

# 2018–2019 ANNUAL REPORT







## Acknowledgement of Country

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services acknowledges traditional owners of lands across Queensland and pays respect to the Elders — past, present and emerging — for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

**Artists:** Sarrita King and  
Tarisse King (April 2019)

Sarita is an Aboriginal artist who combines traditional Aboriginal techniques such as 'dotting' but fuses it with other techniques inherited from her father, William King Jungala. Her artworks are striking depictions of the Australian landscape and its harsh landscapes.

Tarisse is an Aboriginal artist who uses the traditional Aboriginal dotting style in a refreshing and complex way, depicting Australian topography.

## Together

Through its depiction of key cultural sites and incorporating elements such as fire, water and earth, this artwork addresses the theme of communities merging together through shared values.

The use of charcoal colours relates to the regeneration of the land and the role the elements play in shaping the diverse landscapes.

The smaller campsites merge into one large campsite along the travelling lines with the different colours of the smaller circles representing the diversity between communities.

The larger campsite, through the use of multiple colours, portrays values like teamwork, camaraderie and respect.

The movement of people between smaller and larger communities is represented through the travelling lines, and the use of colour represents the diversity of people making these journeys.



This annual report provides information about Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' financial and non-financial performance for 2018–19. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* (effective 1 September 2019) and *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

The annual report includes significant highlights against the priority areas and key initiatives, and service area detailed in the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' 2018–2022 Strategic Plan and the 2018–19 Service Delivery Statement.

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### Open data

Information about consultancies, overseas travel and the *Queensland Language Services Policy* is available on the Queensland Government Open Data website ([www.data.qld.gov.au](http://www.data.qld.gov.au)).

### Feedback

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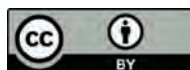


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# Letter of compliance



Office of the  
**Commissioner**

**Queensland Fire and  
Emergency Services**

10 SEP 2019

The Honourable Craig Crawford MP  
Minister for Fire and Emergency Services  
1 William Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the 2018–19 annual report including the financial statements for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

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*.

The annual report requirements checklist is included in the appendices of this report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Wassing', is positioned above the printed name.

Mike Wassing AFSM  
**Acting Commissioner**

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# Commissioner's message

I am pleased to present Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) annual report for 2018–19.

The 2018–19 summer was an extraordinary one in terms of disasters. Extreme weather events have tested our capability this past year and our department has worked hard to adapt and improve to the changing needs of our communities. This report outlines how we have built a more connected and capable Queensland that is prepared for increasingly complex disasters.

The 2018–19 bushfire season, known as Operation Synergy, saw significant fire activity across the state. Between August and December 2018, more than four million hectares of land was burnt. The peak of this occurred during November and December when QFES faced an extreme event. For the first time, the state faced a combination of record high temperatures, unusual patterns of fire behaviour and a 'catastrophic' fire danger rating. Extremes such as these had not been experienced in Queensland before.

Despite these conditions, significant potential losses were prevented.

Our ability to protect people, property and the environment would not have been possible without the 3,000 volunteers and staff who worked day and night to protect lives and property, working in partnership with more than 1,200 personnel deployed from around Australia. Key to the protection of lives and homes was QFES' preparation including the support and involvement from the public, QFES' interoperability with its partners such as aerial capability, and advances in fire behaviour analysis and prediction.

As the fires subsided, Queensland was impacted heavily by a severe weather season, known as Operation Convergence, which included major flooding in Townsville and western areas of the state, resulting in damage to more than 3,000 properties and infrastructure and the loss of over 500,000 livestock. The extreme heatwaves and bushfires that occurred across Queensland, as well as the monsoon flooding, are a clear indication QFES is facing unprecedented

challenges in understanding and responding to the impacts of natural hazards in a changing climate.

In order to address this, QFES introduced a lessons management framework to enable continuous improvement through learning. New processes now provide QFES staff and volunteers the opportunity to contribute to QFES' continuous improvement. This will ensure we develop, adapt and transform to meet the needs of the workforce, stakeholders and the Queensland community. After its implementation following Operations Synergy and Convergence, there have been significant learning and improvement opportunities identified for QFES.

Strategy 2030, launched in June 2019, also reflects how QFES proposes to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that will be present in Queensland through to 2030. This strategy is a significant step to help QFES keep pace with change, positioning the department as leaders in fire and emergency services and ensuring we remain a trusted and reliable frontline service that is also innovative, responsive and forward facing.

The frameworks and strategies delivered during this reporting period are based on communication and engagement with all our stakeholders. The QFES Engagement Strategy, approved in June 2019, delivers on our commitment to achieve outcomes through engagement with our people, partners and communities.





By using a local approach, QFES can ensure stakeholder engagement is about matters that are important to those they affect and are delivered through suitable channels at appropriate times. The strategy also values a coordinated approach including aligning engagement efforts and sharing and pooling information and resources.

Other highlights and achievements covered in the annual report include:

- » the release of the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan 2018*. The plan describes disaster management arrangements for the effective management of disasters in Queensland. The aim of the plan is to enable Queensland to mitigate the effects of, prepare for, respond to, recover from and build resilience to disaster events
- » community safety education programs including Operation Knock Knock, bushfire safety, *If it's flooded, forget it*, photo-electric smoke alarm legislation and home fire safety
- » an increase in aviation capability to eight contracts divided between Toowoomba and Bundaberg airports
- » deployments to assist and support international and interstate agencies battling disasters including deployments to North America, Tasmania and Victoria
- » the launch of the QFES Volunteerism Strategy which aims to create contemporary volunteer models that reflect best practice, innovation and social trends across volunteerism and embed these models in the QFES culture and ethos
- » accreditation as a White Ribbon Australia workplace recognising QFES' commitment to preventing violence against women, supporting employees affected by domestic and family violence, and promoting a safe and respectful workplace for all

- » the launch of the *Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change*. The plan, developed by QFES in partnership with the Department of Environment and Science and the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, outlines the commitments and actions that will be taken to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate
- » incorporating climate projections into the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework with the publication of the *Queensland State Heatwave Risk Assessment 2019*. Released in June 2019, the assessment represents the most comprehensive analysis of future climate risk undertaken for a natural hazard risk assessment in Queensland.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise and acknowledge the former Commissioner Katarina Carroll for her dedication and contribution to QFES over the last nearly five years. We wish her well in her role as Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service.

I thank our staff, volunteers and partners for their continuing contribution and commitment to helping create capable and connected communities and look forward to the year ahead.

Mike Wassing AFSM  
Acting Commissioner  
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services  
10 September 2019



# QFES 2018-19

## Fast Facts

**3,337.85**

Full-time Equivalents (FTEs) including



**198.6**

auxiliary firefighters

**Note:** Due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters, they are presented as 0.1 of an FTE.

Approximately

**38,500**

Volunteers



On average,  
**QFES responds**  
to approximately  
**201 incidents**  
per day

**Note:** Includes Fire and Rescue Service and Rural Fire Service response.

**73,363 total**

**2,607**  
(including  
**1,853**  
residential  
structure fires)

STRUCTURE  
FIRES

**10,154**

LANDSCAPE  
FIRES

**14,331**

MOBILE  
PROPERTY  
CRASHES

**46,271**

OTHER



**153** Emergency Alert campaigns

**2,308** Bushfire community warnings



**9,048** SES tasks including Agency Support Requests

**104,341** SES operational hours





## QFES

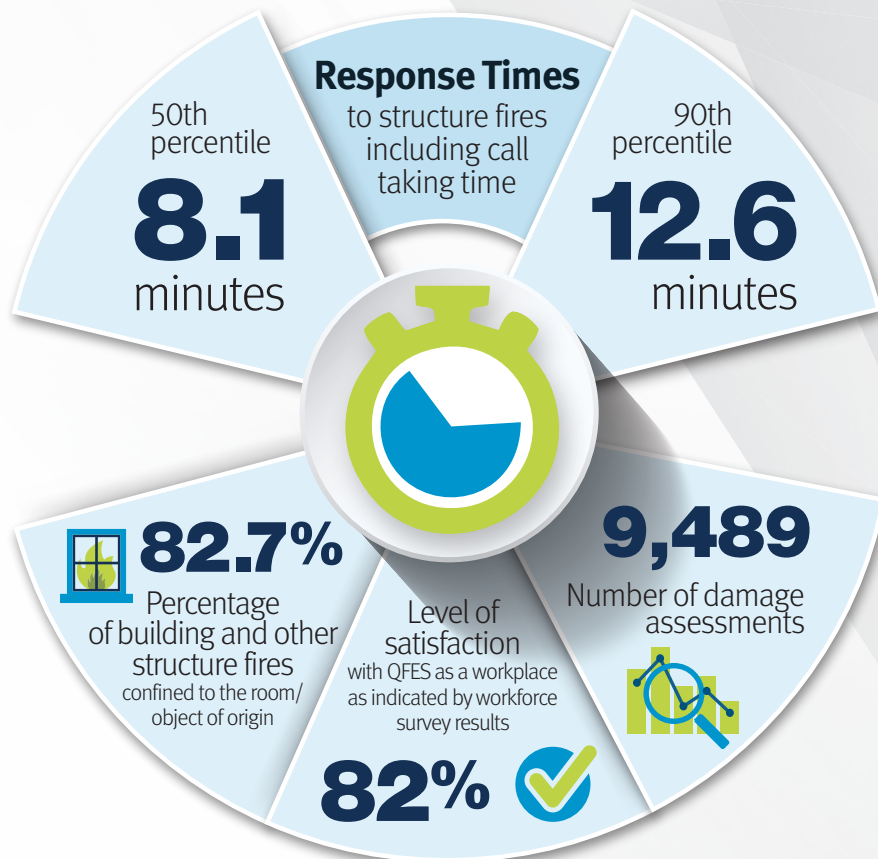
Operating budget

**\$702.5 million**



**\$32.27 million**

Expended by Public Safety Business Agency for QFES' Capital program



QFES Capital program  
**\$6.6 million**



**9** New Motorised swiftwater rescue craft



**9** New Floodboats



**50** New Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) appliances

**119** Replacement Rural Fire Service (RFS) appliances



**3** New Emergency Services Cadet Units in 2018-19 **17** in total



# About the department

## **Our purpose:**

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

## **Our vision:**

Creating safe and resilient communities.







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 Inc. (RLSSQ)
- » Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ)
- » Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ).

### QFES' priority areas are:

- » Prevention and preparedness
- » Response
- » Recovery
- » Strategic capability
- » Business-enabling services.

In 2018–19, QFES administered an operating budget of \$702.5 million. The funding supports the delivery of essential emergency, safety and PPRR services to Queensland. In 2018–19, the department's capital program of \$6.6 million provided an investment of \$5.8 million in capital purchases and \$897,000 for capital grants to rural fire brigades and SES groups to support the delivery of essential frontline public safety services for Queensland's communities (refer to pages 22–25 for further information).

The Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), established on 1 November 2013, provides information and communications technology (ICT), financial, procurement, asset management and human resource services to the public safety agencies including QFES, Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Office of the Inspector General Emergency Management (Office of the IGEM).

PSBA also provides ICT services to the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

The provision of these services by PSBA allows frontline agencies to focus their efforts on delivering critical operational services to the community.

In addition to providing corporate services, PSBA is responsible for the provision of Queensland Government air services.

PSBA is governed by a Board of Management (BoM) comprised of the QPS Commissioner (Chair), QFES Commissioner and an appointed external member. The role of Chair rotates annually in September between the QFES Commissioner and QPS Commissioner.

The Board's functions include providing leadership and oversight to PSBA and coordinating the provision of support services, and any relevant programs to support the public safety entities.

## Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 2) 2018*, 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:

- protect persons, property and the environment from fire and hazardous materials emergencies
- 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
- provide an advisory service, and undertake other measures, to promote—
  - fire prevention and fire control
  - safety and other procedures if a fire or hazardous materials emergency happens
- cooperate with any entity that provides an emergency service
- perform other functions given to QFES under this Act or another Act
- perform functions incidental to its other functions
- 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 priorities

*Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*, launched in June 2018, outlines the government's priorities for the Queensland community.





## Our outcomes

QFES' focus on creating safe and resilient communities supports the Queensland Government's priorities for the community to Be a responsive government and Keep communities safe, 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 learned are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs
- » ensuring QFES' organisational strategy and decisions respond to future need and they are timely, accurate, evidence-based, accountable and transparent.

QFES' priority areas, outcomes and key initiatives, as outlined in its 2018–2022 strategic plan, are:

Priority areas	Outcomes	Key initiatives
<b>Prevention and preparedness</b>	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Collaborate with communities to develop a shared understanding of their risks and empower them to have the capability to manage them.</li> <li>» Enhance our peoples' engagement and facilitation skills to work effectively with the community.</li> <li>» Ensure the department's culture values diversity and that the workforce displays inclusive leadership and behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>Response</b>	Timely, coordinated and appropriate responses are provided to fire and emergency events that minimise their effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Continue to develop systems and strategies for a reduction of, and a more appropriate response to, unwanted alarms.</li> <li>» Support interoperability through establishing shared QFES policies and practices including equipment selection.</li> <li>» Ensure that all services within QFES can operationally support each other and complement our ability to deliver services.</li> <li>» Work with public safety partners to create, wherever practicable, interoperability in the delivery of services.</li> <li>» Provide timely and accurate information to inform and enable communities and responders to adequately prepare for, and respond to, fire and emergency events.</li> </ul>



Priority areas	Outcomes	Key initiatives
<b>Recovery</b>	Appropriate relief and support are provided after responses to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provide timely advice, reporting and support to other agencies to assist in the recovery process.</li> <li>» Conduct damage assessments to inform relief and recovery activities.</li> <li>» Provide QFES transition planning that informs communities, government and non-government organisations.</li> <li>» Deliver timely and accessible recovery information to the community.</li> <li>» Contribute towards recovery operations by providing fit-for-purpose QFES capabilities including logistical and command and control.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic capability</b>	QFES is strategically capable and agile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Continue to create a transformational culture that promotes a shared understanding of how staff and volunteers work together professionally and respectfully.</li> <li>» Progress the creation of shared QFES policies, doctrine, language and concepts of operation.</li> <li>» Identify how existing QFES capabilities could be applied to emerging areas of need.</li> <li>» Ensure that lessons learned are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Business-enabling services</b>	QFES' business-enabling services enhance, integrate and support the department's service delivery and are compliant, authorised and fit-for-purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Ensure that our organisational strategy and decisions respond to future need and that they are timely, accurate, evidenced-based, accountable and transparent.</li> <li>» Deliver services within the state's financial capability.</li> <li>» Attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce and provide safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces.</li> <li>» Confirm that our business processes are aligned with contemporary practice and that they legislatively comply.</li> <li>» Partner with the PSBA to ensure the efficient delivery of the department's corporate services, asset management, financial and human resource requirements.</li> </ul>





**QFES Induction Forum at Kedron  
Emergency Services Complex – July 2018**

**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 is also 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

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.

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

Further information about how QFES is responding to these environmental factors can be found in Our performance (refer pages 30-72).

## Strategic challenges

QFES identified the following key strategic challenges for 2018-19:

- » 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
- » organisational and societal challenges which highlighted the need to explore and invest in more flexible strategies to ensure that QFES has the systems in place to attract, retain and support its volunteers both now and into the future.

Information about how QFES is responding to these challenges can be found in Our performance (refer pages 30-72).

## Outlook

The future focus of QFES is reflected in its strategic plan. The strategic plan provides a four-year blueprint for the department and communicates its priorities to QFES personnel (staff and volunteers), stakeholders and clients.

Key priorities for the department during 2019-20 include:

- » continuing focus on PPRR activities
- » continuing to develop a highly capable, adaptive and interoperable workforce equipped with the skills, knowledge and information to better support the community
- » empowering our people to lead meaningful engagement with our stakeholders
- » streamlining and digitalising business processes to enable effective and timely decision-making.

During 2019-20, key strategic challenges for the department are:

- » climate change leading to increased severity and frequency of weather events with the department needing to plan to meet this increased demand
- » increasing complexity and scope of the operating environment and changes in demographics and community needs requiring QFES to respond to, and adapt, its service delivery model
- » ensuring QFES' communication and information systems are secure to minimise and prevent cyber-risks.

## Our locations

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
- » 1,403 volunteer-based rural fire brigades, including 487 with sheds/stations
- » 297 SES groups
- » seven fire communication centres (one located in each QFES region)
- » seven Regional Offices
- » 39 Area Offices
- » 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 and Northern Region Training and Support Complex in Townsville.

The Emergency Services Complex in Brisbane's northern suburbs houses emergency services including the QFES State Operations Centre, 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 132).



## 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 38,500 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network, Technical Rescue Unit (TRU) and Peer Support Officers (PSOs) and Chaplains.

### 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 2019, there were approximately 33,000 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 2019, there were approximately 5,300 active SES volunteers.**

### Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network

The Research and Scientific Branch consists of a core of permanent staff and a network of volunteers who respond to fire and hazardous materials incidents across Queensland. The volunteer 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 2018–19, they attended a range of incidents including chemical reactions and spillages, discoveries of suspicious substances and fires causing hazardous materials releases.

**As at 30 June 2019, there were 49 research and scientific volunteers including 44 regional based Volunteer 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, multidisciplinary 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 human-induced 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.

As at 30 June 2019, the AUS-1 DART has 21 volunteers including six doctors, five engineers and 10 canine handlers.

**AUS-1 team members  
locating casualties**





## Peer Support Officers

QFES is committed to providing a broad range of support functions for QFES 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 for QFES.

The QFES Peer Support Program is comprised of 158 active 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 informal individual support and delivering education sessions to promote mental health and wellbeing.

During 2018–19, a total of 5,075 hours was invested in peer support activities and peer support was provided to a total of 2,881 people.

## Chaplains

The QFES Chaplaincy Service works collaboratively with other QFES support services and local community networks to strengthen corporate and operational capability and ensure appropriate holistic support.

The QFES Chaplaincy Service is a statewide, locally based, people-focused chaplaincy service that nurtures and supports the spiritual needs and holistic wellbeing of all active and retired members of QFES' paid and volunteer workforce, relating to personal and work life, as well as their immediate and extended families. Volunteer Chaplains in the network across the state are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week through personal contact, incident response systems or referrals. Additional support is also available to community members who are victims or witnesses of incidents or disasters involving a QFES response.

Services include pastoral care, crisis response, counselling support, ceremonial involvement and community engagement.

At 30 June 2019, there were 21 Chaplains.



Peer Support Officer



## Partners

QFES works closely with the public safety agencies—the Office of the IGEM, PSBA and QPS.

The department 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. (QLDSESVA), 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 QLDSESVA 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 QLDSESVA 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 QFES Assistant Commissioner, Emergency Management and Community Capability 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 pages 54–55 or visit the PCYC website: [www.pcy.org.au](http://www.pcy.org.au)



# Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2019





# Structure

## QFES is comprised of the following divisions:

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

The **Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Division** is responsible for providing overall strategic leadership, direction and support to RFS and SES as well as providing strategic oversight of emergency management policy and development for the department. It also provides support through service agreements to other volunteer groups involved in emergency response.

The division incorporates the RFS and SES and 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 community resilience and risk mitigation, the recruitment and retention of a sustainable and 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 other 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.

The division is comprised of Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services, Organisational Engagement, Strategic Services and Human Capital Management (HCM) Directorates.



