ	Tsunami Guide for Queensland
QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	USAR	Urban search and rescue
QFR	Queensland Fire and Rescue	VfQ	Volunteering for Queensland
QPS	Queensland Police Service	WAFA	Women and Firefighting Australasia
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service	WfQ	Working for Queensland
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	WHS	Work health and safety

Compliance checklist

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	Public availability	ARRs – section 9.2	ii
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	Copyright notice	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 9.4	ii
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	Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs – section 11.2	6, 28–31
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	Public Sector Ethics	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4	81–82
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	Consultancies	ARRs – section 31.1	www.data.qld.gov.au
	Overseas travel	ARRs – section 31.2	www.data.qld.gov.au
	Queensland Government Language Services Policy	ARRs – section 31.3	www.data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1	124
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ARRs: *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*

FAA: *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS: *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

