

Overview

About us

Our vision:

One QFES creating safe and resilient communities.

Our purpose:

To help the community to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the impact of fire and emergency events.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) was established as a department on 1 November 2013 under the *Public Service Act 2008 (Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 8) 2013)*.

QFES is the primary provider of fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services throughout Queensland. The department encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), disaster management services, Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES). QFES protects persons, property and the environment through the provision of effective prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR) activities across a range of fire and emergency events including natural and human induced disasters.

RFS and SES are the primary volunteer services of the department. The community-based RFS operates in rural, semi-rural and some urban fringe areas. SES is a community-based, not-for-profit, volunteer emergency service enabled by both state and local governments and sponsor partnerships.

Through service agreements, QFES also supports other volunteer groups that provide emergency response to Queenslanders, including:

- Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA)
- Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Emergency Services Cadets
- Royal Life Saving Society Queensland (RLSSQ)
- Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ)
- Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ).

Key outcomes for QFES include:

- communities are appropriately skilled and resourced to prevent incidents occurring and are adequately prepared for and able to mitigate the impacts of fire and emergency events.
- timely, coordinated and appropriate responses are provided to fire and emergency events to minimise their effects.
- appropriate relief and support is provided after responses to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs.
- the department is strategically capable and agile,
- the department's business enabling services enhance, integrate and support its service delivery and are compliant, authorised and fit-for-purpose.

The Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), established on 1 November 2013, provides professional information and communication technology (ICT), financial, procurement, asset management and human resource services to the public safety agencies including QFES, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM). PSBA also provides ICT services to the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) and Queensland Corrective Services. The provision of these services by PSBA allows frontline agencies to focus their efforts on delivering critical operational services to the community.

PSBA is governed by a Board of Management, which was formally established on 15 September 2016. The Board comprises the QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll (Chair), QPS Commissioner Ian Stewart and an appointed external member, Geoff Waite, Executive General Manager, Risk and Intelligence, Queensland Treasury. The role of Chair rotates annually between the QFES Commissioner and QPS Commissioner.

The Board's functions include providing leadership and oversight of PSBA and coordinating the provision of support services, and any programs provided by the PSBA to the public safety agencies. The Chief Operating Officer reports to the Board and must give effect to any direction of the Board.

Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 4) 2017*, QFES administers the following legislation:

- *Disaster Management Act 2003*
- *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*.

Our accountabilities

The main functions of QFES under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* are 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.

In addition, the Act includes functions of the SES. These are to perform:

- a) rescue or similar operations in an emergency situation
- b) search operations in an emergency or similar situation
- c) other operations in an emergency situation to
 - i) help injured persons
 - ii) protect persons or property from danger or potential danger associated with the situation
- d) other activities to help communities prepare for, respond to and recover from an event or a disaster
- e) activities to raise the profile of the SES or raise funds to support the SES in the performance of its other functions.

Under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, the chief executive of QFES has the following functions for the administration of the Act:

- a) to establish and maintain arrangements between the state and the commonwealth about matters relating to effective disaster management
- b) to ensure that disaster management and disaster operations in the state are consistent with the:
 - i) state group's strategic policy framework for disaster management for the state
 - ii) state disaster management plan
 - iii) disaster management standards
 - iv) disaster management guidelines
- c) to ensure that persons performing functions under the Act in relation to disaster operations are appropriately trained
- d) to provide advice and support to the state group and local and district groups in relation to disaster management and disaster operations.

Queensland Government objectives

The Queensland Government works closely with all Queenslanders to deliver its objectives for the community. Integrity, accountability and consultation underpin everything the Queensland Government does.

Our objectives

QFES' focus on creating safe and resilient communities supported the Queensland Government's objectives for the community of delivering quality frontline services, and building safe, caring and connected communities. QFES delivered on the Queensland Government's objectives through a range of strategies including:

- collaborating with communities to develop a shared understanding of their risks and empower them to have the capability to manage those risks
- providing timely and accurate information to inform and enable communities and responders to adequately prepare for, and respond to, fire and emergency events
- providing timely advice, reporting and support to other agencies to assist in the recovery process
- ensuring lessons learnt are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs
- strengthening community capability and partnerships.

QFES' objectives and strategies, as outlined in its 2017-2021 strategic plan, are:

Objective	Strategies
1 <i>Build community capability to prevent incidents occurring and ensure that they are adequately prepared for and able to mitigate the impacts and consequences of fire and emergency events.</i>	1.1 Collaborate with communities to develop a shared understanding of their risks and empower them to have the capability to manage them. 1.2 Enhance our peoples' engagement and facilitation skills to work effectively with the community. 1.3 Create a deeper understanding of diversity and ensure staff develop the skills to work with multicultural and Indigenous communities.