# Regions

As at 30 June 2019



\*Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue no. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics





**242** Fire and Rescue Stations

**1,403** Rural Fire Brigades

**75** SES Units

**7** Regional Offices

**297** SES Groups

**7** Communication Centres



**25** Fire and Rescue Stations

**53** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**19** SES Units

**179** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre

**20** Fire and Rescue Stations

**40** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**16** SES Units

**179** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre



**38** Fire and Rescue Stations

**69** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**14** SES Units

**394** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre

**46** Fire and Rescue Stations

**47** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**7** SES Units

**203** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre



**38** Fire and Rescue Stations

**22** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**3** SES Units

**29** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre

**36** Fire and Rescue Stations

**25** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**5** SES Units

**82** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre



**39** Fire and Rescue Stations

**41** SES Groups

**1** Regional Office

**11** SES Units

**337** Rural Fire Brigades

**1** Communication Centre



# Financial summary

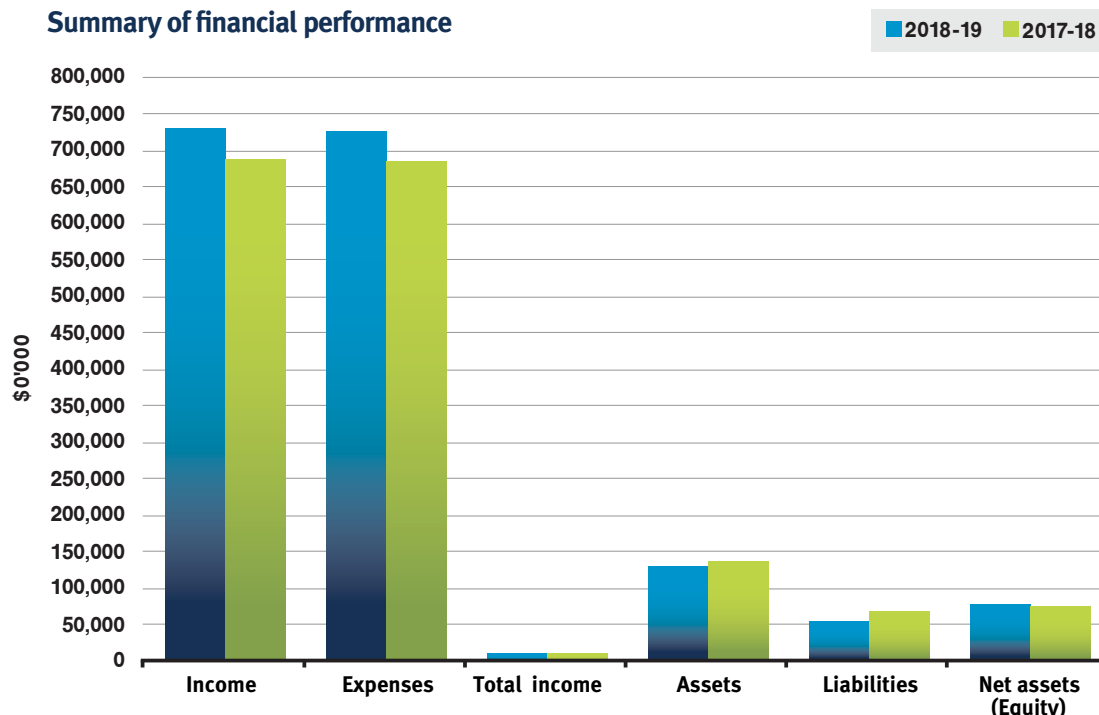
## Summary of financial performance

The following table summarises the operating result and financial position for QFES 2018–19 and 2017–18.

<b>Statement of comprehensive income</b>	<b>2018-19 \$'000</b>	<b>2017-18 \$'000</b>
Total income from continuing operations	727,752	685,510
Total expenses from continuing operations	724,558	682,237
Total comprehensive income	3,194	3,273
<b>Statement of financial position</b>	<b>2018-19 \$'000</b>	<b>2017-18 \$'000</b>
Total assets	126,078	135,050
Total liabilities	51,458	63,893
Net assets (equity)	74,620	71,157



## Summary of financial performance



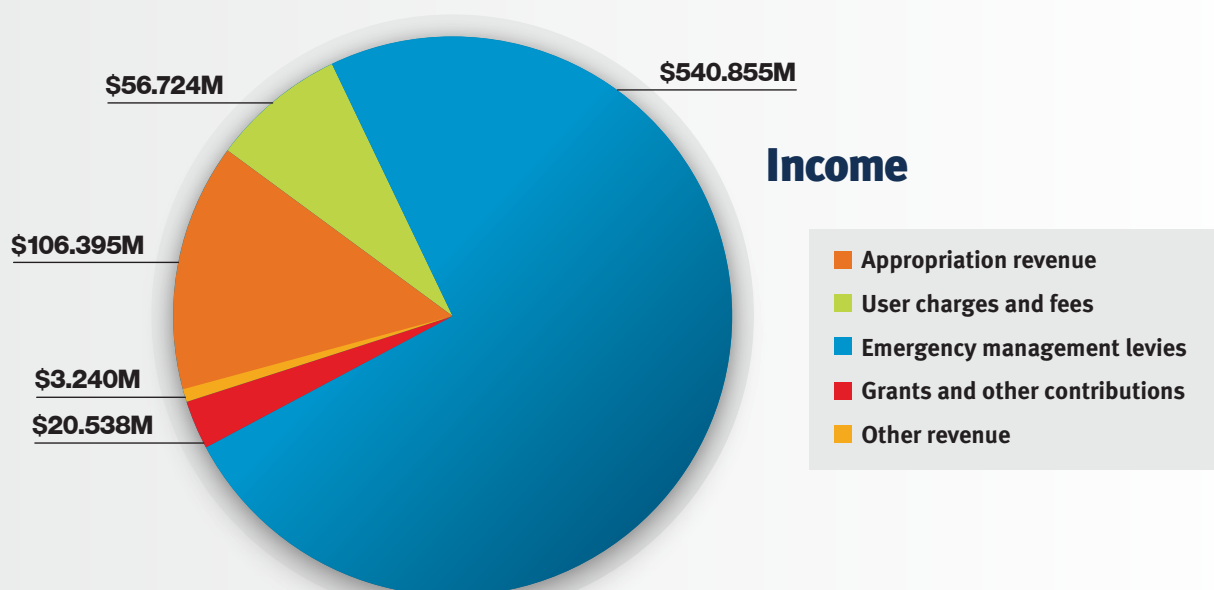
## Income and expenses from continuing operations

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

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

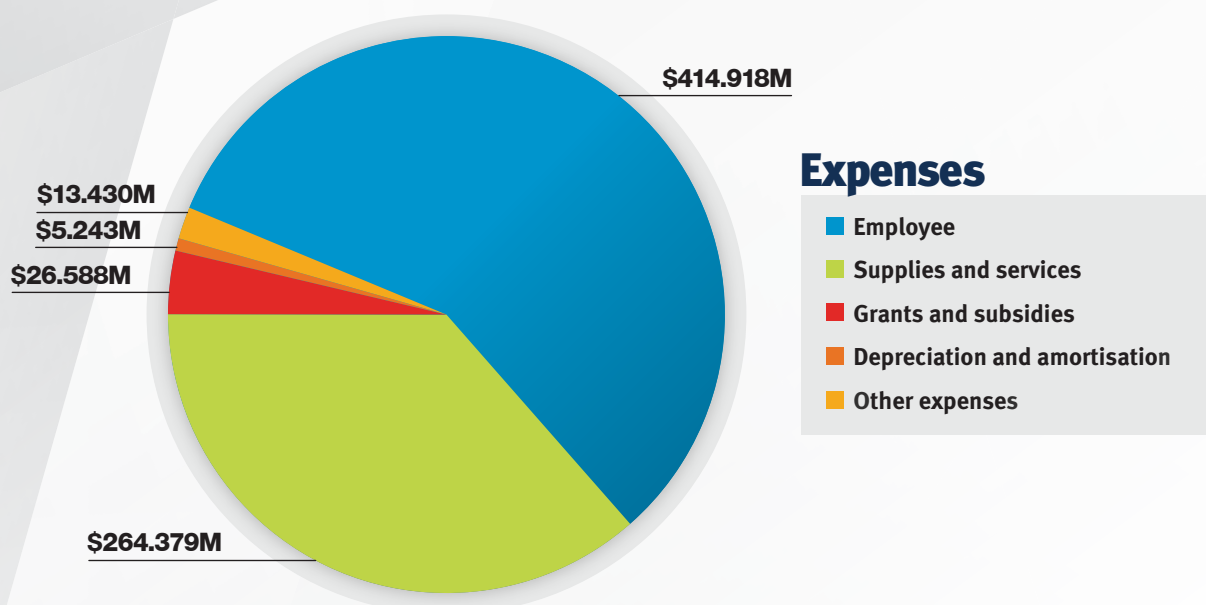
QFES aims to protect persons, property and the environment through the delivery of emergency services, awareness programs, response capability and capacity, incident response and recovery for a safer Queensland. The expenses incurred in the delivery of these services are summarised further below.

For 2018-19, QFES received income from continuing operations totalling \$727.752 million and incurred total expenditure from continuing operations of \$724.558 million. This comprised of:



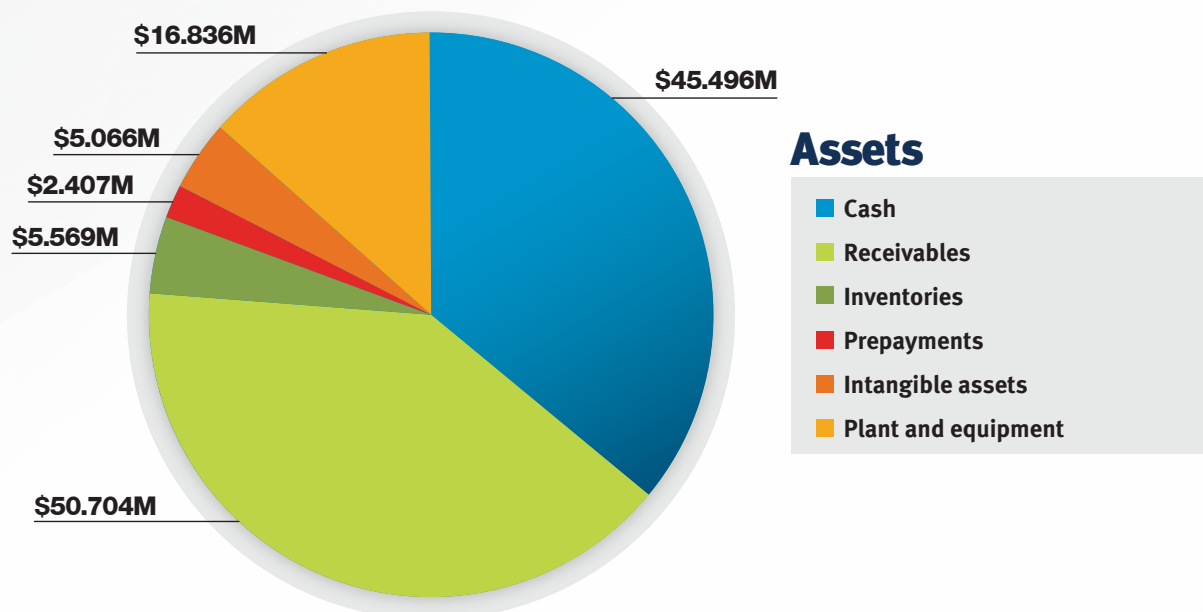


## Income and expenses from continuing operations (cont'd)

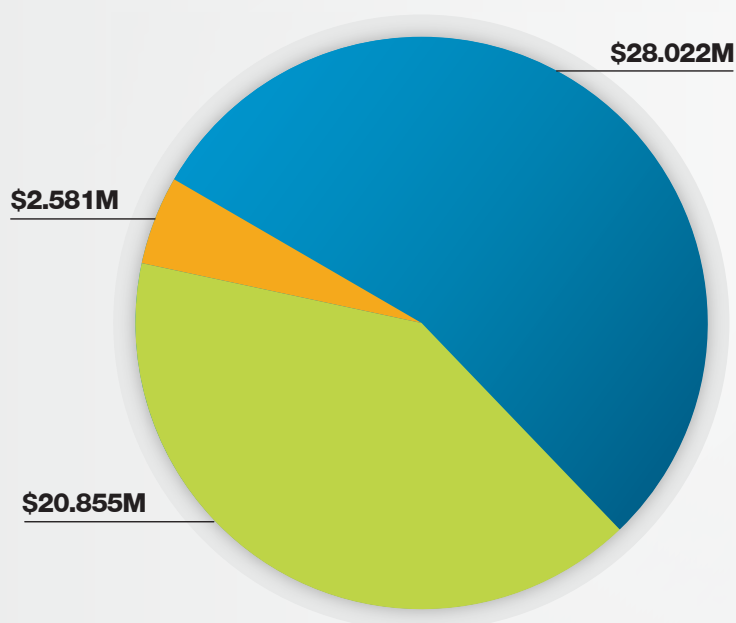


## Summary of financial position

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 2018–19 was \$74.620 million. This comprised predominantly of:







## Liabilities

- Payables
- Employee benefits
- Other current liabilities

## Ownership of Assets

*The Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014* (section 7) requires the PSBA to hold and maintain infrastructure, fleet and communication technology assets for the public safety entities. As a result, the majority of these assets are recognised and reported in the financial statements of the PSBA. The net book value of these assets reported by PSBA but utilised by QFES are as follows:

- » land \$187.0 million
- » buildings and infrastructure \$342.1 million
- » major plant and equipment \$27.6 million
- » plant and equipment \$202.5 million
- » software \$4.0 million
- » heritage and cultural assets \$0.2 million.

There were no significant events after balance date that could be expected to impact the reported operating result for QFES for the year ended 30 June 2019.



# Performance

## Key performance measures

QFES enhances community resilience, mitigates risk and contributes to safer and sustainable communities through disaster management, community assistance, response to structure and landscape fires, and rescue across all hazards.

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 table below provides an overview of the key performance measures for QFES for 2018–19.

### Service area: Fire and emergency services

Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2018–19 SDS	RoGS	2017–18 Actual	2018–19 Target/ Estimate	2018–19 Actual
Rate of accidental residential structure fires reported (per 100,000 households)	1, 2, 3		✓	✓	54.9	<60	56.3
Response times to structure fires including call taking time:	3, 4, 5	✓	✓	✓			
» 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	6				7.9 minutes	<7.8 minutes	8.1 minutes
» 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	7				12.3 minutes	<14.0 minutes	12.6 minutes
Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin	3, 4, 8	✓	✓		83.6%	≥80%	82.7%
Estimated percentage of households with smoke alarm/ detector installed	9		✓	✓	97.1%	95%	-
Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	10	✓	✓		56.2%	50%	55.8%
Rate of Unwanted Alarm Activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment	11	✓	✓		2.4	<4	2.3
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the Rural Fire Service	12	✓	✓		-	≥75%	72%
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the State Emergency Service	12	✓	✓		-	≥75%	78%
Percentage of statewide State Emergency Service volunteers that meet minimal operational training requirements	13	✓	✓		66%	65%	66%
Percentage of disaster management training participants with enhanced capability	14	✓	✓		92%	75%	88%



## Service area: Fire and emergency services (cont'd)

Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2018-19 SDS	RoGS	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Target/ Estimate	2018-19 Actual
Fire and Emergency Services expenditure per person	15		✓		\$136.37	\$138.00	\$142.29
Percentage of households with operational smoke alarms	16	✓		✓	79.9%	95%	-
Percentage of high-risk localities with at least one bushfire mitigation activity completed	17	✓			71%	-	87%
Response times to mobile property crashes	4, 5, 18	✓					
» 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile					8.5 minutes	-	7.9 minutes
» 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile					14.1 minutes	-	13.3 minutes
Response times to landscape fires	4, 5, 19	✓					
» 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile					11.0 minutes	-	11.1 minutes
» 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile					20.2 minutes	-	20.5 minutes
Number of damage assessments undertaken by QFES	20	✓			2,020	-	9,489
Percentage of staff that recognise that the department has a shared QFES approach to service delivery	21	✓			57%	-	67%
Percentage of staff that understand how their work contributes to organisational objectives	22	✓			91%	-	92%
Total expenditure as a percentage of the approved operating budget	23	✓			103%	100%	103%
Level of satisfaction with QFES as a workplace as indicated by workforce survey results	24	✓			83%	-	82%
Agency engagement levels	25	✓			74%	-	75%
Completion rates for compulsory workplace training	26	✓			95%	-	-

### Key:

- Not available / not applicable

RoGS: 2019 Report on Government Services

SDS: Service Delivery Statement

Strategic plan: Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2018-2022



## Notes:

1. 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.
2. A residential property is one in which sleeping accommodation is provided for normal living purposes, for example family dwelling, units, flats and apartments.
3. Structure fires are fires in housing and other buildings.
4. 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.
5. 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 road congestion, driver behaviour (distraction and inattention to emergency responder) and high density urban residential designs.
6. This measure reports the time within which 50 per cent of the first responding fire appliances arrive at the scene of a structure fire.
7. 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.
8. Only structure fires where the confinement has been determined are included in the calculations.
9. 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. The 2018–19 Actual will be available following the Community Insights Survey which is expected to be conducted by 30 September 2019.
10. 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.
11. This measure provides an indication of 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. Unwanted alarms have a negative impact on firefighters and the wider community by increasing safety concerns for fire crews and the public, disrupting the community and industry, creating complacency and imposing unnecessary costs to attend these incidents. Reducing unwanted alarm activations ensures that the department can more effectively manage priority emergency responses and resources. 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 measure is sourced from the QFES Volunteering for Queensland survey which commenced in 2014. The survey measures the percentage of volunteers who indicated they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' based on the question 'how satisfied are you in general with the experience of volunteering with the RFS/SES?'. The survey also measures volunteer satisfaction across a range of areas including training and development, leadership, internal communication and culture. The survey was in field from 25 February to 7 April 2019. The 2018–19 result for RFS satisfaction was impacted by the significant workload undertaken by volunteers throughout the 2018–19 bushfire season. This is a biennial survey. The next survey is scheduled for 2020.
13. This measure represents the percentage of active SES volunteers who have completed the most common minimum training competency of Storm Damage Operations. The 2018–19 Target/Estimate is set at 65 per cent in recognition of the dynamic nature of volunteering including turnover and the varying risk profiles of localities.
14. This measure is sourced from the annual Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework (QDMTF) Satisfaction and Capability Enhancement Survey. It assesses the efficacy of QDMTF training by measuring the percentage of participants who self-indicated that their capability to carry out their disaster management role was enhanced either 'somewhat' or 'significantly'. The *Disaster Management Act 2003* (section 16A(c)) provides the legislative requirement for those with a role in disaster operations to be appropriately trained. In accordance with this requirement, training for Queensland disaster management stakeholders is undertaken in accordance with the QDMTF. Participants undertaking QDMTF training include officers from local, state and Australian government agencies, non-government organisations and volunteer groups. Participant disaster management roles include, but are not limited to, Local Disaster Coordinators, Local Disaster Management Group Chairs, District Disaster Coordinators and District Disaster Management Group Executive Officers.



