

BLUE WATER REVIEW WORKING GROUP COMMUNIQUE

Meeting 17-18 August 2019

Key Matters

The Working Group (WG) focussed on the current capability and risk to the sector. A number of matters were considered:

- **Capability Analysis and Risk Assessment**

- The WG undertook a pilot capability analysis workshop with the “knowledge in the room” considering the sector as it is currently.
- An issue discussed was the importance of foundation and ongoing training, and equal access to training services for frontline volunteers.
- The WG also heard a short, high-level talk about risks, hazards and mitigation practices with the QFES Hazard and Risk Unit. A process to further assess risk will be progressed.

- **The Far Northern Region**

- The WG welcomed Cairns Harbour Master Mr Michael Barnett who presented on the Torres Strait Marine Safety Program that is facilitated by Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ). Mr Barnett detailed the program’s primary focus: improving and promoting boating safety in the region and how MSQ seek to ensure safety in the Torres Strait.
- The WG held a listening session with members of the Gulf, Cape and Island community units. Access to training was again raised as a primary issue facing remote units.

- **A message from the Chair**

- Chair Troy Davies advised the WG that he had accepted a secondment to the role of Executive Director, Organisational Engagement Directorate, QFES, and would be handing over the position of Chair to Joanne Greenfield, Assistant Commissioner of Emergency Management and Community Capability. Troy thanked the WG members for their commitment and support to date. On behalf of the WG, new Chair Joanne Greenfield thanked Troy for his contribution to the BWR and his leadership of the WG since inception.
- The WG acknowledged the formal commencement of QFES Operation Redux (the bushfire season) and recorded a project risk of potential delays due to emergency management activities associated with declared natural disaster events.

An informal dinner was held on Saturday, 17 August at the Cairns SES Complex. The WG was delighted to welcome the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, the Honourable Craig Crawford MP. Minister Crawford was pleased to advise the WG and volunteers of a funding boost included in the latest Service Agreements between QFES and both VMRAQ and AVCGA. An additional \$300,000 will be provided to each entity to cover insurance costs. This inclusion addresses short-term reform suggestions made in the Blue Water Review where insurance costs were highlighted as a source of concern for the sector. As expressed by many on the night – this represents a lot of sausages that don’t need to be sizzled! After farewelling the Minister, the WG conducted a Q&A Session with approximately 40 volunteers from the Gulf, Cape and Island Communities and south to Innisfail.

The next BWR WG meeting will be held in Brisbane from the 27 - 29 September 2019. In facilitating the sixth volunteer session in Cairns, the WG has now sought engagement with all Squadrons and Flotillas across Queensland. This now concludes the engagement session schedule. The WG thanks all volunteers who, in some instances, travelled great distances to engage with the BWR WG.

For additional information on the activities of the BWR WG please visit the [website](#) or email the WG via BlueWaterReview@qfes.qld.gov.au.