

Commissioner's message

It is a pleasure to present Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) annual report for 2017–18. This report provides a review of our performance in delivering services to create safe and resilient communities for all Queenslanders.

QFES is a unique organisation where staff and volunteers work together to assist communities to recover in times of disaster and emergency. Above all, I truly appreciate the dedication and commitment of our staff and volunteers, and all they do to keep Queensland communities safe.

During 2017–18 much work has been done to further develop the QFES Volunteerism Strategy. QFES is supported by approximately 42,000 volunteers from the Rural Fire Service (RFS), State Emergency Service (SES), Research and Scientific Branch network and Technical Rescue Unit as well as Peer Support Officers. QFES' paid and volunteer workforce provided input to the strategy's development, which is expected to be finalised by 30 September 2018.

QFES has a strong focus in preparing for our future, and two further key strategies launched in 2018 will support us in continuing to deliver world-class fire and emergency services to all Queenslanders. Strategy 2030 will help us prepare our people and our organisation for whatever the future may bring. Scenario planning workshops, which included key partners and stakeholders, have helped to refine the way we think about QFES' long-term view. Outcomes from the workshops, along with a community survey and research projects to understand community expectations of QFES, will inform the strategy's development. The Digital Transformation Strategy also recognises QFES' need to adapt to a rapidly changing and complex environment. Its focus is on creating a future where users, technology and information are better aligned, and where QFES is empowered and equipped to meet evolving demands and expectations. Both strategies are well underway, with consultation papers for each expected to be finalised by 30 September 2018.

A highlight this year was the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. QFES deployed more than 800 personnel from each of its three services – Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), RFS and SES – along with the public service, to provide a range of support including response capabilities to fire, natural hazards, disasters and hazardous materials; support for counter terrorism activities; and support to Local Disaster Management Groups. The QFES planned response to the Games has left a fantastic legacy for future, planned major events within QFES.

Throughout 2017–18 QFES continued its commitment to a robust governance environment. Our clearly defined governance framework ensures well-informed decision-making and accountability across the department. A number of committees established under QFES' new governance framework held their first meeting in 2017–18 including the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee and People and Culture Committee. A follow-up review of the maturity and effectiveness of the governance arrangements was conducted in March 2018. The report highlighted significant progress has been made since 2016 and QFES is undertaking further work based on the report to further strengthen its governance maturity and effectiveness.

The 2017 Working for Queensland survey gave employees the opportunity to provide their views and opinions about a wide range of workplace factors. With 59 per cent of the workforce responding to the survey, up from 38 per cent from the 2016 survey, a much clearer insight into our workplace has been provided. This insight has enabled the development of actions that QFES can take in response to the survey findings.

Other highlights and achievements covered in the annual report include:

- the development of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework which will provide an integrated, consistent and state-wide approach to natural hazard risk management
- the release of the Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline which gives state and local governments and agencies support to respond to natural and man-made events
- the implementation of Nexus and roll-out of Office 365 to QFES staff and volunteers
- the creation of a Lessons Management Framework that will provide a continuous cycle of learning on both operational and corporate matters
- the continued delivery of community safety programs such as Fight Fire Fascination (FFF), Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP), and Safehome
- the launch of a new recruitment attraction campaign 'ALL IN. ALL FRONTS.'
- continuing work on cultural change across the department with QFES a highly commended finalist in the 2017 Premier's Awards for Excellence in the Leadership category for the QFES Transforms Through Leadership Initiative
- targeted community engagement initiatives to build and maintain relationships between emergency services, multicultural and family support agencies and multicultural community members.

I thank our staff and volunteers for their continuing contribution and commitment to helping create safe and resilient communities and look forward to the year ahead.



Katarina Carroll APM

Commissioner

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

10 September 2018