15. This measure reports the fire and emergency services' expenditure divided by the estimated population of Queensland. Population data is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue no. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics. This measure is reported in line with the RoGS methodology. The 2018–19 Target/Estimate is based on Queensland Treasury population estimates. Expenditure includes QFES operating expenditure plus a calculated user cost of capital for property, plant and equipment assets excluding land assets. The 2017–18 Actual was above the Target/Estimate of \$134.00, mainly due to an increase in the contribution to PSBA for agreed additional activities/services and capital projects. The 2018–19 Actual is above the Target/Estimate of \$138.00 due to significant bushfire and severe weather events in 2018–19, and additional investment for public safety regional radio communications (\$6.4 million of a total \$26.9 million over 2018–19 and 2019–20).
16. 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 that have been tested and are operational. Results are derived from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey. The 2017–18 Actual has been revised from the 2017–18 annual report following data cleansing. The 2018–19 Actual will be available following the Community Insights Survey which is expected to be conducted by 30 September 2019.
17. During Operation Cool Burn, priority locations for mitigation are identified by Area Fire Management Groups made up of key stakeholders such as land management agencies and local governments as well as QFES representatives. These locations are then treated with risk mitigation measures of targeted community education, fire line upgrades, hazard reduction burns or a combination of these activities. Some activities cannot be completed most commonly due to climatic conditions. Following Operation Cool Burn, QFES regions consider the risk areas that remain as part of their preparation and planning for the bushfire season itself. There are many activities carried out outside of the Operation Cool Burn period or in areas away from the Operation Cool Burn targets which also contribute to bushfire mitigation.
18. This strategic plan measure has been amended from 'Response times to road crashes'. Mobile property crashes encompass a broader range of incidents attended by QFES including road crashes. This measure reports the time within which 50 per cent and 90 per cent of the first responding QFES appliances arrive at the scene of a mobile property crash.
19. This strategic plan measure reports the time within which 50 per cent and 90 per cent of the first responding QFES appliances arrive at the scene of a landscape fire.
20. This is a new measure in the strategic plan. QFES provides appropriate relief and support during and after response to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs. Damage assessments inform QFES, its partners and the community of the relief and recovery activities required. The 2018–19 result was impacted by the monsoon flooding event in January–February 2019.
21. Data is sourced from the annual Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey. The 2017–18 data was derived from an agency specific question to determine staff's views as to whether 'QFES has a *'one QFES'* approach to service delivery'. The 2018–19 data was derived from an agency-specific question to determine the views of staff as to whether 'QFES has a *'whole of QFES'* approach to service delivery'.
22. Data is sourced from the annual WfQ survey. The 2017–18 and 2018–19 data was derived from the survey factor 'My job' (question 21b: I understand how my work contributes to my organisation's objectives).
23. The 2017–18 and 2018–19 additional expenditure was funded by additional income received in that financial year.
24. Data is sourced from the annual WfQ survey. The 2017–18 and 2018–19 data was derived from the survey factor 'My job' (question 35: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your current job?).
25. Data is sourced from the annual WfQ survey. This factor is derived from a number of questions about staff's views of the organisation including 'My organisation inspires me to do the best in my job', 'My organisation motivates me to help it achieve its objectives' and 'I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation'.
26. In 2017–18, compulsory workplace training referred to the QFES Workplace Behaviour Training (WBT) package. The WBT package contained modules that addressed the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* and identified what is acceptable workplace behaviour. The *Think. Say. Do.* awareness package replaced the WBT. The awareness package is comprised of eight modules including workplace behaviour and Code of Conduct. *Think. Say. Do.* was not compulsory during 2018–19 however, a total of 3,818 QFES personnel completed the awareness package during this period and the package continues to be promoted across the department. QFES is considering introducing *Think. Say. Do.* as a compulsory workplace training program to ensure employees are aware of their ethics-related rights, responsibilities and obligations through targeted education and training.



# Our performance

This section reports on the priority areas and key initiatives of the QFES Strategic Plan 2018–2022 and is a sample of the department's performance highlights from 2018–19. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.



**Operation Synergy**

2018–19 Annual Report  
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services



## Priority area

# 1. Prevention and preparedness

### Outcome

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.

### Key initiatives

- » Collaborate with communities to develop a shared understanding of their risks and empower them to have the capability to manage them.
- » Enhance our peoples' engagement and facilitation skills to work effectively with the community.
- » Ensure the department's culture values diversity and that the workforce displays inclusive leadership and behaviour.

### Measures of success

- » Percentage of households with operational smoke alarms
- » Percentage of buildings inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection
- » Percentage of high-risk localities with at least one bushfire mitigation activity completed
- » Percentage of statewide SES volunteers that meet minimal operational training requirements

**Refer to the Key performance measures on pages 26-29 for 2018–19 data.**

## Building fire safety

QFES provides critical fire safety advice to building certifiers on both the technical and practical components of building fire safety. Building certifiers are required to seek QFES advice as part of the building approval process detailed in the *Planning Act 2016* and *Building Act 1975*. Advice includes the assessment of building plans prior to construction for the suitability of fire safety installations, and onsite inspections to ensure compliance and correct installation to the agreed design upon completion of the building.

Building fire safety activities for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 include:

- » fire investigation inspections (580 structures)
- » Building Approval Officer assessments (1,967) and inspections (1,765)
- » structure inspections by Safety Assessment Officers (958).

The Better Regulation Strategy, which includes the Regulator Performance Framework, recognises the actions and performance of regulators in implementing, administering and enforcing regulations plays a significant role in achieving the policy objective of regulation, as well as reducing the regulatory burden on businesses, including small business and the community.

To maximise the effectiveness of the framework, commencing in 2018–19, regulators are required to report annually the extent to which they are implementing the model practices in the framework and to outline plans for future improvements of their business practices. The QFES Regulator Performance Framework 2018–19 Annual Performance Report is included in the Appendices, refer pages 120–127.



## Combatting combustible cladding

The QFES Cladding Support Unit continued to work with other agencies, including the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the Department of Housing and Public Works, to mitigate issues with combustible building cladding through identifying, assessing and rectifying at-risk buildings in Queensland.

The unit forms part of the Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce established in July 2017 following the fatal Grenfell Tower fire in London (June 2017) and the Melbourne Lacrosse Tower fire (November 2014).

As of 1 October 2018, new laws applied in Queensland requiring all building owners of a class 2-9 building (refer the Building Code of Australia), of a type A or B construction, to register their building and complete a combustible cladding checklist.

The taskforce is conducting a statewide review into all class 2-9 buildings in Queensland that possibly have Aluminium Composite Panel (ACP) cladding fitted, ranging from unit blocks to hospitals and healthcare facilities.

If an in-scope building is fixed with ACP cladding, the building owner is required to register the building on the Safer Buildings website ([www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au](http://www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au)). From information supplied by the building owner, the Cladding Support Unit coordinates the appropriate region to undertake an Operational Risk Audit and works with the building owner and building management to develop minimisation strategies including upgraded QFES operational response and building evacuation plans.

As at 30 June 2019, QFES has conducted 251 Operational Risk Audit inspections which have resulted in 81 buildings having an upgraded initial response.

The Cladding Support Unit continues to work with building developers and other industry stakeholders by providing agency referral advice on building applications to ensure the Queensland community and QFES firefighters have the safest possible built environment to live and work.

The 2018 Commissioner's Award for Excellence—Customer Focus was awarded to the Cladding Support Unit for its significant contribution to the Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce, ensuring safer communities through mitigating fire risks involving combustible cladding.

## Illegal and unsafe budget accommodation

Fire safety is a priority for QFES with inspectors continuing to identify illegal and unsafe budget accommodation buildings (BABs). BABs are buildings including boarding houses, backpacker or other hostels, guesthouses, share-houses or similar, where six or more persons have shared access to a bathroom or sanitary facilities and do not form a common household.

Under the *Building Act 1975*, BABs are required to have fire safety mechanisms in place such as fire safety management plans, emergency lighting and early warning systems. QFES officers conduct joint inspections with local government to identify buildings operating as BABs.

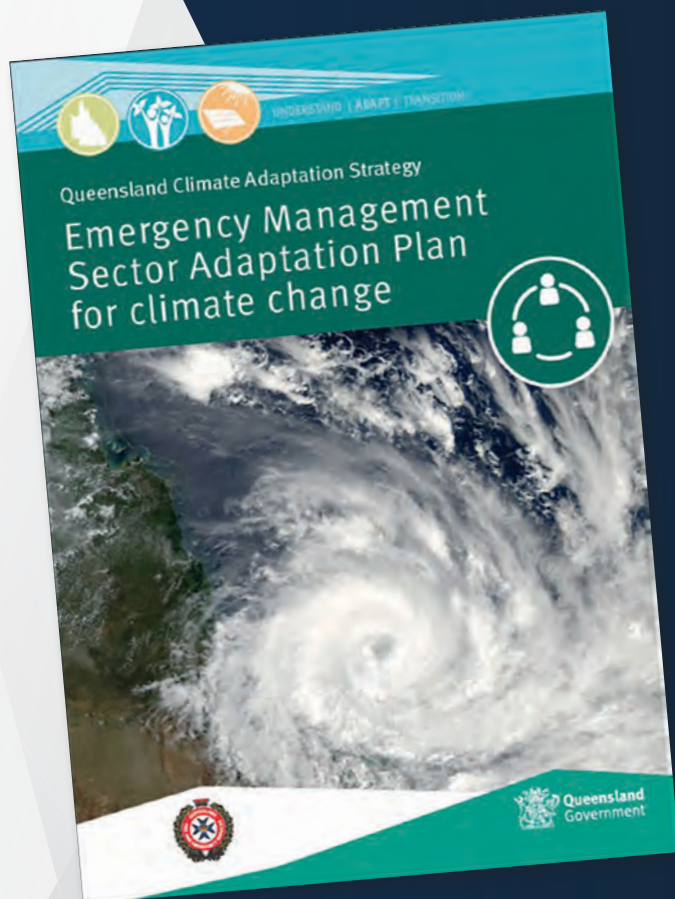
During 2018–19, QFES conducted 373 inspections of 189 premises suspected of operating as illegal and unsafe BABs. These activities resulted in:

- » 82 Requisitions by Commissioner issued to reduce the risk
- » 25 Notices by Commissioner issued to improve fire safety within the premises
- » 30 Infringement Notices issued for breaches of fire safety, totalling \$43,018 in fines.

The QFES Compliance and Prosecution Unit manages all enforcement and prosecution action against operators of BABs that do not meet the minimum fire safety standard requirements. The unit also assists regions with covert surveillance and targeted inspections where illegal and unsafe accommodation practices are suspected.

QFES is also part of a Horticulture Workers Interagency Group where representatives of agencies attend horticultural worker information sessions in seasonal worker localities. QFES officers provide accommodation fire safety information and advice to the typically transient workers at these information sessions.





## Planning for climate change

The summer of 2018–19 was the hottest on record for Australia. The extreme heatwaves and bushfires that occurred across Queensland are a clear indication QFES is facing unprecedented challenges in understanding and responding to the impacts of natural hazards in a changing climate.

The *Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change* (EM-SAP) was launched in September 2018 under the broader Queensland Climate Change Response which outlines the commitments and actions that will be taken by the Queensland Government to transition to a low carbon, clean growth economy and to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

The EM-SAP, developed by QFES in partnership with the Department of Environment and Science (DES), and the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF, Griffith University) seeks to foster 'An adaptive emergency management sector that is fully engaged with the risks and opportunities of a changing climate, building resilience together with the communities of Queensland'.

The plan identifies eight sector-specific priorities and 32 actions, existing climate adaptation activities, and current knowledge gaps and barriers to adaptation for the emergency management sector. It has subsequently been adopted by the State Disaster Coordination Group which is initiating a Climate Change Working Group supported by QFES to implement the EM-SAP.

Additionally, QFES established its own Climate Change Working Group in April 2018 that includes representatives from its three services and business units. The aim of the working group is to provide an advisory role for the BoM to ensure QFES takes a comprehensive approach to addressing issues related to climate change. The department's working group met four times in 2018–19.

The QFES Climate Change Working Group developed a QFES Position Paper for Climate Change which was published in October 2018 ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)) and will inform a future Climate Change Action Plan under Strategy 2030. QFES firmly '...believe[s] better decisions on climate change now, will improve our ability to deliver the right services in the right locations for Queenslanders, well into the future.'

QFES has also been proactive at a national level through the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) on its Climate Change Group which also released a consistent climate change position in October 2018.

QFES has commenced incorporating climate projections into the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) with the publication of the *Queensland State Heatwave Risk Assessment 2019* (SHRA) ([www.disaster.qld.gov.au](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au)). Released in June 2019, the assessment represents the most comprehensive analysis of future climate risk undertaken for a natural hazard risk assessment in Queensland. It is underpinned by a robust scientific basis enabling all stakeholders including state agencies, disaster management groups, infrastructure owners and town planners to understand, plan for, and reduce the risk from heatwaves. The SHRA was coordinated through a working group led by QFES, Queensland Health and DES.

During Queensland Climate Week (2–8 June 2019), QFES held an event on 3 June 2019 called *Rising to the Climate Change Challenge - An adaptive emergency management sector is engaged with the risks and opportunities of a changing climate*. The event was addressed by the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and provided an overview of the current climate change science and proactive action being undertaken by the Queensland Government, and specifically QFES, across the emergency management sector. Key programs and projects were showcased as part of the proceedings including EM-SAP, QERMF, SHRA, Strategy 2030 and the Climate Change Action Plan.

Three QFES staff attended the Climate Reality Training Program, held during Queensland Climate Week, where they had the opportunity to hear from global experts on climate change, including former Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, and learn how to promote and enable effective climate change action.



## Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework

QFES led the development of the QERMF, endorsed by the Queensland Disaster Management Committee in August 2017, as the state approach to disaster management risk. The risk assessments conducted through the QERMF directly support risk-based planning within Queensland's disaster management arrangements. As of June 2019, QFES has conducted 52 QERMF risk assessment workshops with a QERMF Local Government Forum to be held on the future direction and maturation of the framework scheduled for July 2019.

QFES works on climate change for disaster management with the expertise and scientific data of DES, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Bureau of Meteorology, and Geoscience Australia. In 2018–19, QFES, DES and Queensland Health partnered to complete the SHRA to assist all stakeholders at each level of Queensland's disaster management arrangements to understand current and future heatwave risk potential across all sectors of Queensland's communities and economy.

Similarly, QFES has developed the State Earthquake Risk Assessment (SERA) and accompanying Tsunami Guide for Queensland. These high-level reports act as foundational earthquake and tsunami risk assessments for Local and District Disaster Management Groups and relevant state agencies. The reports provide a comprehensive overview of earthquake and tsunami risk for Queensland. The reports are expected to be released by 31 July 2019.

QFES is also leading a significant body of work, through the QERMF, to understand the impact of climate change on future tropical cyclone occurrence. The Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland (SWHA-Q) will provide the information and capability required to determine the potential physical impacts of future severe tropical cyclones (under the influence of climate change) on Queensland communities and enable all levels of Queensland's disaster management arrangements to develop long-term strategic risk treatment strategies. The SWHA-Q is expected to be completed in June 2020.

The QERMF team was awarded the 2018 Commissioner's Award for Excellence–Innovation for embracing new and innovative ideas in the development of the QERMF.

## Queensland State Disaster Management Plan

The *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan 2018*, prepared in accordance with section 49 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and released in October 2018, describes disaster management arrangements for the effective management of disasters in Queensland. The aim of the plan is to enable Queensland to mitigate the effects of, prepare for, respond to, recover from and build resilience to disaster events.

QFES worked with QPS (lead agency) as part of the State Disaster Management Plan Recrafting Steering Committee to develop the plan with the then QFES Commissioner as Chair of the committee.

## Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience

QFES is partnering with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) to implement the *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2017*. Implementation is being progressed through the *Resilient Queensland 2018–21* framework utilising a regional resilience pilot program. The aim of the program is to deliver and evaluate regional resilience strategies and action plans for defined areas and determine their suitability for statewide rollout.

These pilot programs are located in central west Queensland (incorporating the Longreach Disaster District) and the Fitzroy River and Mary River catchments. QFES engaged in the reporting period with a wide range of stakeholders in each of the pilot areas to identify key priorities and maintain alignment to Queensland's disaster management arrangements and the QERMF.





## Commercial training partnerships

The QFES Training and Emergency Management (TEM) Branch manages the commercial activities of QFES by generating community and industry resilience opportunities. TEM delivers fire safety and awareness prevention and preparedness services to the Queensland community, interstate entities and fosters partnerships internationally.

TEM has working relationships with a number of major commercial partners providing highly specialised fire-related services and consultancies. These partnerships demonstrate an ongoing commitment to providing innovative business solutions that provide benefits to the community either directly from specialised training or indirectly by QFES' collaborative engagement activities.

Revenue generated as a result of these community and industry collaborations provide QFES with continuous improvement opportunities.

### Highlights for the reporting period include:

- » the management of outdoor advertising billboard structures at 28 fire stations across the state with QFES campaigns broadcast, as part of the agreements, when advertising lease arrangements are not in place
- » a continued partnership agreement with Glencore (Mount Isa Mines Ltd) from September 2018 for five years, to supply a comprehensive aboveground fire and rescue response capability 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is a historical partnership dating back to 1989. The current day arrangement forms a response capability which QFES shares with Glencore to support the town of Mt Isa and surrounding districts
- » the establishment of a two-year MoU with Refrigerated Warehouse and Transport Association of Australia (RWTA) in June 2019. RWTA represents companies from the Australian Cold Chain industry. Under the MoU, the RWTA markets and promotes TEM to deliver the 'RWTA Ammonia Emergency Management Training Program' (based on QFES hazmat training) to Cold Chain industry companies at a fixed rate
- » the provision of training to the Norfolk Island Fire Service in July 2018 under a MoU with Norfolk Island Regional Council. TEM conducted courses in Respond to Aviation Incidents (Specialist), Fire Team and Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS)
- » the delivery of overseas commercial training including:
  - two TEM trainers travelled to Fiji in March 2019 to assist with the delivery of Incident Management System and Working in an Emergency Operation Centre training to members of the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance. The upskilling of trainers enables them to return to their nation and instruct others on systems and processes to operate within an Emergency Operation Centre, contributing to making Pacific Island Nations self-sufficient in disaster management.
  - two accredited training courses in AIIMS to Porgera Joint Venture in Papua New Guinea in September 2018 in support of the MoU with the Papua New Guinea Fire Service.



## Community Insights

The annual Community Insights Survey, launched in 2018, takes an all hazards approach and delves into understanding community risk perception and awareness, preparedness levels and steps taken, and community understanding and expectations of QFES services.

Survey results are collated into a dashboard enabling the data for the whole state to be viewed or filtered by QFES region, respondent age, home age and ownership status. The interactive nature of the dashboard enables more specific analysis to identify areas that require targeted community education and campaign activities to build community preparedness and resilience into the future.

The 2019 Community Insights Survey is expected to be conducted by 30 September 2019.

## Community safety education programs

Community safety education programs aim to assist members of the public in preventing, preparing for, and responding to fire and emergency events.

Education programs conducted include:

- » **Operation Knock Knock:** on 15 September 2018, QFES led a multi-agency, statewide community engagement operation, involving more than 1,000 staff and volunteers, to help people understand their local risks, know how to prepare for them, and connect with their local community. In partnership with local governments, Australian Red Cross, SLSQ, VMRAQ, the QRA and QPS, the door knock reached over 7,700 people.
- » **Home Fire Safety:** this campaign is timed around winter when there is typically a peak in the number of house fires. For example, in 2018–19, QFES attended 1,853 house fires across Queensland with 428 occurring in the winter months. The campaign encourages residents to prepare their home for a quick escape, discuss their escape plan and practise it. The campaign runs from early June to late August each year with advertising on social media, radio and digital channels.
- » **Queensland's Great Escape:** a public event held online on 28 June 2019 provided an opportunity for individual households to rehearse an evacuation and be prepared if a fire occurs.

For more information refer [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/firescape](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/firescape)

### Operation Knock Knock





- » **Smoke alarm legislation:** the public safety campaign ran from August to October 2018 focussing on the smoke alarm legislation which commenced on 1 January 2017 with specific messaging to introduce and build awareness of the legislative changes. The campaign encompassed statewide radio, catch-up TV, search engine marketing, social media advertising and editorials on a popular real estate website.

For more information refer [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms)

- » **If it's flooded, forget it:** this campaign reminds Queenslanders of the dangers of driving through floodwater and asks people to consider that their decision will affect others.

Research conducted in May 2018 found six per cent of Queensland drivers continue to drive through floodwaters. These drivers are most likely to be aged 18–39, drive either a 4WD or ute and drive long distances every week. As a result of the research, the 2018–19 campaign focused on the cohort of drivers who self-assess the risk of driving through floodwaters.

For more information refer [www.floodwatersafety.initiatives.qld.gov.au](http://www.floodwatersafety.initiatives.qld.gov.au)



- » **Bushfire Safety:** the campaign focused on Queenslanders acknowledging the constant risk of bushfire with the message *A perfect day can turn into horror in a moment*. The campaign ran from 5 August to 3 November 2018 to educate Queenslanders about bushfire safety. It encourages those living close to bushland to prepare their properties and complete a Bushfire Survival Plan. Advertising included regional radio, billboards, social media and direct mail-outs to those in at-risk areas.

The 2018 campaign was reviewed in December 2018. Overall, the campaign performed well with community attitudes towards bushfire safety and preparedness having remained steady since the previous research conducted in December 2017. The campaign is likely to have contributed to maintenance of individual bushfire preparedness levels.