Objective (cont'd)	Strategies (cont'd)
2 <i>Contribute to the provision of a timely, coordinated and appropriate response to minimise the effects of fire and emergency events.</i>	<p>2.1 Review the current service delivery model, levy arrangements and supporting legislation to ensure they meet contemporary needs.</p> <p>2.2 Continue to develop systems and strategies for a reduction of, and a more appropriate response to, unwanted alarms.</p> <p>2.3 Support interoperability through our equipment selection, practices and policies.</p> <p>2.4 Ensure that all services within QFES can operationally support each other and complement our ability to deliver services.</p> <p>2.5 Work with public safety partners to create, wherever practicable, interoperability in the delivery of services.</p> <p>2.6 Provide timely and accurate information to inform and enable communities and responders to adequately prepare for, and respond to, fire and emergency events.</p>
3 <i>Provide appropriate relief and support during and after responses to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs.</i>	<p>3.1 Provide timely advice, reporting and support to other agencies to assist in the recovery process.</p> <p>3.2 Conduct damage assessments to inform relief and recovery activities.</p> <p>3.3 Provide QFES transition planning that informs communities, government and non-government organisations.</p> <p>3.4 Deliver timely and accessible recovery information to the community.</p> <p>3.5 Contribute towards recovery operations by providing fit-for-purpose QFES capabilities including logistical and command and control.</p>
4 <i>Enhance strategic capability and agility.</i>	<p>4.1 Continue to create a transformational culture that promotes a shared understanding of how staff and volunteers work together professionally and respectfully.</p> <p>4.2 Progress the creation of a One QFES policy, doctrine, language and concepts of operation.</p> <p>4.3 Identify how existing QFES capabilities could be applied to emerging areas of need.</p> <p>4.4 Ensure that lessons learnt are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs.</p>
5 <i>Provide business-enabling services that enhance, integrate and support the department's service delivery and that are compliant, authorised and fit-for-purpose.</i>	<p>5.1 Ensure that our organisational strategy and decisions respond to future need and that they are: timely; accurate; evidenced-based; accountable; and transparent.</p> <p>5.2 Strengthen community capability and partnerships.</p> <p>5.3 Support evidence-based service delivery through the use of business intelligence and data analysis.</p> <p>5.4 Deliver services within the state's financial capability.</p> <p>5.5 Develop and implement a QFES Volunteerism Strategy to foster inclusivity and cohesion and remove duplication and barriers.</p> <p>5.6 Attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce.</p> <p>5.7 Provide safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces.</p> <p>5.8 Confirm that our business processes are aligned with contemporary practice and that they legislatively comply.</p> <p>5.9 Work with PSBA to ensure that it is aware of what it needs to deliver to meet the department's business requirements and actively monitor its performance.</p>

Our values

Our behaviour and the way we do business are guided by our values:

- **Respect** — we appreciate and value each other and our differences.
- **Integrity** — we are individually accountable for our performance and undertake our duties with diligence and transparency.
- **Courage** — we are brave when facing adversity, value ethical behaviour and challenge wrongdoing.
- **Loyalty** — we are committed to each other, have pride in our organisation and are dedicated to keeping Queensland communities safe.
- **Trust** — we are open, honest and dependable.

QFES' values align with 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

The environment in which QFES operates is rapidly changing. Some of the strategic environmental factors QFES is working to address include:

- the continuing growth in Queensland's population, combined with its diversity and geographic dispersal across the state
- a predicted increase in the severity and frequency of natural disasters
- changing community expectations around government services
- changes in the volunteer landscape
- crime and safety threats resulting from technological advancements, globalisation and violent extremism.

QFES responds to these environmental factors through the delivery of its strategic plan. Importantly, QFES works collaboratively with the 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 rescue, and emergency services.

Further information about how QFES is responding to these environmental factors can be found in the 2017–18 Highlights (refer pages 25–66).

Strategic challenges

QFES identified the following key strategic challenges for 2017–18:

- increasing impact of climate change
- managing service capacity versus community expectations
- increasing demand for services as the population grows, ages and becomes more culturally diverse.

Information about how QFES is responding to these challenges can be found in the 2017–18 Highlights (refer pages 25–66).