For more information refer [www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/bushfires](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/bushfires)

## E-contact

Building community resilience is key for QFES and engagement via its social media platforms helps to achieve this. Social media enhances interaction between QFES and Queensland communities enabling QFES to provide the community with timely safety messages and warnings.

During 2018–19, followers on the QFES Facebook page increased by more than 66,000 to in excess of 316,000 followers. QFES' 2,730 Facebook posts were shared more than 100,000 times, attracted more than 400,000 likes and 90,000 comments, and reached more than 64 million people. A notable mention was a post in April 2019 about safety messaging and toxic canisters which reached 268,000 people, attracted 1,700 likes and 470 comments, and was shared more than 2,200 times.

QFES increased its presence on Instagram with followers more than doubling from 7,000 to 17,500. QFES activity on Twitter in the same period reached 13.9 million people with the International Firefighters' Day tweet reaching more than 32,000 people alone.

## Research and development

Research and development is an increasingly significant part of the national emergency services agenda. Research and development provides many operational and strategic benefits. It challenges paradigms, fosters innovation and offers evidence and options to enhance practice, improve services and deliver outcomes. QFES strongly values the contribution research and development makes to the department's ability to help the community prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the impact of emergencies and disasters. QFES participates in research and development activity across the department in areas such as firefighting, climate change and disaster management.

Under a MoU with the University of Queensland, QFES and the university continued to work on the Tall Timber Buildings research and development project. QFES is a partner organisation in the project Australian Research Council Research Hub for Advanced Solutions to Transform Tall Timber Buildings. The research is aimed at further understanding the benefits and limitations associated with the use of timber in multistorey buildings. QFES' involvement in this project includes large-scale fire experiments at the SFEST. The project is due to be completed by 31 December 2019.





### Flashover fire conditions testing the timber's fire performance

The Simulation Analysis-based Risk Evaluation (SABRE) is a decision support framework created to enable bushfire intelligence products. SABRE was employed successfully during the November-December 2018 bushfire emergency where its six-day preparedness and incident response tools, including probabilistic fire spread predictions, played an important role in key decisions. The SABRE tools spanned tactical response at the Incident Management Team level, Incident Control Centres, Regional and State Operations Centres and also up to and including the State Disaster Coordination Group and the Queensland Disaster Management Committee.

As at 30 June 2019, SABRE had 6,896 users, the majority of who are RFS brigade officers. SABRE users are also located within a number of local governments and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

QFES also conducted development on a fire spread simulation tool called 'Spark' written within the CSIRO's open framework. Phoenix is a fire spread simulator currently in operational use within QFES. Spark is a fire spread simulator under development to perform similar functions to Phoenix, however it uses a different software architecture. Spark can potentially provide QFES with more options to tailor and enhance features and capabilities more easily and transparently using the latest scientific research into fire spread simulation. Both of these simulator tools

have the potential to feed fire spread prediction data into SABRE for value added analysis and deployment of decision support intelligence tools.

QFES also played an important role in enhancing the disaster management sector's understanding of psychological and emotional preparedness for disasters. QFES was a partner with the Bundaberg Regional Council and Central Queensland University in research that investigated what psychological and emotional preparedness means to communities, what prevents people from engaging with disaster risk and how best to communicate risk when people's physiological responses to an overwhelming threat disrupt the best-laid preparations and plans. This research was published in the October 2018 edition of the Australian Journal of Emergency Management.

QFES will continue to grow its research and development capability with a new research framework and governance arrangements that support alignment of the department's research expertise with strategy, within QFES and across the emergency and disaster management sector.

## Smoke alarm legislation

Smoke alarm legislation introduced on 1 January 2017 mandates that all Queensland domestic dwellings have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms installed in each bedroom, in hallways connecting bedrooms and in the exit pathway on every level of the dwelling, over a staged period.

Key stakeholders including government departments, industry bodies, suppliers, retailers, installers, advocacy groups and trade and QFES representatives participated in a forum in March 2019 to gather ideas to better inform Queenslanders of the smoke alarm legislation. A focus of the forum was the 1 January 2022 compliance deadline after which owners of domestic dwellings who enter into a lease, renew an existing lease or enter into an agreement to transfer the land to another person will be required to comply with the new smoke alarm legislation.

The forum discussed ways for industry to help disseminate key messages and improve standards, performance, compliance and enforcement, affordability and incentives and implementation timeframes.

QFES is working with industry stakeholders and representatives from the forum to disseminate the smoke alarms message as part of its public awareness campaign.

For more information refer [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms)



# Bushfire prevention and preparedness

Bushfire prevention and preparedness is a shared responsibility in Queensland, primarily resting with landowners and land managers for hazard reduction. QFES is the primary agency for hazard mapping and the department leads and coordinates bushfire mitigation programs. QFES is also the primary response agency for fires in Queensland.

QFES conducts Operation Cool Burn where bushfire mitigation activities, such as hazard reduction burning, fire break or fire trail works and targeted community engagement, are coordinated across the state annually. Operation Cool Burn is a period of heightened mitigation activity, generally held from the beginning of April to the end of August, but hazard reduction burns, fireline/break maintenance and community education occur year-round.

QFES has matured its relationship with its partners during Operation Cool Burn, enabling the focus to be on shared community priorities for the protection of life and property.

QFES works alongside partners in Area Fire Management Groups established in all RFS areas in Queensland to gather intelligence before identifying high-risk areas and prioritising mitigation activities.

Risk mitigation activities also occur at other appropriate times of the year with the responsibility for risk mitigation resting with the owner (landowner or occupier) of the hazard.

The historic level of prescribed burning, including Operation Cool Burn, coordinated and conducted by QFES has been informed by the longer-term fire weather typically experienced in Queensland. However, the bushfire event in November and December 2018 (refer pages 56–57) was a compound event comprising a rare combination of climatic conditions that meant usual planned burning efforts were less likely to have had an effect.<sup>1</sup> Prescribed burning is not always a feasible option and has less impact on the severity of fire impacts when conditions are extreme.<sup>2,3</sup> However, prescribed burning is often the only practical hazard reduction option to achieve the scale and effect required for Queensland. Climate change is increasing the length of bushfire seasons which limits the opportunities for prescribed burning.

Operation Cool Burn 2018 commenced on 1 April 2018 and continued through to 16 August 2018. Due to the seasonal outlook, targeted mitigation activities were supported by significant media efforts to heighten community awareness of bushfires and the need to prepare for the upcoming season.

Operation Cool Burn 2019 commenced on 1 April 2019 and will continue through to 31 August 2019, unless varied for climatic or operational reasons. The Bureau of Meteorology is predicting a dry and warm winter for many parts of Queensland, which means an early onset of the bushfire season is possible. The focus for 2019 is on improving community preparedness.

1. Bureau of Meteorology, 'Special Climate Statement 67 – an extreme heatwave on the tropical Queensland coast', Bureau of Meteorology, 2018, p.14, <[www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/statements/scs67.pdf](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/statements/scs67.pdf)>, accessed 2 January 2019.

2. CSIRO, 'Bushfires in Australia, CSIRO Submission 09/355 prepared for the 2009 Senate Inquiry into Bushfires in Australia', Parliament of Australia [website], July 2009, p. 9, <[www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=3d4e5dd5-9374-48e9-b3f4-4e6e96da27f5](http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=3d4e5dd5-9374-48e9-b3f4-4e6e96da27f5)>, accessed 13 December 2018.

3. B. McCormick, '2002-03 Bushfires: Is Fuel Reduction Burning the Answer? (Parliament of Australia Current Issues Brief no. 8)', Parliament of Australia [website], 2002, <[www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/cib/2002-03/03cib08.pdf](http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/cib/2002-03/03cib08.pdf)>, accessed 16 December 2018.





## Land use planning for bushfire

QFES continues to provide expertise in support of the *State Planning Policy - state interest guidance material Natural hazards, risk and resilience for bushfire*. Land use planning review activities for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 included:

- » Planning Schemes and Amendments (eight)
- » State Assessment and Referral Agency Requests and development approval advice (16)
- » Environmental Impact Statements (10)
- » Ministerial Infrastructure Designations (five)
- » Regional Planning Reviews (two).

QFES, in partnership with the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, continued to draft revised technical guidance titled *Bushfire Resilient Communities* to support the abovementioned state interest guidance material. Consultation garnered significant interest which will see the refinement of the technical material continue into 2019–20. QFES concurrently commenced a review of the methodology for Bushfire Prone Area mapping in conjunction with the CSIRO.

At the 2018 Premier's Awards for Excellence ceremony held in November 2018, the QFES Commonwealth Games project team was awarded for their exceptional contribution to public safety during the 2018 Commonwealth Games—a joint win in the category of *Performance*.

The project team also received the 2018 Commissioner's Award for Excellence – Performance and Commissioner's Outstanding Award.

## Building community resilience

Resilient Australia Queensland Award and Resilient Australia Awards recipients, the *My Resilient Community* project, are achieving results in building community resilience. The project team, comprised of officers from QFES, QPS and Moreton Bay Regional Council, developed a toolkit to help isolated areas that were often difficult for emergency services to get to quickly, and support them in working together and planning for a range of disasters including bushfire, storm, flood and cyclone. The toolkit focusses on assessing and mitigating risks and identifying and using community strengths, resources and skills. This includes identifying an evacuation point and vulnerable members of the community and collating

key contacts and other vital information. The project is facilitated by the local government and, as a stakeholder, QFES assists by providing advice on fire behaviour and maps of local regions.

The original project involved four communities in Moreton Bay including Moreton Island. Further expansion is proposed into Central and North Coast regions with eight local governments identified to take part in the project.

## Supporting inclusion and diversity

Queensland has an increasingly diverse population which QFES considers in the development and delivery of its programs and services in order to build safe and resilient communities and ensure community preparedness for disaster events.

In May 2019, QFES released its Inclusion and Diversity Policy to provide direction to QFES personnel on the requirements for how QFES engages with communities and partners and how the QFES workforce engages with each other.

### Highlights for the reporting period include:

- » the launch of Emergency Services Cadets Groups in Charters Towers, Hinchinbrook (Lucinda) and South Burnett (Nanango). The Emergency Services Cadets Program endeavours to build community resilience through the fostering of the next generation of emergency services personnel
- » assisting members of the deaf community or people who have hearing impairment to install specialised smoke alarms through the Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme managed by Deaf Services Queensland. In 2018–19, 370 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms were provided. A total of 2,329 have been provided (as at June 2019) since the commencement of the scheme in June 2013
- » supporting the ability for RFS and SES volunteers to transition from operational roles to support roles enabling older people to remain active and help their community prepare for emergencies and disasters
- » providing Auslan interpreters when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information
- » supporting the CareerTrackers programs with the sponsorship of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as interns (four) enabling them to gain valuable skills and experiences in the areas of legal, media, talent development and psychology support
- » implementation of the Allies of Inclusion program which builds a visible network of QFES staff who are committed to a workplace culture that is fair, equitable and inclusive. The program involves QFES personnel as agents of positive change contributing to safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces where everyone feels welcomed, accepted, valued and embraced.



# Case study

## Stanwell/Gracemere Fire

The Stanwell, Kabra and Gracemere areas are primarily grazing land, however some pastures were suffering from a grass disease<sup>4</sup> and conditions were generally dry. Although Gracemere had not been drought-declared<sup>5</sup>, the town received well-below average rainfall in 2018<sup>6</sup>.

On 25 November 2018, the Rockhampton Regional Council area was amidst an extreme heatwave with the temperature reaching 41.5°. In Stanwell, a previously extinguished fire on private property reignited on 26 November 2018 and QFES assistance was requested. A fire ban was issued for the Rockhampton local government area from 1.00am on 27 November 2018.

On 28 November 2018, under catastrophic conditions, the fire quickly became uncontrollable. Aircraft were used for water bombing and to collect information for predictive modelling. These aerial assets were available due to QFES' arrangements with the National Aerial Firefighting Centre. Preparations for the 2018 bushfire season enabled access to the largest aerial firefighting fleet ever used in Queensland.

By the afternoon of 28 November 2018, the fire was advancing in the direction of the town of Gracemere and its approximately 11,300 residents<sup>7</sup>. The combination of low humidity, below average rainfall, dry pastures, above average temperatures and very high winds created an ideal environment for the fire's rapid spread.

QFES Fire Behaviour Analysts used predictive analytic modelling software to map the potential path of this fire in partnership with other agencies. In this case, the Bureau of Meteorology provided predictive weather information which QFES used to produce the overlays within simulation products. The modelling showed the fire was likely to impact the Gracemere township, particularly from ember attack, by 5pm that day.

At 3.16pm on 28 November 2018, QFES advised evacuating the town was necessary to prevent loss of life. Thousands of residents heeded the advice and chose to leave.

The predictive analytics imagery was released to the media to support a greater understanding of the need for evacuation. The predictive analytics produced on this fire also allayed concerns that the fire could potentially impact Rockhampton. The analysis conducted by the QFES Fire Behaviour Analysts indicated the fire would not impact Rockhampton, therefore preventing unnecessary disruption of the community from evacuation.



Intensive aerial water bombing by including the Large Air Tanker along with on the ground fire crews, worked to slow the fire. Continuous use of predictive modelling allowed both aircraft and ground crews to be deployed to maximise effectiveness.

Later that evening, it was still not safe for evacuated Gracemere residents to return to their homes. Residents who chose to stay in their properties rather than evacuate, called for emergency assistance during the night.

At 9am on 29 November 2018, the risk was downgraded and residents could return to their homes, but were told to remain alert. One house was reported to be lost as well as a number of sheds and outbuildings.

4. A. McCosker, 'Grass disease causes pastures to die before graziers' eyes', ABC Rural News [website], 2018, <[www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2018-04-13/grass-dieback-shocksgraziers/9603082](http://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2018-04-13/grass-dieback-shocksgraziers/9603082)>, accessed 10 January 2019.

5. Queensland Government, 'Drought Declarations', The Long Paddock [website], <[www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/drought/drought-declarations](http://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/drought/drought-declarations)>, accessed 11 January 2019.

6. Bureau of Meteorology, 'Monthly Rainfall: Gracemere-Lucas St.', Bureau of Meteorology [website], 2018, <[www.bom.gov.au/jsp/ncc/cdio/wData/wdata?p\\_nccObsCode=139&tp\\_display\\_type=dataFile&tp\\_stn\\_num=039049](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/ncc/cdio/wData/wdata?p_nccObsCode=139&tp_display_type=dataFile&tp_stn_num=039049)>, accessed 11 January 2019.

7. 2016 Census Stats Gracemere', Australian Bureau of Statistics [website], <[http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC31230](http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC31230)>, accessed 10 January 2019.

**Aerial waterbombing near Gracemere**  
Source ASHJO Photography





## Priority area 2. Response

### Outcome

Timely, coordinated and appropriate responses are provided to fire and emergency events that minimise their effects.

### Key initiatives

- » Continue to develop systems and strategies for a reduction of, and a more appropriate response to, unwanted alarms.
- » Support interoperability through establishing shared QFES policies and practices including equipment selection.
- » Ensure that all services within QFES can operationally support each other and complement our ability to deliver services.
- » Work with public safety partners to create, wherever practicable, interoperability in the delivery of services.
- » Provide timely and accurate information to inform and enable communities and responders to adequately prepare for, and respond to, fire and emergency events.

### Measures of success

- » Percentage of disaster management training participants with enhanced capability
- » Response times to structure fires
- » Response times to mobile property crashes
- » Response times to landscape fires
- » Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin
- » Rate of unwanted alarm activations per alarm signalling equipment

**Refer to the Key performance measures on pages 26-29 for 2018-19 data.**

## Working to reduce unwanted alarm activations

QFES responds to approximately 18,000 unwanted alarm activations from monitored fire alarms systems per year. Unwanted alarms have a negative impact on firefighters and the wider community by increasing safety concerns for fire crews and the public, disrupting the community and industry, creating complacency and imposing unnecessary costs to attend these incidents. Reducing unwanted alarm activations ensures that the department can more effectively manage priority emergency responses and resources.

Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, QFES charges for attendance at unwanted alarms to encourage building owners or occupiers to be continually proactive in managing fire alarm systems.

At 30 June 2019, QFES had 7,640 installed alarm connections and responded to 17,514 unwanted alarm activations from monitored fire alarms systems in 2018-19. The total number of incidents attended by QFES in 2018-19 was 73,363, this means that 24 per cent of all incidents were unwanted alarms.

QFES worked extensively with the building industry and building owners and occupiers to further reduce the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms, especially those with high numbers of automatic alarm callouts. Increased awareness is being achieved through:

- » a combination of pre and post construction activities with building designers and owners/occupiers
- » direct advice to owners of those buildings identified as having a high alarm frequency





**Fire on North Stradbroke Island**

- » the development of the pragmatic test that involves practical cooking and hot shower simulations to prove the strategies outlined in the QFES guidelines work to minimise or eliminate unwanted alarms with 173 pragmatic tests conducted on 108 buildings with a pass rate on first testing of 89 per cent.

This ongoing work with the building industry has resulted in a continued reduction in the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms per Alarm Signalling Equipment connection from 3.7 in 2005–06 to 2.3 in 2018–19.

## **Aviation capability**

In support of operational preparedness, some major changes, enhancements and investment in QFES' aviation capability occurred in 2018–19, positively altering the operating model of aviation within the department.

The most significant shift has been an increase in the number of National Aerial Firefighting Centre contracted aircraft engaged for the bushfire season from three contracts located at Archerfield airport to eight contracts divided between Toowoomba and Bundaberg airports. Historically, the Bundaberg area and surrounds have seen a large volume of high-risk incident response which now benefit from aircraft within closer proximity.

The purchase and development of a hangar at Toowoomba Regional Airport, officially opened in September 2018, has provided the QFES State Air Operations Unit with a hub for operations outside of busy Brisbane airspace for training and innovation support. It also provides coverage across a greater landmass.

The 2018–19 bushfire season demonstrated the value of these investments for fire suppression, intelligence gathering and situational awareness.



## Capital works program

Most new and ongoing capital initiatives to support QFES' operational capability are delivered by PSBA. This includes fire and emergency services facilities, fire appliances and communications equipment.

QFES continues to be responsible for delivering operational equipment and information systems development to support the provision of fire and rescue and emergency management services throughout Queensland.

Significant capital works initiatives were progressed or delivered during 2018–19 including:

» **completion of the:**

- replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at Childers and Richmond and an upgrade at Dirranbandi
- upgrade of the permanent fire and rescue station at Mount Ommaney
- upgrade of the permanent fire and rescue station and communications centre at Rockhampton
- RFS and SES complex at Howard, collocated with the police station
- upgrade of the Horn Island collocated RFS and SES facility
- Charleville area office refurbishment

» **continuing the:**

- replacement auxiliary fire and rescue station at Rathdowney
- replacement combined area office and rural fire and SES facility upgrade at Mount Isa

» **commencing work on the:**

- replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at El Arish, Esk, Gracemere, Kilkivan, Wooroolin and Yarraman
- replacement permanent fire and rescue stations at Bracken Ridge and Chandler
- new permanent fire and rescue stations at Pimpama and Yarrabilba
- infrastructure works for the south western region headquarters and replacement of the permanent fire and rescue station at Charlton
- upgrade of the permanent fire and rescue stations at Loganlea and West Logan
- Weipa emergency and disaster centre
- upgrade of the QFES communications centre collocated with QAS in Cairns
- new emergency services facility at Maleny.

## Fleet management

During 2018–19, QFES and PSBA established a Joint Fire and Rescue Fleet Management and Maintenance Taskforce to address issues affecting operational fleets and provide detailed oversight of the replacement build program and the maintenance of vehicles. The taskforce will ensure an appropriate number of operational and safe appliances are on the road and in service. Where possible, the taskforce will predict potential issues and address them in advance.

A Five-Year Building Program has been developed to ensure the FRS and RFS fleets have a regular annual procurement and build to provide better budget management and replacement programs.

Key initiatives include the temporary expansion of the Eagle Farm workshop; a new facility to replace the Eagle Farm workshop which will come on line in 2021; progressing the QFES fleet build; planning and maintenance priorities; the engagement of external suppliers to assist with capacity to meet unscheduled workloads; and selection of a workshop system/solution.

QFES continues to deliver fit-for-purpose appliances which included 50 new FRS appliances and 119 replacement appliances for RFS in 2018–19.





## Government Wireless Network onboarding for SES

The SES Communications Onboarding Project will deliver critical communications improvements to the SES. The project, which commenced in October 2018, will transition the SES to the Government Wireless Network (GWN). The GWN is a fully integrated, secure digital radio communications network that emergency service personnel in South East Queensland use to communicate mission critical information.

Additionally, several activities were undertaken to uplift and provide the SES with improved radio communications in those areas outside the GWN coverage area.

The SES operates on several different technologies and networks, often without the provision of individual radios for those responding. These initiatives will enable all QFES services to operate on the same communications network as other emergency services in South East Queensland and ensure the SES across the state has access to existing QFES UHF (ultra-high frequency) infrastructure.

Upgrading communications technology will reduce issues such as analogue radio congestion, coverage blackspots and allow ageing radios to be replaced.

## Radio/Communications Taskforce

The Radio/Communications Taskforce was established in January 2019 to investigate and identify technical and user issues with radio communications, analyse and evaluate these issues, and deliver a report with high-level advice and solutions.

The taskforce engaged with the workforce, subject matter experts and external contractors to explore, analyse and consolidate information to better understand the issues to ensure the continued safety of firefighters and the community.

In June 2019, the taskforce commenced comprehensive, independent testing of the radio network and equipment. The results of this testing will allow QFES to better understand some of the issues raised by the workforce and the current uncertainty of precise information on this matter.

A final report is expected to be delivered in August 2019.

## Improving road safety and response times

QFES' response times continue to be strengthened by the statewide roll-out of the Emergency Vehicle Priority (EVP) system. The EVP system detects emergency vehicles with lights and sirens approaching enabled intersections and changes the traffic light to green before the vehicle arrives, if safe to do so. The system halts traffic coming from different directions in more natural patterns, improving safety for road users and ultimately cutting minutes off emergency response times. EVP-equipped vehicles on the Gold Coast show travel time reductions by up to 26 per cent.

During the reporting period, road safety was further enhanced and response times reduced with the ongoing roll-out of the EVP system in Gladstone, Hervey Bay, Maryborough and Rockhampton. These regional centres join Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay, South East Queensland, Toowoomba and Townsville where the traffic management technology is already in place.

At 30 June 2019 there are more than 2,470 intersections and 153 fire appliances across Queensland fitted with the technology.

The system has attracted a number of awards at a state, national and international level.



## Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (drones)

In December 2018, Brisbane and Far Northern Regions completed a two-year Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) trial which highlighted the successful use of RPAS, also known as drones, for QFES operations. These trials resulted in RPAS being approved as a new QFES capability in early 2019.

QFES has developed a state, regional and functional area RPAS framework for QFES to integrate an RPAS capability into business-as-usual operations. The framework encompasses the regulatory regime, safety and operations, and is proportionate to the level of RPAS risk. It also identifies and addresses the challenges posed by the use of RPAS and supports the increasing range of RPAS operations and applications. The framework also provides governance to protect, monitor and enforce suitable RPAS use.

The use of RPAS will enhance QFES' ability to maintain situational awareness and collect intelligence to assist with informed decision-making. RPAs were successfully used before and after Tropical Cyclone Owen (December 2018) at Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw, Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor (March 2019) at Lockhart River and during the monsoonal flooding (January – February 2019) in Far Northern Queensland. The information and intelligence that has and will continue to be provided to QFES and other agencies will ensure more effective and efficient operations across a range of incidents including lost person searches, disaster assessments, assisting in difficult terrain rescues and fire investigations as pre and post community impact assessments.



## Swiftwater floodwater rescue

The State TRU manages the ongoing development of Swiftwater Floodwater Rescue Technicians across the state, in addition to providing competency maintenance training workshops for existing technicians and operators.

The TRU conducted two Swiftwater Rescue Level 2 courses during 2018–19, resulting in 28 personnel successfully completing the course. At 30 June 2019, there are 410 Swiftwater Floodwater Rescue Technicians within QFES. The unit also conducted eight refresher competency skills workshops on the Tully River providing training for 156 personnel from regional locations.

The Level 1 Swiftwater Floodwater Rescue training package was reviewed in the reporting period to enable it to be delivered to all auxiliary stations and volunteers from SES and RFS as required. The re-written training package is now identified as Swiftwater Floodwater Rescue (SR) – 1 (Land) and provides the appropriate level of operator skills to conduct swiftwater rescue from a river edge or other dry position.

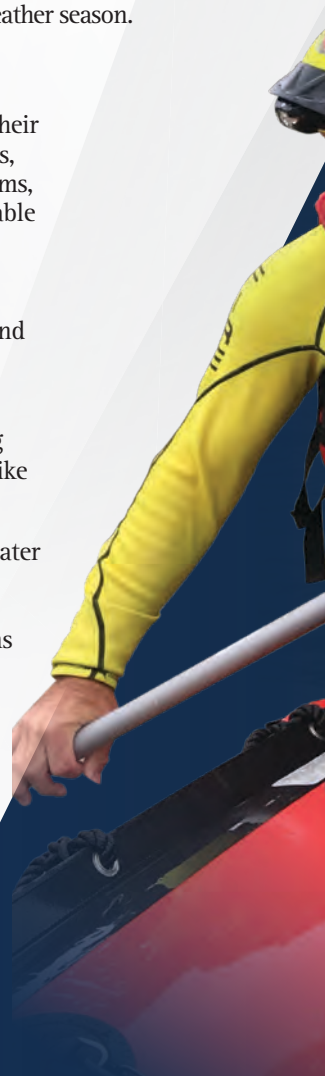
In addition, QFES purchased 99 Level 1 Swiftwater Rescue kits which have been distributed to regions for training and equipping of auxiliary stations and identified RFS brigades and SES groups.

In December 2018, Brisbane Region Swiftwater Floodwater Rescue Technicians participated in a swiftwater training exercise held at Wivenhoe Dam to ensure they were prepared for the severe weather season.

The exercise enabled the technicians to prepare and train in real swiftwater environments. The technicians practised their skills in the areas of self-rescue techniques, 'throw bagging' and setting up rope systems, casualty handling in the water and inflatable rescue craft. More complicated systems were also set up simulating the recovery of casualties, with foot entrapments and casualties on top of submerged vehicles and clinging to trees.

The skills developed during the exercise included swimming in swiftwater, reading hazards in the water and technical skills like paddling and flip drills.

During the severe weather season, Swiftwater Rescue teams also assist with support for medical emergencies, evacuating and relocating residents and resupplying towns with food and medication.





## Motorised swiftwater rescue capability

The evolution and introduction of the QFES Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft (MRSC) capability continues to strengthen with an additional nine motorised craft purchased in 2018–19. This brings the number of motorised craft available for use during the 2019 severe weather season to 26. These new motorised craft are distributed across all QFES regions and extend the ability of swiftwater rescuers to reach stranded individuals in distant locations or in rapidly flowing water situations. This Australian first initiative has developed since 2015–16 to a point where MRSC operations in swiftwater incidents are now considered to be general business.

Training has continued with an additional 24 personnel completing the two-week training course in 2018–19, bringing the total number of MRSC trained personnel at 30 June 2019 to 90 including 12 senior instructors. Training initiatives have included MRSC personnel travelling to Tasmania to access the sustained water flows required for effective and productive training. This training option was investigated as a result of the inability to guarantee water flows in other training locations within Queensland.

Prior to the commencement of the 2019 severe weather season, each region will have three motorised craft with the State Deployment Centre housing an additional four craft for training and deployment.







## Watch Desk

On 7 July 2018, the QFES State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) Watch Desk officially celebrated 10 years of operation.

The Watch Desk is responsible for ensuring all SES requests are coordinated and actioned, assisting with SDCC staff training and exercises, contributing to policy and planning, and forming a core part of the Operations Cell during SDCC activations.

Watch Desk officers inform, support and liaise with emergency management stakeholders such as local governments, state agencies and disaster management groups to provide alerts and assist with PPRR activities.

The operation of the Emergency Alert System in Queensland, a community messaging tool used during times of imminent threat from disasters and emergencies, has been a significant function of the SDCC Watch Desk since 2009.

During 2018–19, the Watch Desk created 153 Emergency Alert campaigns, compared to 14 campaigns in 2017–18. The campaigns were focused as follows:

- » 68 flood-related
- » 56 fire-related
- » 15 water-infrastructure related
- » 11 cyclone-related
- » three water spouts.

There was also a 29 per cent increase in the number of weather warnings sent (3,617) from the Watch Desk to relevant stakeholders and the Watch Desk also assisted in tasking and monitoring over 10,000 SES jobs, an increase of 64 per cent compared to 2017–18.

## National Fire Danger Rating System

QFES continues to support the National Fire Danger Rating System review and development of the system, as a member of the AFAC Board and with the provision of input through the AFAC Predictive Services Group.

The intent of the review is to build a more contemporary science-based fire danger rating model which takes into consideration a broader range of vegetation types across the country, thereby providing a more accurate fire danger rating to communities.

QFES contributed to a number of meetings as a member of the group reviewing the forest fire behaviour table.

## Local governments and the SES

The SES is funded by state and local governments, sponsors and community donations. QFES works with local governments across the state to ensure and enable SES unit and group capability. As the SES plays an integral role in supporting local governments' disaster response capability, the development of a MoU between QFES and each local government is a way to clarify the relationship.

The MoU was developed in collaboration with several local government Disaster Management Officers and brokered through the Disaster Management Network Forum facilitated by the Office of the IGEM. The MoU highlights the partnering arrangements between QFES and local governments for the management and support of the SES and details responsibilities for funding and support arrangements. This ensures the delivery of an effective emergency service that contributes to a safer more resilient community.

As at 30 June 2019, 58 out of 75 local governments have signed the MoU.

In 2018–19, the Queensland Government distributed \$1.65 million across each local government with active SES units or groups as part of the SES annual local government subsidy. This funding is provided to assist local governments in offsetting administrative and operational costs as a result of supporting their local SES.

In October 2018, at the LGAQ Annual Conference, resolution 56 was passed: *That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the Queensland Government to wholly fund the State Emergency Service from existing funds received from the Emergency Services Levy with appropriate budget allocation and governance arrangements.*

The complexities of this matter are under consideration and local governments, SES volunteers and other key stakeholders will be consulted prior to determining the best course of action.



## Supporting our volunteers

Within Queensland there are approximately 38,500 volunteers supporting QFES in delivering frontline services, building community capacity and enhancing community resilience. QFES' volunteer workforce is comprised of RFS and SES volunteers, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officers, AUS-1 DART volunteers, PSOs and Chaplains (refer pages 14–16 for further information).

These volunteers dedicate thousands of hours to providing invaluable support to their communities with training and preparedness and operational response. Consistent with the Volunteerism Strategy, QFES has invested substantially in improving conditions and access to information for volunteers that will support greater community capability into the future.

During the reporting period, QFES progressed initiatives to support its volunteers including:

### Taskforce Catalyst

Taskforce Catalyst was formally established on 16 July 2018 to drive progress and change within the SES to strengthen frontline capability and integration for QFES.

The taskforce concluded in January 2019 having engaged and consulted widely with key stakeholders such as the QLDSESA, SES Volunteer Consultative Committee, LGAQ, SES volunteers and QFES personnel throughout the state.

The outcomes of the taskforce include:

- » allocation of equipment and training to SES volunteers for Swiftwater Rescue Level One
- » the development of a Leadership Development Framework which will assist in identifying enhanced leadership training requirements for SES members

- » a review of SES Training Pathways and the development of a more flexible Train-the-Trainer model for SES volunteers
- » the development of an SES Volunteer Community Education Program in alignment with the RFS to enhance QFES' community education within local government areas.

In addition, in October 2018, the Queensland Government committed to a one-off boost to the 2019–20 SES Support Grant which aims to assist local governments in providing high quality emergency and disaster management services by supporting the activities of the SES. The available funding more than tripled from \$320,000 to \$1 million to provide grants to local governments for SES facility upgrades and vehicles.

### Volunteer recognition

During National Volunteer Week, held 20 to 26 May 2019, QFES highlighted the vital role its volunteers play in keeping Queensland communities safe, with the unveiling of an Emergency Service Volunteer Pin. QFES volunteers were among the first to be presented with the pin which will also be available to Australian Red Cross, VMRAQ, AVCGA, SLSQ, RLSSQ, Local Ambulance Committees and PCYC members who have served for more than 12 months.

The Emergency Service Volunteer Pin, which will be presented annually to eligible volunteers, features a simple yet strong and vibrant design to capture the spirit of volunteering through inclusivity. The centre symbol represents the Maltese Cross as a direct link to the Queensland badge design. The four arms of the cross traditionally represent faith, justice, temperance and fortitude and for the pin, they also acknowledge the value of each individual volunteer and the services they collectively provide to the community.



Operation Convergence

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## Celebrating volunteers

RFS and SES weeks are an opportunity to recognise and praise the selflessness, hard work and commitment of volunteers and staff around the state who support them, so they can undertake and deliver their critical work in Queensland communities.

Events, including award ceremonies and open days were held in the regions across the state to highlight the dedication and commitment of those who volunteer to help keep Queensland communities safe.

SES Week was held 20 to 28 October 2018 with the theme *enhance, train and excel* where the focus was on the work SES volunteers do in training, ensuring they are equipped to help the most vulnerable members of the community.

RFS Week will be held from 1 to 7 September 2019. RFS Week 2019 will celebrate 70 years of the RFS, recognising the dedication and commitment of its volunteers, looking back on the history of the Service and the events, milestones and people.

In 2019, the RFS celebrates its 70th Anniversary, marking 70 years since the first rural fire brigades were officially registered. The following brigades are celebrating 70 years of dedication to the Service:

- » Glass House Mountains
- » Lagoon Pocket
- » Byfields
- » Kandanga
- » Thangool
- » Gordonbrook.

## Grant support to community groups

The QFES Grants Unit continued to provide support to SES groups and units to identify, plan, apply for and complete grant applications. QFES provided support with 40 grant applications from SES groups applying through programs external to QFES. The unit worked with the QFES Hazard and Risk Unit to extend support to Local Disaster Management Groups. Five grant workshops were delivered in the reporting period providing grant information to assist SES, RFS and Local Disaster Management Groups.

## Interstate/international deployments

Due to protracted or complex operations, QFES may be requested to deploy officers to participate in intrastate, interstate or international deployments as a member of a QFES Strike Team or taskforce for the purpose of an emergency response. Deployments can be an opportunity to gain personal and professional development including learnings around fire management and resourcing systems, as they often involve an integration of QFES permanent, auxiliary, civilian and volunteer staff and resources. International deployments provide an opportunity to share knowledge with fire service professionals across the globe. Depending on the nature of the emergency, an inter-agency response may also be required.



**Gold Coast RFS Strike team receiving briefing 2018**



## Deployments during 2018–19 included:

### United States of America

**Incident:** Wildfire

**Period of deployment:**

August – September 2018

Eleven QFES personnel joined 188 fire specialists from across Australia and New Zealand to help the United States battle ravaging wildfires in 14 different states.

With approximately 89 active fires burning more than 375,000 hectares, QFES' emergency response to the wildfires was critical in assisting United States firefighters. QFES facilitated many roles including managing tactical implementation and resources at the fire front, structure protection and responsibility for fire ground personnel.

### Canada

**Incident:** Wildfire

**Period of deployment:**

August – September 2018

Two QFES fire behaviour analysts were deployed to join an international contingent of fire specialists fighting wildfires in British Columbia and Ontario. The analysts assisted local crews and other international agencies predicting how the fires may spread and how best to combat them.

Canada experienced more than 90 wildfires, with more than 5,000 active fires affecting more than 850,000 hectares of land.

### Tasmania

**Incident:** Bushfires

**Period of deployment:**

January – February 2019

More than 40 fires burnt almost three per cent (approximately 200,000 hectares) of Tasmania in January 2019, nearly all were ignited by lightning storms on 28 December 2018 and 16 and 29 January 2019. QFES deployed 58 personnel to the Tasmanian fires. The roles QFES staff undertook were Incident Management Team functional roles, Air attack supervisors, Predictive Services and support to the National Resource Sharing Centre and AFAC.

### Victoria

**Incident:** Bushfires

**Period of deployment:**

February – March 2019

In early March 2019, Victoria experienced at least 380 bushfires with the vast majority caused by lightning. An estimated 70,000 hectares of land burned with significant fires raging in Bunyip State Park and around Licola, Dargo, Gippsland, and Yinnar South.

Seventeen QFES personnel were deployed including six Fire Behaviour Analysts and one representative to support the National Resource Sharing Centre and AFAC.

The Fire Behaviour Analysts were integrated in Incident Control Centres in Gippsland where they worked with the Country Fire Authority, Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria, and Victoria Police, as well as representatives from private plantations.

The analysts provided specific advice to the planning section and Incident Management Teams about fire behaviour, fire spread, intensity and spotting, supporting firefighter safety, enabling positioning of crews, and providing the ability to determine whether offensive or defensive suppression strategies were more likely to be safe and effective in fighting the fire.



Canada deployment



## Exercises

QFES personnel participate in exercises to increase their competency levels in major, joint agency and small routine incidents through hands-on training. Exercises enable testing of factors including:

- » interoperability across QFES services
- » ability to liaise with external agencies
- » appropriate response and operational procedures
- » communications plans
- » response times
- » suitability and effectiveness of equipment and personal protective equipment
- » operational preparedness.

### Examples of exercises conducted or that QFES participated in include:

- » a continuous 48-hour field exercise, conducted by the AUS-1 DART, during August 2018, to reclassify the team as an internationally Classified Heavy USAR team under the auspices of the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG).

This five yearly re-classification exercise was overseen by international classifiers from classified INSARAG rescue teams and resulted in the AUS-1 DART maintaining the prestigious classification as a Heavy USAR team. The multi-jurisdictional Queensland DART continues to be a world leader in USAR operations and mentorship in the international community.

- » an international deployment exercise to the United States of America (USA) from 2-9 June 2019. The AUS-1 DART combined with personnel from New South Wales DART (AUS-2) and federal government representatives from Emergency Management Australia and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to participate in Exercise Shaken Fury at the Mascatauck Urban Training Center in Indiana. The combined Australian DART deployed a team of 60 personnel to the USA, including 30 AUS-1 DART personnel.

This exercise was a full-scale deployment of the combined Australian team to a simulated earthquake event at the Muscatatuck site, utilising the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) C17 transport aircraft to uplift and return the 60 personnel and 14 tonnes of equipment. The exercise was the first time any Australian USAR team had deployed and participated in an international field exercise.

The exercise proved the capability of the Australian USAR deployable capability and builds on the Australian capability to provide assistance to devastated communities in the local, state, national and international environments. The exercise reinforced the ability of all responders to work together.



CAPEX 2018 Tropical Exposure

### AUS-1 DART team successfully reclassifies

In August 2018, the Queensland DART was successful with its reclassification exercise, maintaining international recognition as the AUS-1 DART team.



- » a multi-agency operational exercise known as Exercise Grey Sandpit was held in Warwick on 26 July 2018. During the exercise, QFES personnel joined emergency service workers from QPS and QAS to respond to a simulated major building collapse following a gas explosion. With the first responding vehicle calling for assistance, all services were activated and tasked with responding to the developing disaster. RFS and SES volunteers and USAR specialists worked rapidly as a team to safely extract all casualties from the rubble.
- » an Australian government-led capability exercise held at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy over six days in October 2018. Specialist chemical, biological and radiological response teams comprised of specialists from the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. Approximately 300 personnel and visitors participated each day during the Counter Terrorism Capability Exercise (CAPEX) 2018 Tropical Exposure.

The CAPEX theme used four principles as a basis for scenarios: detect, exploit, attribute and defeat. The training incorporated current and emerging threats using chemical, biological and radiological materials drawn from across the globe.