Outlook

QFES will contribute to *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*, the Queensland Government's objectives for the community (launched 11 June 2018), to be a responsive government and keep communities safe through a range of initiatives, including:

- collaborating with communities to develop a shared understanding of their risks and empower them to have the capability to manage those risks
- providing timely and accurate information to inform and enable communities and responders to adequately prepare for, and respond to, fire and emergency events
- providing timely advice, reporting and support to other agencies to assist in the recovery process
- ensuring lessons learnt are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs
- ensuring that QFES' organisational strategy and decisions respond to future need and that they are timely, accurate, evidence-based, accountable and transparent.

The future focus of QFES is reflected in its 2017–2021 strategic plan. The strategic plan provides a four year blueprint for the department and communicates QFES' organisational priorities to staff, stakeholders and clients.

Key priorities for the department during 2018–19 include:

- continued focus on PPRR activities
- reviewing the current service delivery model, to ensure it meets contemporary needs
- ensuring the department continues to be an inclusive, respectful and diverse organisation for staff and volunteers
- continuing to enhance financial capability and embed a culture of fiscal sustainability
- creating a knowledge framework which fosters learning from experience, creates good governance, and supports the delivery of strategic capability.

During 2018–19, key strategic challenges for the department are:

- predicted climate change leading to more intense and frequent weather events with the department needing to plan to meet this increasing demand
- changing needs of an ageing and geographically dispersed population will result in the department having to adjust service delivery to better meet community needs.

Resources

QFES delivers its services from seven regional locations throughout the state — Far Northern, Northern, Central, North Coast, Brisbane, South Eastern and South Western. They include:

- 242 FRS stations
- 1,409 volunteer based rural fire brigades, including 486 with stations
- 301 SES groups
- seven communication centres (one located in each QFES region)
- Special Operations Centre located at Cannon Hill, Brisbane
- State Deployment Centre located at Morningside, Brisbane.

In addition, frontline staff and volunteers are trained throughout the state in various education and training facilities including the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training (SFEST) at Whyte Island.

The Emergency Services Complex in Brisbane's northern suburbs houses emergency services including the QFES State Operations Centre (SOC), State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) and the Brisbane Region Fire Communications Centre (FireCom).

A list of contacts and key locations for QFES is available in the appendices of this report (refer page 126).

Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of frontline services and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience. QFES has approximately 42,000 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch network and Technical Rescue Unit.

- **Rural Fire Service**

Volunteer rural fire brigades provide fire management services for rural and semi-rural communities and some urban fringe areas across approximately 93 per cent of the state. In addition to responding to fires in their local area and in surrounding areas in support of other brigades and emergency services, volunteer brigades undertake a range of planning and preparation activities to ensure communities are well prepared for the bushfire season. This includes community education, hazard reduction and mitigation activities to reduce the risk from fire to people and property. 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 2018, there were approximately 36,000 RFS volunteers.

- **State Emergency Service**

The SES is a community-based, not-for-profit, volunteer emergency service enabled by both state and local governments and sponsor partnerships. It plays a vital part in Queensland's emergency management approach and provides assistance to Queensland communities in times of disaster or emergency. The Queensland Government works in partnership with local governments through providing shared support and services that make a significant contribution to the ongoing effectiveness of the SES.

This important partnership assists SES volunteers to provide a valuable volunteer emergency service to their local communities. SES groups perform search and rescue, storm damage and floodboat operations, road crash rescue, emergency traffic management and vertical rescue, and protect persons and property from danger in disaster and emergency situations. They also perform incident management and agency support. The SES maintains a high level of cooperation and support to QPS for assistance in search activities.

The SES also provides valuable assistance to other emergency services and helps communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from an event or a disaster. Flood and storm responses form a significant part of Queensland SES activities.

As at 30 June 2018, there were approximately 5,600 active SES volunteers.

- **Research and Scientific Branch volunteer (Scientific Advisor) network**

The Research and Scientific Branch incorporates permanent staff and volunteers who respond to hazardous materials incidents across Queensland. This volunteer network is a critical component of the Branch's expert 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 from private industry, local governments and tertiary institutions across Queensland. During 2017–18, they attended a range of incidents including chemical reactions and spillages, and fires causing hazardous materials releases.

As at 30 June 2018, there were 53 scientific volunteers including 48 regional based Scientific Officers and five Queensland Health Brisbane-based Scientific Support Officers.