- » a multi-agency and multiple venue disaster management discussion and planning exercise known as Exercise Loci Spatio was conducted in August 2018. This exercise involved a hypothetical 5.5 magnitude earthquake impacting on the Maranoa Regional Council area with widespread damage and disruption to its infrastructure, essential services and the public. This simulated scenario impacted the Maranoa Local Disaster Management Group, its Local Disaster Coordination Centre in Roma and the four Local Emergency Coordination Committees in Yuleba/Wallumbilla, Surat, Mitchell and Injune. A total of 58 participants, including 10 QFES personnel from three regions, were involved in the exercise across five different locations for a period of three hours. The exercise was the first of an ongoing series of planning, reviewing, training and testing sessions that will assist the regions prepare for, respond to and recover from possible significant events in the future.





## Support to volunteer marine rescue services

The Queensland Government supports approximately 35,000 marine rescue volunteers through service agreements with various marine rescue organisations. QFES, on behalf of the Queensland Government, administers the service agreements. Volunteer marine rescue encompasses AVCGA, RLSSQ, SLSQ and VMRAQ.

Financial support is provided to the volunteer marine rescue organisations, under the Volunteer Marine Rescue Support Package, to assist in the delivery of water safety programs, white water rescue, helicopter support and blue water search and rescue capabilities.

The Service Agreements for VMRAQ and AVCGA concluded on 30 June 2019 with new Service Agreements renewed from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019. Negotiations for the period beyond 31 December 2019 are expected to commence in September 2019.

The Service Agreement with RLSSQ also concluded on 30 June 2019 with a new three-year service agreement commencing on 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022.

The Service Agreement with SLSQ is in place until 30 June 2020.

## Blue Water Review

In Queensland, the AVCGA and VMRAQ provide volunteer marine rescue services with 21 coastguard flotillas and 26 volunteer marine rescue squadrons.

*The Review into Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations in Queensland* was released on 16 January 2019. It examines and identifies key issues in the provision of marine search and rescue services by AVCGA and VMRAQ which need to be considered to ensure volunteer marine rescue has a sustainable and strong future.

Following the release of the report, a working group was established and chaired by QFES. The working group includes members of AVCGA and VMRAQ as well as key stakeholder organisations such as Maritime Safety Queensland, QPS, QAS, SLSQ and the Queensland Recreational Boating Council Inc.

The working group has formed a vision for the future of the volunteer marine rescue sector, along with other recommendations, which are under consideration. An implementation plan is expected to be finalised by November 2019.

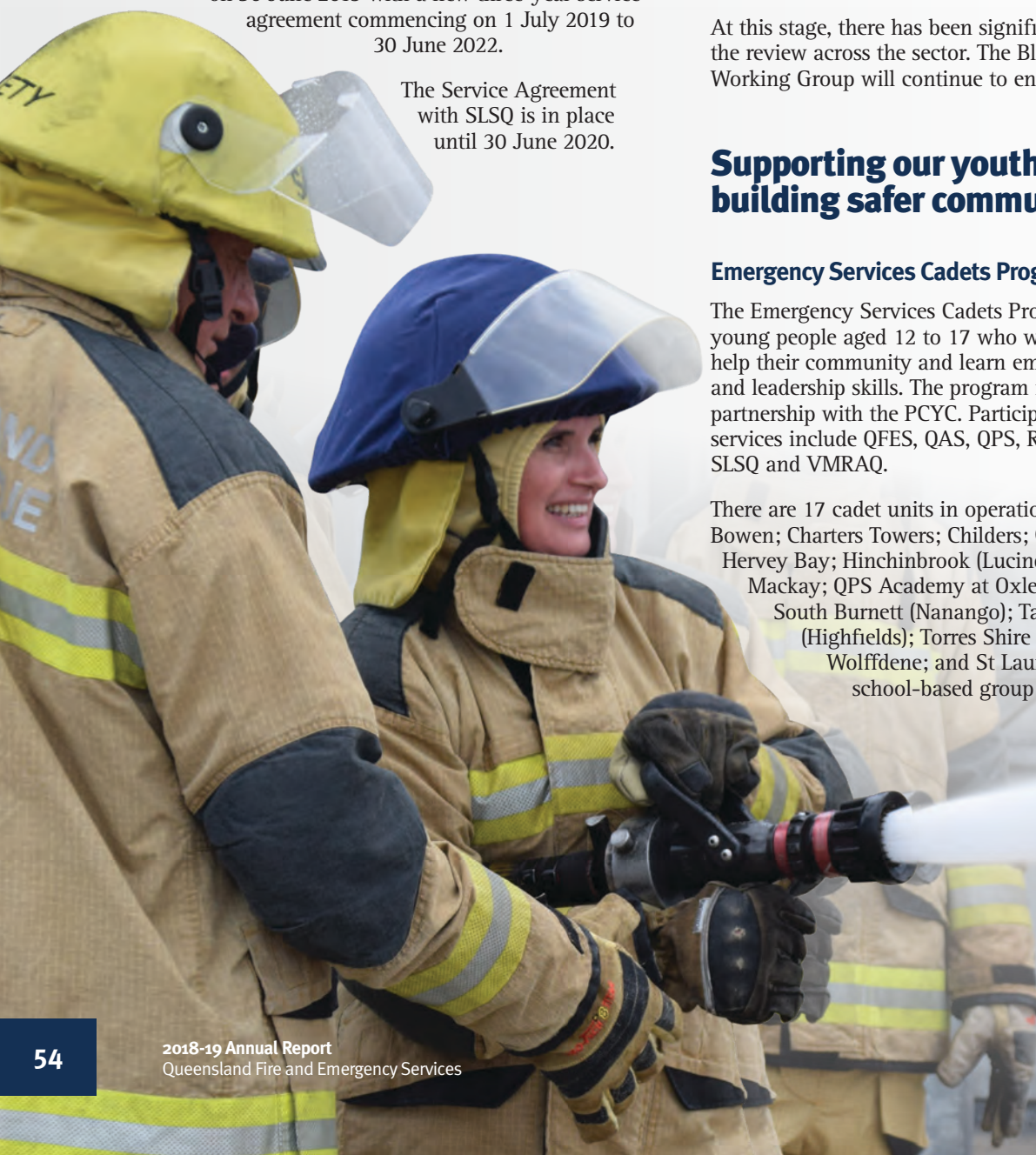
At this stage, there has been significant support for the review across the sector. The Blue Water Review Working Group will continue to engage the sector.

## Supporting our youth and building safer communities

### Emergency Services Cadets Program

The Emergency Services Cadets Program is aimed at young people aged 12 to 17 who want to volunteer, help their community and learn emergency response and leadership skills. The program is delivered in partnership with the PCYC. Participating emergency services include QFES, QAS, QPS, Red Cross, AVCGA, SLSQ and VMRAQ.

There are 17 cadet units in operation at Biggenden; Bowen; Charters Towers; Childers; Coorooora; Hervey Bay; Hinchinbrook (Lucinda); Hughenden; Mackay; QPS Academy at Oxley; Redland City; South Burnett (Nanango); Tara; Toowoomba (Highfields); Torres Shire (Thursday Island); Wolffdene; and St Laurence's College, a school-based group in South Brisbane.





Discussions are underway in several communities to assess the feasibility of opening new cadet units in Cook Shire (Cooktown – July 2019) and Tablelands (Herberton – late 2019).

Highlights for 2018–19 include:

- » 654 young Queenslanders were actively involved in the program supported by 202 adult leaders and 133 active emergency services members at 30 June 2019
- » the launch of three new units – Charters Towers, Hinchinbrook (Lucinda) and South Burnett (Nanango)
- » QFES and PCYC signed a new three-year service agreement from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021 for the provision of the program. The service agreement will see expansion of the number of cadet units to 25 by 2021 and QFES will increase its in-kind support to cadet units with the provision of training and participation in youth development activities with an emergency services focus
- » a three-year MoU was established between QFES and PCYC to support the delivery of Certificate II in Public Safety (SES) to cadet unit members
- » the program delivered 105 community projects such as PCYC events, Emergency Services Open Days and Expos, community clean-up days and ANZAC Day – equating to more than 8,500 hours of community volunteering.

### **Fight Fire Fascination program**

The Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) program is a free, confidential and voluntary educational program designed to support parents and guardians with their efforts to educate their children about fire. The program is based on a belief that children and young people can learn skills to remain safe from fire. This is achieved through a series of visits to the home by specially trained firefighters.

The program is available to children and young people aged between three and 17 who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident. It works in partnership with schools, mental health services and other community agencies to ensure children and families are supported and receive assistance to develop fire safety skills.

At 30 June 2019, there were 37 trained practitioners across the state. During 2018–19, there were 133 FFF enquiries received and actioned by QFES with 23 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.

### **Road Attitudes and Action Planning program**

The Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program is delivered in high schools by operational firefighters. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers.

At 30 June 2019, there were 174 program presenters located throughout Queensland.

Highlights for 2018–19 include:

- » delivery of 317 presentations in Queensland schools and education facilities to approximately 54,000 students
- » delivery of the program throughout Queensland including RAAP tours to schools in regional areas such as Chinchilla, Miles and Tara.

### **Best rescue team in the country**

Twenty teams from all over Australia, New Zealand and Asia competed in the Australasian Rescue Challenge in Warragul in July 2018 with the Far Northern Region combo Road Crash Rescue team crowned the best rescue team in the country. The team is comprised of six firefighters from across five stations including Port Douglas, Cairns and Mareeba and a paramedic from the QAS.

Rated against technical, medical and leadership skills and scored by judges from all over the world, the team came fourth overall and first in Australia.





Deepwater, November 2018

## Bushfire season Operation Synergy

The 2018–19 bushfire season, known as Operation Synergy, officially commenced on 1 August 2018 and continued through until 10 January 2019. The name was chosen to reflect the outcome produced when all areas of QFES and its partners collaborate effectively during operations.

The 2018–19 bushfire season was extraordinary, though follows a general trend of an increasingly warm climate. The compounding fire weather conditions and resulting fire behaviour during the bushfire season, particularly during November 2018, had not been seen in Queensland at a similar scale. During Operation Synergy, 2,611 fires burnt more than four million hectares of land.

An unprecedented number of Emergency Alerts were issued for bushfire during this period totalling 53 for the state, with a further 1,984 Bushfire Community Warnings issued.

Air support was provided throughout the season by 72 aircraft. At the peak of the fire activity, 49 aircraft were airborne simultaneously.

QFES also used its extensive predictive fire modelling capability to inform planning and management of

these fires. More than 700 products were developed and disseminated to crews on the ground to support firefighting efforts including Fire Spread Predictions maps and SNAP Reports, which provide a summary of fire behaviour and fire weather estimates.

The peak period of 'anomalous' high temperatures extended from 24 to 28 November 2018, fuelling widespread fire events that totalled more than 1.4 million hectares between 22 November and 6 December 2018. QFES' efforts to protect the community during this peak period included more than 3,000 volunteers and staff who worked day and night to protect lives and property. Efforts to protect the community would not have been possible without the invaluable support provided by more than 1,200 personnel from every state and territory in Australia.

For the first time in Queensland, the Bureau of Meteorology's Forest Fire Danger Index reached over 130 for the Rockhampton area seeing the 'catastrophic' category triggered for a number of hours in Central Region. The CSIRO notes that: 'an index of 100 means that fires will burn so fast and hot that control is virtually impossible'. Extremes such as these had not been experienced or managed by Queensland communities or emergency responders previously.

The potential for elevated fire conditions was identified by QFES and preparations were well underway for the seasonal circumstances. Even though QFES was aware of the potential, the particular compounding conditions during late November and December were unexpected.

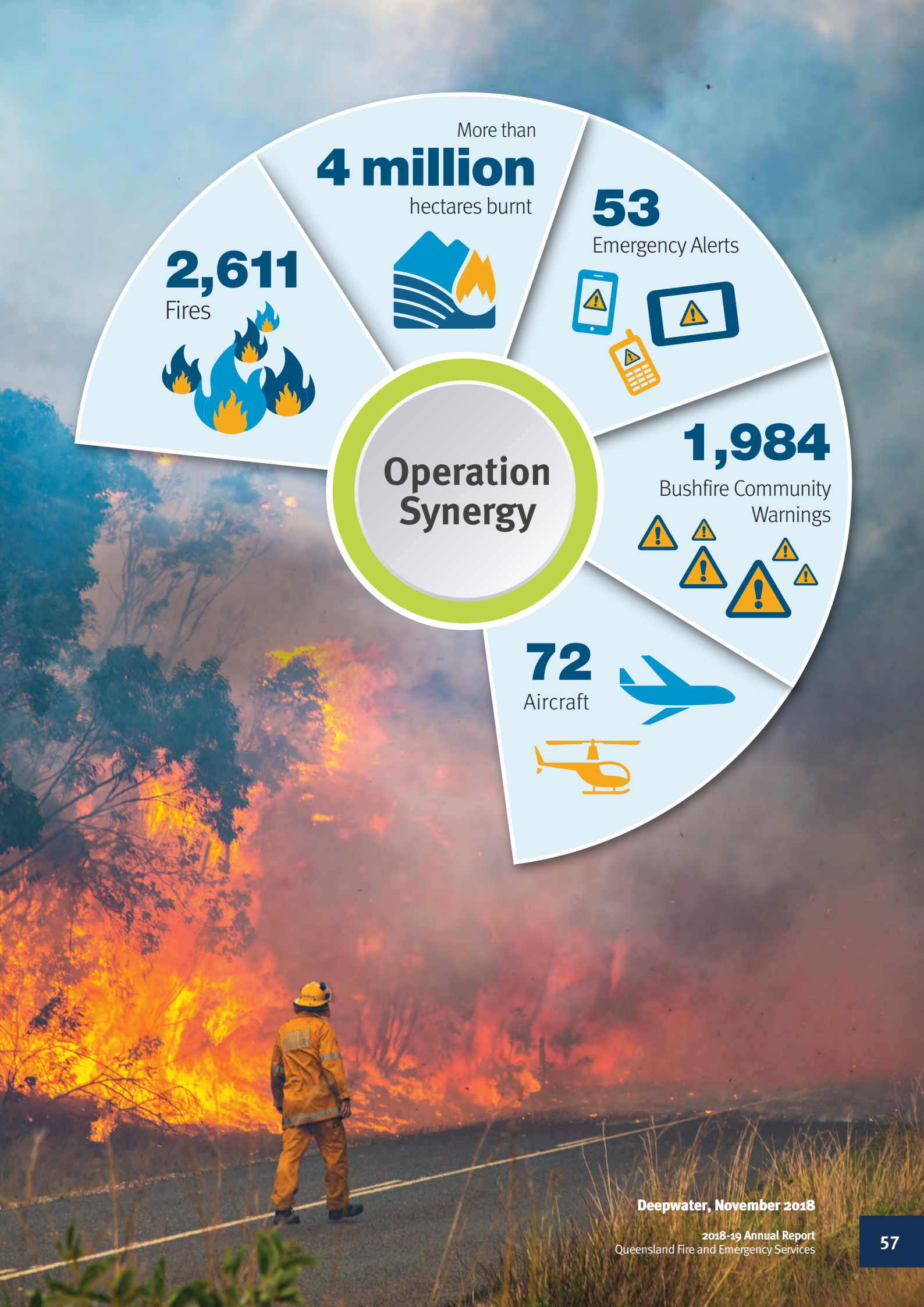
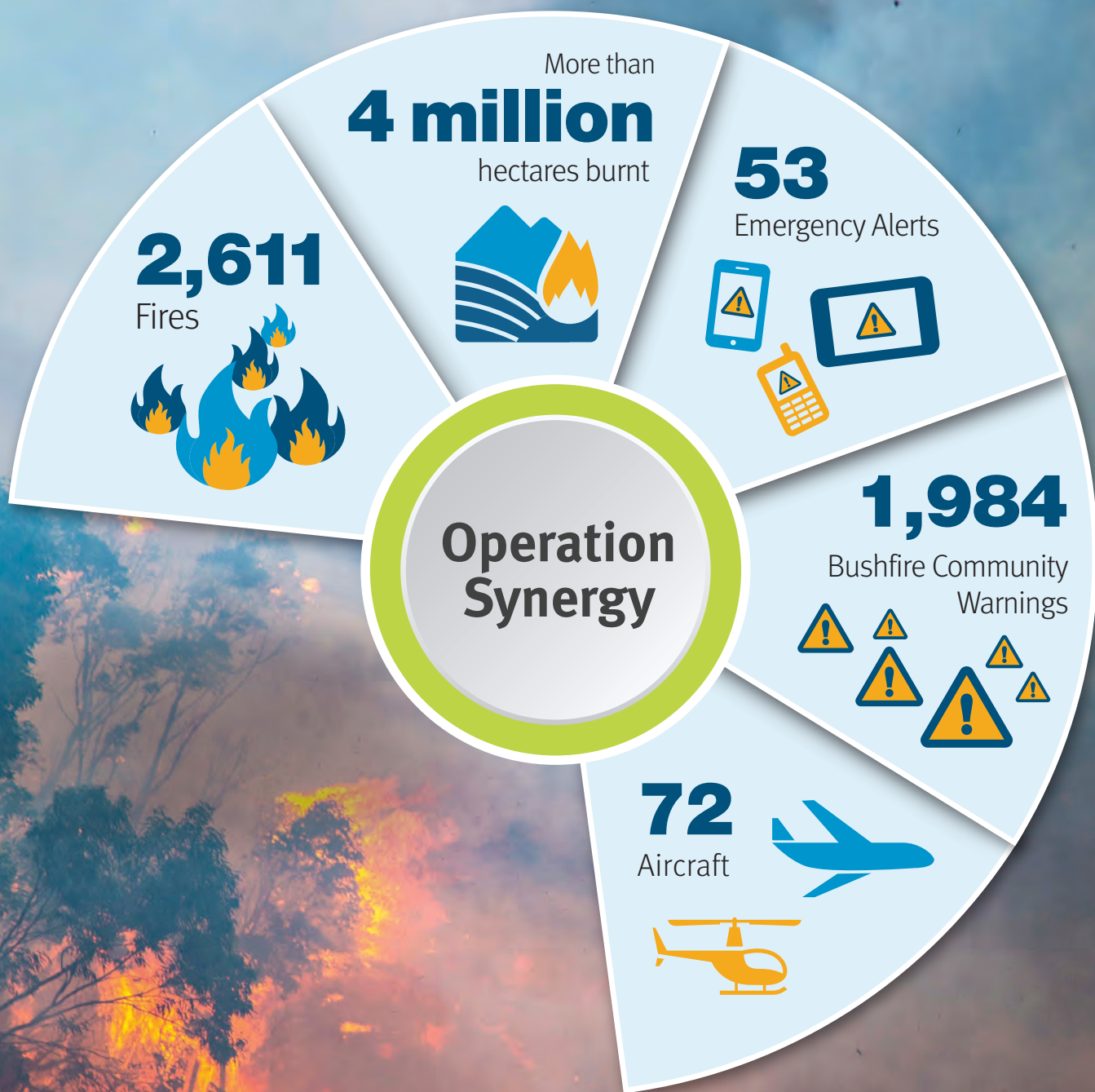
The mission for Operation Synergy was a unified approach with all stakeholders to achieve the mission objectives of:

- » protection of life – emergency responders and community
- » provision of public information and warnings
- » protection of critical assets
- » protection of community and agricultural assets
- » conservation of environment.

Despite conditions ranging up to catastrophic Fire Danger Ratings, the mission objectives were achieved and significant potential losses were prevented. Key to the protection of lives and homes was QFES' preparation including the support and involvement from the public, QFES' interoperability with its partners such as aerial capability, and advances in fire behaviour analysis and prediction. QFES also invested in research to improve bushfire mitigation and response.

Following Operation Synergy, a debrief program was specifically designed and implemented to better appreciate QFES' efforts during the bushfire season and identify opportunities for improvement through gathering evidence, data and feedback with almost 5,000 observations collected.





Deepwater, November 2018



# Severe weather season

## Operation Convergence

The 2018–19 severe weather season, known as Operation Convergence, officially commenced on 1 November 2018 and continued through until 30 April 2019.