- **Technical Rescue Unit – Urban Search and Rescue**

The Disaster Assistance Response Team (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, doctors, engineers, Hazmat specialists, police and volunteer canine handlers, mechanics and communications operators who respond to natural and man-made disasters across Queensland. The volunteer network within this team is a critical component comprising doctors, engineers and canine specialists. These specialists come from private industry, local governments and tertiary institutions across Queensland. During 2017–18, these volunteers participated in the annual USAR 48 hour field deployment exercise (August 2017) and skills maintenance workshops and skills acquisition courses.

As at 30 June 2018, the AUS-1 DART has 14 volunteers including five doctors, five engineers and four canine handlers.

Partners

QFES works closely with the public safety agencies — the Office of the IGEM, PSBA and QPS. QFES also has strong relationships with its partners including local governments who provide shared services and support to SES, and those in the community through volunteer groups including the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc. (RFBAQ), Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association Inc. (QLDSESV), Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee and the Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association. These partnerships are vital for QFES to enhance community safety by minimising the impact of fire and emergency incidents on the people, environment and economy of Queensland.

- **Local Government Association of Queensland**

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is the peak body for local government in Queensland. QFES collaborates with LGAQ in relation to disaster management arrangements before, during and after a disaster event at all levels of the disaster management arrangements.

A Disaster Management Alliance Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) exists between QFES and LGAQ which establishes a strategic commitment and clear understanding of each agency's roles and responsibilities. The MoU also enables collaboration opportunities for local government to contribute to the development of disaster management policies and service delivery strategies.

- **Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland**

The RFBAQ is a representative body for rural fire brigades. It provides information and advice to volunteers and consults with QFES on matters of policy, training, equipment, finance and vehicle safety through the RFS Strategic Working Groups.

- **Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association**

The QLDSESV is a representative body for, and advocates on behalf of, its members. The association provides information and advice to volunteers and consults with QFES on matters of policy, training, equipment, finance and vehicle safety through the Communications Standards Committee. The QLDSESV is a member of the national SES Volunteer Association.

- **Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee**

The role of the Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee is to provide advice to the Queensland Government and voluntary organisations involved in marine rescue activities and to investigate and make recommendations on matters referred to the committee. The committee also ensures suitable guidelines are available for the standardisation of an integrated Queensland statutory service/volunteer marine rescue capability.

The committee is chaired by the Assistant Commissioner, SES within QFES with membership from the following agencies:

- AVCGA
- Department of Transport and Main Roads (Maritime Safety Queensland)
- QPS
- RLSSQ
- SLSQ
- VMRAQ.

- **Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association**

The Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association, commonly known as PCYC, is a non-government, not-for-profit, charitable organisation that provides appropriate, affordable and accessible youth development programs and services to support young people in making positive life choices. The PCYC Emergency Services Cadets Program is delivered in partnership with PCYC and Queensland's emergency services including QFES and QPS.

For further information regarding the Emergency Services Cadets Program refer to page 34 or visit the PCYC website: www.pcy.org.au/Youth-Programs/Emergency-Services-Cadets.aspx

Structure

QFES comprises:

- Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Division
- Readiness and Response Services Division
- Strategy and Corporate Services Division.

The **Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Division** is responsible for providing overall strategic leadership, direction and support to RFS and SES. It also provides support through service agreements to other volunteer groups involved in emergency response. The Division incorporates the Emergency Management and Community Capability Directorate, which is comprised of the Community Resilience and Risk Mitigation, and Community Capability and Volunteerism Branches. The Division is responsible for introducing innovative strategies to support the recruitment and retention of a sustainable skilled volunteer workforce and the application of technical expertise in disaster management capabilities and support that meet the increasing demand from more frequent and severe disasters and emergencies. It works in partnership with local governments to develop management and volunteer capability, and through the provision of high quality services, support and advice, ensures safer and more resilient communities across Queensland.