The name was chosen to reflect the requirement for convergence of capability which is scalable and adaptable to meet the needs of community, achieved through leadership and proactive engagement across community, government and not-for-profit organisations including public/private partnerships.

As the fires abated in December 2018, the first major cyclone of the season, Tropical Cyclone Owen (December 2018) menaced areas around the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York. Tropical Cyclone Owen was a long-lived system that moved from the Coral Sea into the Gulf of Carpentaria and back again, reaching cyclone intensity on two occasions. Torrential rain was experienced in Halifax where an Australian record fell on 16 December 2018. The Bruce Highway was cut north of Ingham and two rescues occurred. Sugar cane crops were impacted and hundreds of chickens were lost to flooding.

Soon after Tropical Cyclone Owen disappeared, Tropical Cyclone Penny formed (December 2018), making landfall along the west coast of Cape York Peninsula near Weipa late on New Year's Day 2019, uprooting trees and flooding local roads. Following landfall, Tropical Cyclone Penny tracked in an easterly direction across Cape York Peninsula and emerged over the Coral Sea on 2 January 2019. The remnants of Tropical Cyclone Penny tracked back towards the Queensland coast over the next few days and the system once more made landfall near Bowen on 9 January 2019 with heavy rainfall occurring.



Townsville, February 2019

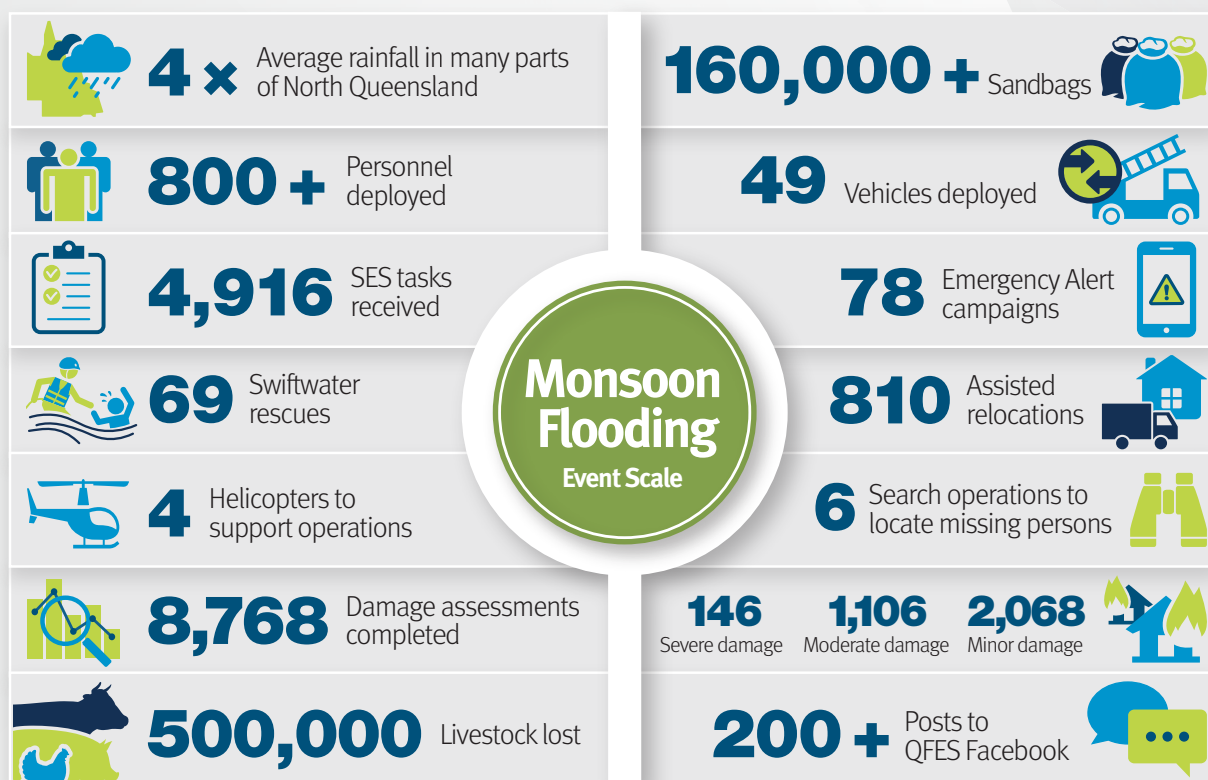
On 21 January 2019, a burst of monsoon westerlies formed the monsoon trough where a number of low centres were initially present around Cape York. The monsoon trough brought torrential rain and thunderstorms about the Mossman and Daintree areas. Rapid onset, major record flooding occurred in the Daintree River as a result. A tropical low, formed in the monsoon trough, moved slowly south west into Gulf country and stalled from 31 January 2019 to 5 February 2019. Concurrently, the monsoon trough, which extended from the low east into the Coral Sea, was also nearly stationary in the Cardwell area. During this time, periods of torrential rain occurred both near the tropical low over northwest Queensland, and to the south of the monsoon trough over the Herbert and Lower Burdekin District, in Townsville and surrounding areas.

Long-standing records were also broken on the east coast, with locations including Townsville receiving more than their average annual rainfall in a week. Major flooding occurred in the region and the Ross River Dam reached almost 250 per cent capacity. Over 3,000 properties in Townsville were flooded before the system moved towards the northeast and continued to weaken until 8 February 2019 when it



Ross River Dam, Townsville  
February 2019





### Summary of the Scale of the Monsoon Flooding Event 25 January to 14 February 2019

was last discernible. Three deaths occurred during this flooding event which are under review or investigation by appropriate authorities. QFES offers its sincere condolences to all those affected.

Many locations in the northwest areas of Cloncurry, Julia Creek and Richmond received well over the average annual rainfall in under a week, breaking long-standing records. The Flinders River at Richmond broke the 1974 flood level and record flooding occurred over a wide area. Over 500,000 livestock perished as a result of the floodwaters, significantly impacting graziers at an estimated cost in excess of \$1 billion.

Also during this period, Tropical Cyclone Oma developed, intensifying into a Category 2 system on 11 February 2019. Tropical Cyclone Oma continued to strengthen and reached Category 3 on 16 February 2019. Tropical Cyclone Oma caused alarm in South East Queensland as the Category 2 system tracked south and then west in the Coral Sea. Some forecasts suggested it could make landfall near Brisbane but eventually it tracked back out to sea. The system generated large waves and powerful surf from the Capricornia coast to northern New South Wales, along with strong winds along the southeast Queensland coast.

An embedded tropical low on the monsoon trough in the Coral Sea tracked towards the Cape York Peninsula and quickly intensified into a tropical cyclone. Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor made landfall on 19 March 2019 south of Lockhart River as a Category 3 system. Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor tracked across the far north of the Cape York Peninsula and generated heavy rainfall. Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor re-intensified to a Category 4 over the Gulf of Carpentaria before making landfall south of Port McArthur in the Northern Territory. After making landfall, the system weakened and tracked south, producing widespread heavy falls from western to central Queensland, extending into southern and south eastern parts of the state, with some areas experiencing their highest March daily rainfall on record.

The one in 100 years rainfall produced by the monsoon trough in the northern areas of the state during January and February 2019, highlighted that this was no ordinary wet season. However, work undertaken by QFES ensured service and operational preparedness prior to the severe weather season, enabled QFES to support Queensland communities to manage the impacts of the disaster events.

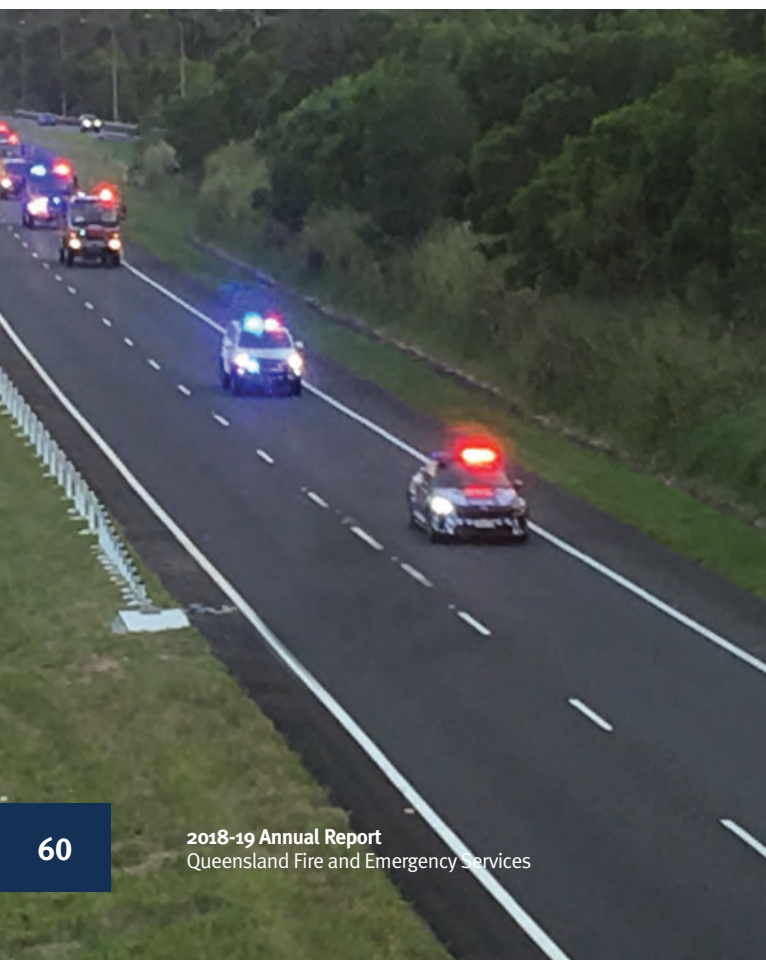


# Case study

## Interstate support

### Overview

As devastating bushfires swept through much of Queensland from November to mid-December 2018, QFES personnel worked tirelessly day and night to respond to the unprecedented fire activity. With every region in Queensland experiencing fire activity, resources were stretched with fatigue of personnel a factor for consideration.



### What happened

QFES contacted the National Resource Sharing Centre and made a formal request for assistance for interstate resources to support the ongoing firefighting operations in Queensland. The request was for both crews and Incident Management Team roles. The request was approved by the Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee and a total of 1,202 personnel plus additional aircraft and equipment deployed to Queensland.

The National Resource Sharing Centre maintains the Arrangement for Interstate Assistance which is the basis for sharing fire and emergency service resources across state boundaries and between Australian states and territories and New Zealand.

Career and volunteer firefighters mobilised to help local response activities, with New South Wales RFS providing additional support, deploying across the border with their appliances.

Interstate support was utilised in all areas across the state, from strike crews to Incident Management Team personnel and specialist roles such as fire behaviour analysts and fire investigators.

The ability to rotate interstate personnel into response activities provided the ability to rest local personnel and manage fatigue.

Response efforts on North Stradbroke Island were multi-jurisdictional with support provided by personnel from South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria.

### Conclusion

Although observations indicate improvement opportunities in the way QFES manages interstate assistance for future operations, the support provided by interstate crews was invaluable to the response. There is opportunity to strengthen logistics processes for the request, management and tasking of interstate personnel in preparation for future receipt of interstate assistance.

Interstate deployments provide deployees and local crews with the opportunity to share skills and knowledge. There is great benefit to see how other agencies and jurisdictions operate with the opportunity to leverage processes that may be applied on their return from deployment.

In January-February 2019, a number of QFES personnel were able to reciprocate the support and assistance provided by other jurisdictions by deploying to Tasmania to assist crews battling blazes in intense heatwave conditions.



## Priority area

# 3. Recovery

### Outcome

Appropriate relief and support is provided after responses to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs.

### Key initiatives

- » Provide timely advice, reporting and support to other agencies to assist in the recovery process.
- » Conduct damage assessments to inform relief and recovery activities.
- » Provide QFES transition planning that informs communities, government and non-government organisations.
- » Deliver timely and accessible recovery information to the community.
- » Contribute towards recovery operations by providing fit-for-purpose QFES capabilities including logistical and command and control.

### Measure of success

- » Number of damage assessments undertaken by QFES

**Refer to the Key performance measures on pages 26-29 for 2018-19 data.**

## Bushfire Rapid Risk Assessment

During 2018-19, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, with assistance from QFES, piloted a Bushfire Rapid Risk Assessment as a part of an interstate multi-disciplinary, multi-agency capability deployed to Agnes Water in late December 2018. The assessment, which focussed on the Eurimbula and Deepwater National Parks, identified 24 risks to cultural heritage values, biodiversity, flooding and erosion, built assets and tourism. Treatments to the value of \$1.86 million were determined and have assisted with immediate stabilisation and informed the long-term recovery needs of the area.

## Damage assessments

QFES continues to manage and improve the damage assessment capability within QFES for community recovery following severe weather events.

The upgraded damage assessment program is based on iPad technology and provides an instant record of damage as the data is collected from the field. Trained DART personnel collect damage assessment data to ensure data aligns with the damage assessment data dictionary that is consistent across AFAC partners.

During 2018-19, a total of 9,489 damage assessment surveys were collected by QFES which is a significant increase from 2,020 in 2017-18. The 2018-19

increase is due to the monsoon flooding event which occurred in January-February 2019.

In conjunction with the QRA, QFES continues to provide follow-up assessments of damaged locations at specific times following significant events. QFES also provided assistance to QRA on two occasions during the reporting period to conduct follow-up damage assessment data collection in the aftermath of Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor (March 2019).

The damage assessment capability is being supplemented by the introduction of an additional data collection program called Impact Note. This program has been developed for use by staff and volunteers in the early aftermath of a severe weather event to provide early indications of damage in their local areas. The early collection of damage data enables the appropriate and strategic deployment of Damage Assessment Teams to areas of greatest need, resulting in the best use of resources for the community. Impact Note will provide an early damage heat map and will be available for use by staff and volunteers without the need for specific training. The integration of damage assessment and Impact Note provides an operational link between permanent and volunteer personnel, working as one service in support of the community.

A total of 173 Impact Note surveys were collected by QFES during 2018-19.



## Disaster Assistance Response Team

QFES maintains a DART comprising over 350 trained staff. The DART is a multi-skilled, multi-jurisdictional team consisting of staff from FRS, QAS, QPS (Canine Unit) and PSBA and includes volunteer doctors, canine handlers and engineers.

The DART is internationally deployable as a 75-person team for earthquake incidents and is flexible and agile enough to provide response and recovery, and command and control capability in a vast array of severe weather and flood events. The team can deploy as small swiftwater response or damage assessment teams of two to four personnel, through to the full-scale deployment of a 75-person taskforce as needed.

In June 2019, the AUS-1 DART combined with personnel from the New South Wales DART (AUS-2) and federal government representatives from Emergency Management Australia and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to participate in an international deployment exercise, known as Exercise Shaken Fury (for further information refer page 52).

## Flexible Habitat

QFES maintains a deployable flexible habitat tentage system that is available for deployment to emergency and disaster events. The flexible habitat is deployment-ready on a semi-trailer at the State Deployment Centre with the capacity to house 70 people on stretchers in the tentage system. This capability is supplemented by two additional tentage systems in the QFES USAR caches.

The flexible habitat is used in response and recovery activities in Queensland and interstate as necessary, providing QFES with a base of operations for community response, or providing emergency shelter for affected communities.

During 2018–19, the flexible habitat was deployed for operations and event support at:

- » Agnes Waters during Operation Synergy bushfire response
- » Townsville during East Coast Tropical Monsoon response
- » Rockhampton during the SES State Disaster Challenge.

## Transition planning

During 2018–19, QFES continued to work with local governments to review their local disaster management plans to ensure efficient transition planning from response to recovery coordination.

Post impact, QFES undertakes damage assessments to gather information about the number of homes and other buildings damaged which supports phase one of recovery planning (for further information refer page 61).

QFES also assists with transition planning through representation on appointed Recovery Committees. A QFES officer may also be appointed as a State Recovery Coordinator to assist in coordinating the recovery and reconstruction efforts of government and non-government agencies in the affected areas.



## Priority area

# 4. Strategic capability

### Outcome

QFES is strategically capable and agile.

### Key initiatives

- » Continue to create a transformational culture that promotes a shared understanding of how staff and volunteers work together professionally and respectfully.
- » Progress the creation of shared QFES policies, doctrine, language and concepts of operation.
- » Identify how existing QFES capabilities could be applied to emerging areas of need.
- » Ensure that lessons learned are taken into consideration during future fire and emergency PPRR programs.

### Measures of success

- » Percentage of staff that recognise that the department has a shared QFES approach to service delivery
- » Percentage of staff that understand how their work contributes to organisational objectives

**Refer to the Key performance measures on pages 26-29 for 2018-19 data.**

## Lessons management framework

During the reporting period, QFES introduced a Lessons Management Framework to enable continuous improvement through learning. The process allows for the scalability of local solutions implemented at the local level through to broad scale solutions implemented as formal strategic projects.

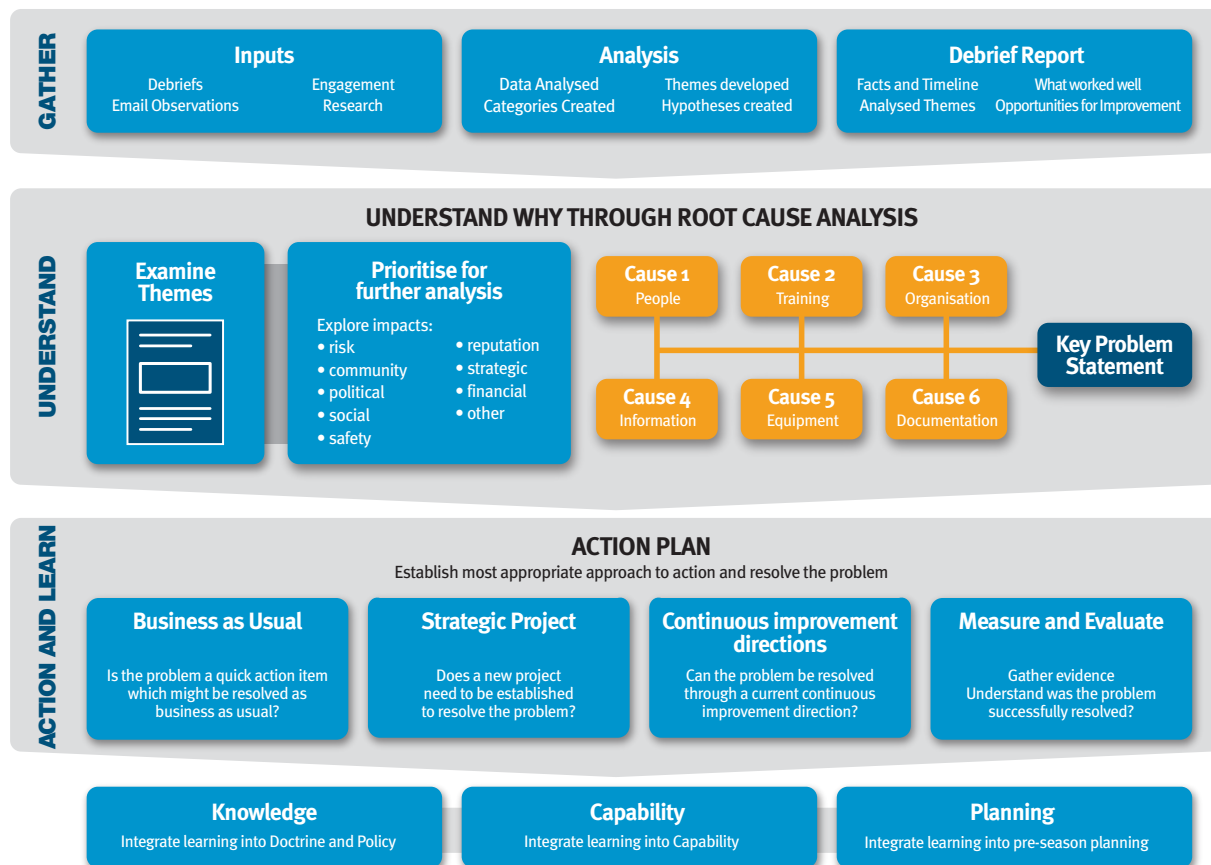
A new debrief and lessons management process has been developed to help the department adapt to meet the needs of staff, volunteers, stakeholders and community as a result of operational activity.