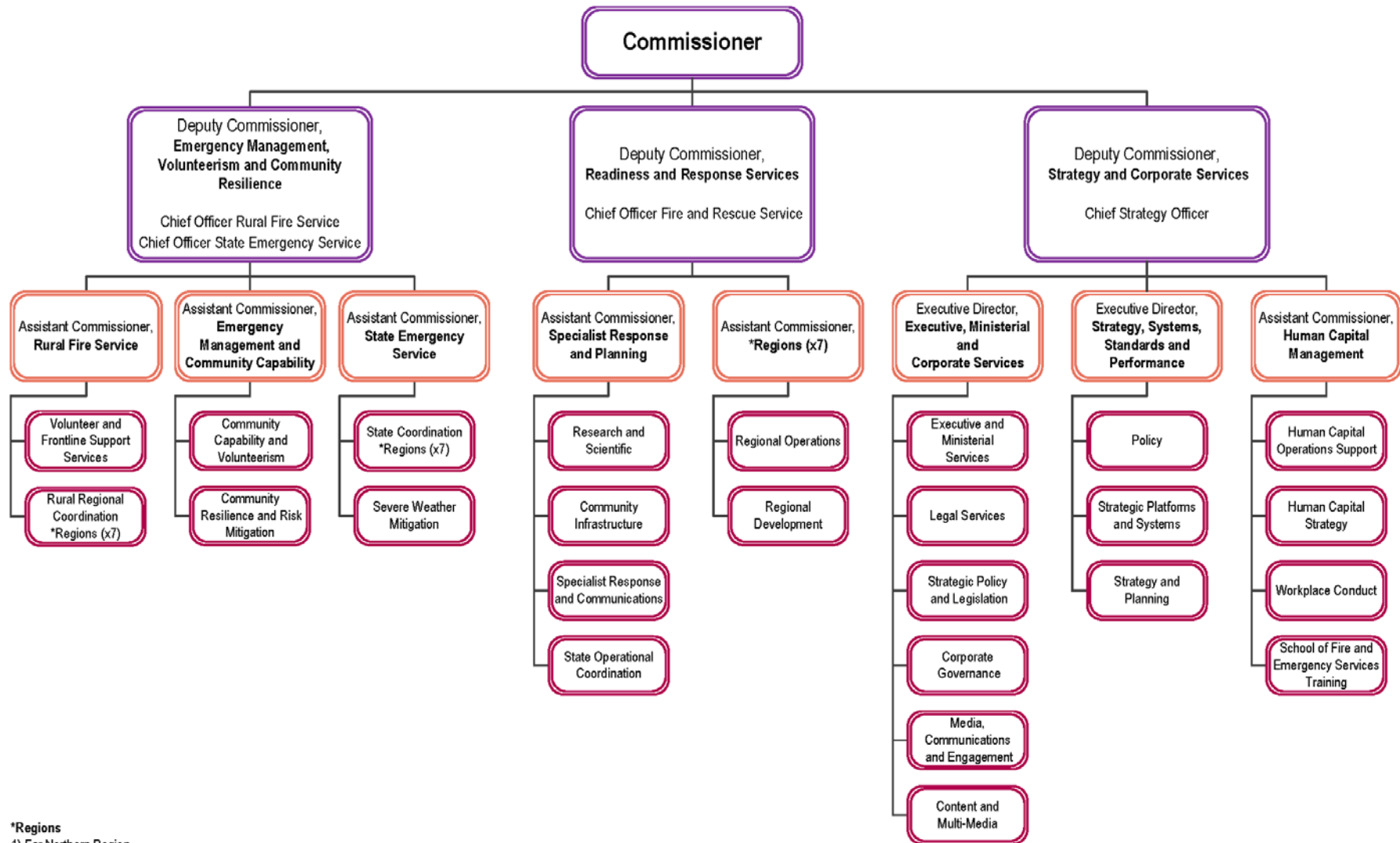
The **Readiness and Response Services Division** is responsible for ensuring the response capacity of QFES operational staff in emergent situations as legislated in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and *Disaster Management Act 2003*. The Division provides sustainable leadership and direction through the coordination of emergency management and fire and rescue operational activities. The Division is comprised of a skilled fire and emergency management workforce, working in partnership with state government departments, local governments and communities to improve resilience and enhance operational capacity during times of emergency. Regional operations as well as Fire Communications, Fire Safety, Fire Engineering, Investigation and Compliance, Technical Rescue, Breathing Apparatus (BA)/Hazmat, and Research and Scientific are integral elements of this Division.

The **Strategy and Corporate Services Division** is responsible for leading the department's strategic framework and vision, and driving performance and integrated capability across QFES. The Division works closely with the public safety agencies to ensure the department's planning and policy enhances the capability of its people, and services and equipment are contemporary, agile and able to meet the service delivery needs of Queensland communities.

Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2018

14



- *Regions**
- 1) Far Northern Region
 - 2) Northern Region
 - 3) Central Region
 - 4) North Coast Region
 - 5) Brisbane Region
 - 6) South Eastern Region
 - 7) South Western Region

Regions