The debrief and lessons management process provides QFES personnel with the opportunity to contribute to the continuous improvement of QFES, to ensure the department develops, adapts and transforms to meet the needs of the workforce, stakeholders and the Queensland community.

The new process was implemented following Operations Synergy and Convergence resulting in significant learnings and opportunity for improvement for QFES.



## Lessons Management - Review and Improvement Cycle



## Service delivery model

The QFES integrated service determination model (ISDM) is a place-based approach that is focused on engagement with partners and community to co-design QFES services and resources based on the unique risks and hazards faced by the local community.

The ISDM was approved by the BoM in late 2018 and is being further developed to focus on engaging with partners and community to apply an evidenced-based approach to QFES services and tailor resourcing to be co-designed to adapt to the unique risks and hazards faced by the local community. A component of the ISDM is the QFES Human Capital Optimisation Matrix which has been developed to ensure QFES applies a consistent approach to the allocation of resources across the state.

## Legal status of rural fire brigades

The *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* provides delegated powers to rural fire brigades for the purpose of conducting their operations. However, the legal status of brigades is far more complex. A review was undertaken in 2017–18 to gain a better understanding of the impact the current legal status has on brigades with the findings of the review to be used to develop solutions and strategies that will support a modern rural fire service into the future.

The Legal Status of Rural Fire Brigades final report was produced in August 2018 documenting findings and opportunities to improve stakeholder understanding of the impact and limitations of the current legal status of brigades. As a result of the report findings, statewide staff awareness sessions have been undertaken with RFS scheduled to commence awareness communication with rural fire brigades in 2019–20.

## Working for Queensland survey

The Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey is an annual survey which measures Queensland public service employees' perceptions of their work, manager, team and organisation. The survey is conducted by an independent provider and facilitated by the Public Service Commission.

The 2018 survey, undertaken in September 2018, provided an opportunity for QFES staff to have their say and make a difference, and provide insight into the QFES workforce and the issues that matter to them.

The results indicate that 86 per cent of participants are proud to tell others they work for QFES and 82 per cent are satisfied in their current job. There were positive improvements in the perception of leadership, innovation, learning and development, workplace culture and inclusiveness.

QFES continues to utilise the insights provided from the survey each year to formulate action plans and continue to improve and develop as a department.

The 2019 survey is scheduled to be undertaken in September 2019.



## Priority area

# 5. Business-enabling services

### Outcome

QFES' business-enabling services enhance, integrate and support the department's service delivery and are compliant, authorised and fit-for-purpose.

### Key initiatives

- » Ensure that our organisational strategy and decisions respond to future need and that they are timely, accurate, evidenced-based, accountable and transparent.
- » Deliver services within the state's financial capability.
- » Attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce and provide safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces.
- » Confirm that our business processes are aligned with contemporary practice and that they legislatively comply.
- » Partner with the PSBA to ensure the efficient delivery of the department's corporate services, asset management, financial and human resource requirements.

### Measures of success

- » Total expenditure as a percentage of the approved operating budget
- » Level of satisfaction with QFES as a workplace as indicated by workforce survey results
- » Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the SES
- » Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the RFS
- » Agency engagement levels
- » Completion rates for compulsory workplace training

**Refer to the Key performance measures on pages 26-29 for 2018–19 data.**

## Fiscal sustainability

The QFES Fiscal Sustainability Review was completed in March 2016, providing 12 recommendations to support QFES to achieve sustainable fiscal performance.

Since that time, QFES has embarked on a range of projects in response to the recommendations including embedding a new governance framework in 2017, implementing a Procurement Policy and conducting a financial sustainability review of the SFEST in 2019. QFES also finalised a Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2019–2023 and Fiscal Sustainability Implementation Roadmap 2019–20 in June 2019.

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure QFES can:

- » meet its present and future financial commitments
- » position itself for unforeseen changes to future income
- » ensure continuity of service delivery to the community into the future.

The strategy will be delivered through the Implementation Roadmap which outlines the activities QFES will implement in 2019–20.



## Governance framework

A review of QFES governance committees was undertaken in 2018 to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of structures established in 2017. The review found that there had been significant improvements since implementation including:

- » mobilising committees
- » development of a committees' relationship matrix
- » development of the committee threshold document
- » support network for secretariats
- » a mature functioning Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC).

The review also provided recommendations to enable QFES to deliver the next step of change for corporate governance to address the findings and associated recommendations set out in the Fiscal Sustainability Review (March 2016).

## Safety for children (Blue cards)

Queensland is recognised as having one of the strongest working with children check systems in Australia. This system is continuing to be strengthened with a series of reforms.

QFES personnel are dedicated to keeping Queensland communities safe and this includes the youngest and most vulnerable – our children.

The usual functions performed by many QFES personnel fall within regulated employment under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*; meaning that approximately 30,000 personnel are required to hold a current blue card.

Blue cards are one of a range of measures in place to protect children, along with the government's 'No Card, No Start' system which comes into effect in early 2020. QFES has a legislative and shared responsibility to achieve the government's commitment.

Progress to date includes:

- » the establishment of a QFES Safety for Children Working Group
- » ongoing consultation with industrial unions and industrial associations
- » preparation of QFES' strategy, policy and procedures and other support resources.

Blue card application lodgement commenced in June 2019 for existing QFES personnel required to hold a blue card.

# Strategy 2030

*Strategy 2030 reflects the expectations of Queenslanders for modern emergency services.*

In a fast-paced, ever-changing world, it is imperative that the fire and emergency services provided to the Queensland community are contemporary, relevant and of the highest standards. To achieve this, QFES must ensure it understands the needs and expectations of the community.

Strategy 2030, launched in June 2019, was informed by conversations with staff and volunteers, communities and partner organisations. A series of workshops and focus groups considered the impact of a range of global trends on fire and emergency services over the next 12 years.

Strategy 2030 reflects how QFES proposes to meet the future challenges and realise the opportunities that will be present in Queensland through to 2030.

Strategy 2030 is a significant step to advance QFES to keep pace with change, positioning the department as leaders in fire and emergency services and ensuring that QFES continues to be a trusted and reliable frontline service that is also innovative, responsive and forward facing.

The five guiding principles of Strategy 2030 are embedded across governance, risk, planning and performance mechanisms to further support and ensure alignment and execution.

To achieve the vision of Strategy 2030, QFES is embarking on a transformation journey which includes a series of projects and strategic initiatives to deliver a future QFES (refer Continuous improvement directions and Strategic initiatives on pages 68-70 for further information).

Strategy 2030 can be accessed at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)



**Capable communities**  
Local solutions to local problems achieve sustainable outcomes. We will focus on working with communities to develop knowledge and practical skills to maximise capability to prevent or reduce the impact of emergency events and to speed recovery.

**Adaptive**  
Building adaptive capacity with the community, the organisation, and the emergency and disaster management sectors will enhance our collective ability to manage the unexpected. Together we will build trust to learn, adjust and anticipate.

**Interoperable**  
All parts of the system are able to work together effectively, in a coordinated way, and can connect to neighbouring systems when needed. We will support individual parts or systems to complement each other for a seamless whole, without duplication or gaps.

**Guiding Principles**

Our people

**Sustainable**  
Economic, environmental and social sustainability go hand in hand to contribute to a capable and adaptive Queensland. We will live this principle by maintaining value-for-money capability that minimises our impact on the environment and reflects community need.

**Intelligence**  
The community, our partners, and our people are empowered to make decisions with greater confidence. We are uniquely positioned to collect, analyse and interpret a range of information, integral to better decision-making about emergencies in Queensland.



## C4I Foundations Review

The *C4I Foundations Review*, undertaken by retired Major General McNam AO, and finalised in August 2018, identified how QFES could deliver contemporary command, control, coordination, communications and intelligence (C4I) information capabilities. The intent of the review recommendations was accepted and referred to QFES leaders for implementation through the continuous improvement directions.

## Continuous improvement directions

QFES leaders and key stakeholders from across the state worked collaboratively to establish a continuous improvement agenda to support Strategy 2030 and its associated strategic initiatives.

Extensive engagement highlighted the following continuous improvement priorities:

- » implementation of functions to enable state directorates to provide standards and strategy whilst enabling regions to deliver services within communities
- » enhance QFES' C4I capability by strengthening the command and control capability through strengthened collaboration and communication
- » define the strategic role of the State Operations Centre, Regional Operations Centres, Incident Control Centres and Emergency Operations Centres
- » enhance communications devices to further support operations
- » build on the QFES culture to enable effective operations
- » develop a common operating picture to enable decision-making.

These priorities will be implemented through key strategic initiatives which align with the Strategy 2030 guiding principles and other business-as-usual work.

## Strategic initiatives

The key strategic initiatives under Strategy 2030 are:

### Digital Transformation Strategy

QFES has embarked on a journey of Digital Transformation to align people, technology and information, and to empower and equip QFES personnel, stakeholders and the community to do new things, in new ways, to rapidly meet evolving demands and expectations.

Digital transformation is a process of shifting the organisation to new ways of thinking and working using digital, social, mobile and emerging technologies. The ongoing program, which began in late 2018, involves changing leadership approaches, introducing new thinking models, and encouraging and sustaining innovation. The focus for 2019 and towards 2030 is to increase the use of appropriate technology to improve the way QFES personnel, clients, suppliers, partners and stakeholders work together.

### Engagement Strategy

The Engagement Strategy, approved in June 2019 following a department-wide consultation process, delivers on QFES' commitment to achieve accepted outcomes through engagement with its people, partners and communities. Implementation of the strategy includes a range of projects to improve engagement such as:

- » auditing of the current engagement landscape
- » reviewing policy, procedure, doctrine and governance arrangements
- » developing consistent engagement training which is customised to different needs
- » establishing new communications and engagement platforms
- » developing a consistent approach to engagement planning and documentation
- » building engagement case studies, updating materials and creating a toolkit
- » developing a platform to improve visibility of QFES engagement at the local, regional and state levels
- » establishing a network of QFES personnel with key engagement responsibilities.

The strategy recognises QFES personnel are highly trusted within their local communities and therefore well placed to tailor engagement.

By using a place-based approach, QFES can ensure stakeholder engagement is about matters that are important to them and are delivered through suitable channels at appropriate times.

The strategy also promotes a coordinated approach including aligning engagement efforts and sharing and pooling information and resources.

Evaluation of engagement activity is designed to cover local, regional and state levels. Local and regional communication and engagement plans will prompt for engagement evaluation as part of the process which will inform Regional Engagement Plans and the Annual Engagement Strategy ensuring evaluation is occurring at all levels through the department.

The strategy is available at: [www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)





## Knowledge Environment

The Knowledge Environment creates an environment that supports QFES in its delivery of services to Queensland through clearly defined capabilities with the following initiatives:

- » a set of eight baseline capabilities and a capability assessment model to access, develop, plan and evaluate QFES' service requirements and ensure it is able to meet service needs into the future has been developed.
- » the establishment of a knowledge framework that provides knowledge-sharing in part, through strategic, operational and tactical policy and doctrine. The doctrine is informed by data, lessons and performance information which generates knowledge to drive improved strategy, innovation and capability.
- » a learning environment through lessons management which supports ongoing development of capability, policy and doctrine, and improved service delivery (refer Lessons management framework on pages 63–64).
- » the establishment of elements of assurance which underpin the integrity of decision-making on capability through functions such as internal audit, external reporting and the Enterprise Portfolio Management Office.

The combination of initiatives which make up the Knowledge Environment will be implemented in stages across 2019–20.

## Service Alignment Plan

The aim of the Service Alignment Plan is to strengthen QFES' local capacity to ensure adequate support, resources and local decision-making and that QFES' regional service delivery considers a place-based approach.

The plan is being defined taking into consideration engagement on the continuous improvement directions and the other key strategic initiatives with QFES personnel.

On 8 April 2019, QFES moved to a new organisational model to enhance operational capability, improve efficiency and give more autonomy to regionally-based QFES personnel to make locally appropriate decisions.

The model sees regional leaders for FRS, RFS and SES and Business Operations report directly to a regional Assistant Commissioner. State-based Assistant Commissioners and their support staff will continue to play an important role in providing strategic oversight and guidance to ensure support and consistency across the state.

In addition, from May 2019 the State Operations Centre and Regional Operations Centres maintain a 24-hour capability. There will be one chain of command, a strengthened lessons learned process, improved training and exercising, and visibility of all resources. This active oversight will ensure a seamless escalation to response when major incidents occur.

## Strategic Investment Plan

The Strategic Investment Plan will support QFES in developing a robust framework for identifying and prioritising investments to support decision-making and contribute to fiscal sustainability. An interim Strategic Investment Plan will be delivered in 2019–20. The interim plan will align with the QFES Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2019–2023 and the relevant principles of the broader Queensland Government's fiscal strategy.

Continuing work on the development of a Strategic Investment Framework and subsequent Strategic Investment Plans will also align with other significant initiatives underway including capability modelling and service alignment.

## Legislative review

Since November 2013, QFES has undergone a period of reform and transformation. While organisational and strategic change has occurred, the legislation which supports QFES and its operations has remained relatively the same.

QFES commenced reviewing portfolio legislation in the reporting period to identify opportunities for improvements to the legislation, with an initial focus on addressing technical issues within the legislation. The review will ensure QFES is in the best position to meet the existing and emerging needs of Queensland communities.

QFES is reviewing the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*; *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*; *Disaster Management Act 2003*; and *Disaster Management Regulation 2014*; and a number of other Acts that impact on the way QFES does business.

## People and Culture Strategy

QFES is dedicated to continuously developing its organisational culture. Ongoing cultural development will be a key enabler to delivering on Strategy 2030 and the department's future vision.

The QFES People and Culture Strategy, expected to be released in 2019–20, sets the strategic vision for culture. The strategy will be supported by a Culture Framework which will provide guidelines, principles and a revised process focusing on a more mature approach to continuous cultural development for QFES. The framework is expected to be finalised by 31 December 2019.



## Volunteerism Strategy

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy, launched in October 2018, aims to create contemporary volunteer models which reflect best practice, innovation and social trends across volunteerism and embed these models in the QFES culture and ethos.

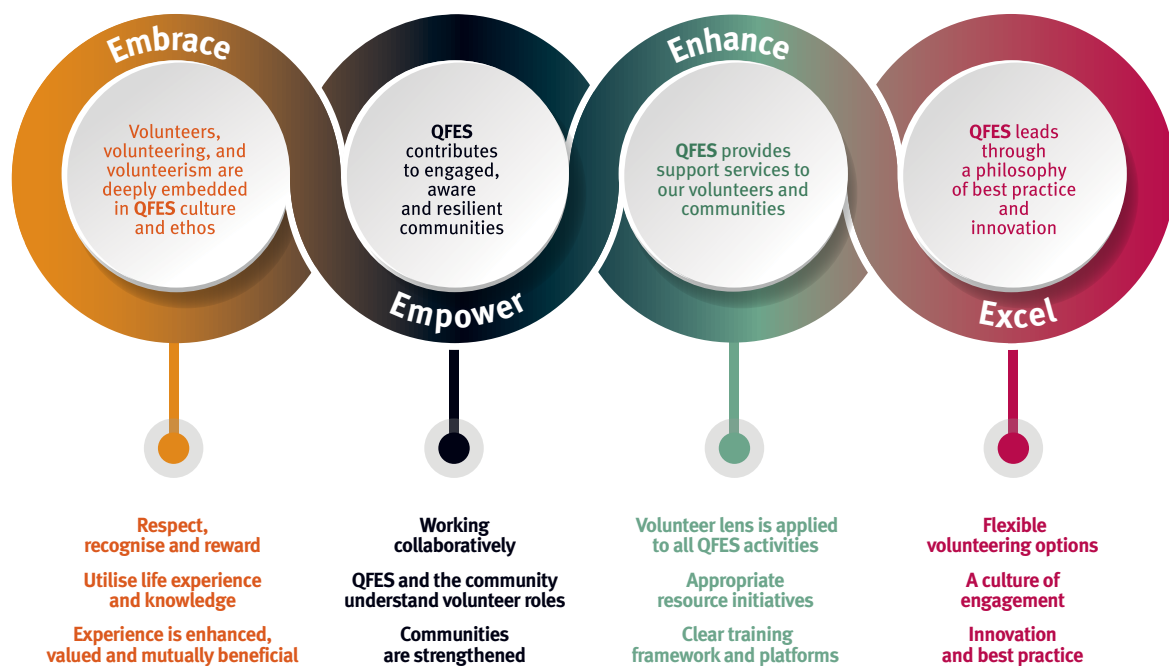
The strategy sets out the strategic priorities and guiding principles for the development of a contemporary and robust volunteerism model for QFES.

The strategy establishes a framework for the application of a 'volunteer lens' across all QFES activities and seeks to incorporate the value of volunteers, volunteering and volunteerism into the future of an integrated QFES. The priorities will guide the development of a future volunteer workforce that is sustainable, capable, more closely connected to its local community and better able to adapt to organisational and societal changes.

QFES is developing an implementation plan which establishes actions based on data collected during consultation with volunteers at the Volunteerism Strategy roadshows held across Queensland. These workshops also engaged QFES state office business units, state services, QFES Regional Leadership Teams, local governments and other stakeholders, both internal and external, to help put solutions into action through the implementation plan.

The Volunteerism Strategy Implementation Plan will identify the strategies to foster inclusivity and recognition. One way this has been achieved is with the introduction and presentation of the Emergency Service Volunteer Pin, launched by the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services on 21 May 2019 during National Volunteer Week (refer page 49).

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy is available at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au).





## Emergency Management Levy

The Emergency Management Levy (EML) provides around 75 per cent of funding for QFES to provide a wide range of vital emergency and disaster management services across Queensland. QFES services that benefit from the EML are provided by paid and volunteer staff to help Queenslanders before, during and after emergency and disaster events. The owner of land classified as prescribed property must pay the levy.

Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and subordinate legislation, the Commissioner is responsible for determining the boundaries of a levy district and the class of that district.

Levies are set by the *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011* and vary according to the classification of the property and class of a district in which the property is situated.

During 2018–19, levy boundaries in the fast-growing greater Ipswich and Toowoomba areas were reviewed following consultation with stakeholders including rural fire brigades and property owners. Changes to the boundaries took effect from 1 July 2019. There were no changes to rural fire brigades servicing these areas, nor their operational response activities. Reviewing the levy boundaries and making sure the levy is applied correctly ensures residents continue to receive world-class fire and emergency services.

## Enterprise Portfolio Management Office

QFES established an Enterprise Portfolio Management Office in 2018–19 to provide governance, assurance and a mechanism for the monitoring of strategic projects. The Enterprise Portfolio Management Office uses Prince2 methodology as a baseline to provide advice and guidance on managing projects and reports to QFES management on the progress of active projects. Through standardising project management processes and procedures, while simultaneously providing continuous development through formal, experiential and social learning, QFES is developing a good practice business environment for the management of key projects. This approach will ensure investments and decisions are made and projects delivered that meet the requirements of a modern fire and emergency service.

## Volunteering for Queensland survey

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy aims to embrace, empower and enhance QFES' volunteer workforce. An important way to do this is by listening to volunteers' voices and using feedback to inform the future.

The 2019 Volunteering for Queensland survey was held in February – April 2019 and was open to all QFES volunteers, with more than 2,500 volunteers completing the survey. The survey is conducted biennially and assesses volunteers' satisfaction and seeks feedback on workplace environments, how QFES works together, and how QFES supports and engages with volunteers. The survey was undertaken through independent survey platform Qualtrics.

The results indicate that 96 per cent of volunteers intended to continue volunteering with QFES and 82 per cent would recommend being a QFES volunteer. There was also a 13 per cent increase in volunteers believing there had been positive changes in culture over the past two years.

Results are being presented across the state and will continue to inform the QFES future direction through action planning processes that will guide the department as it improves and develops.





## New approach to innovation

The QFES Planning, Research and Innovation Unit has been participating in a six-month States of Change learning program since April 2019, run by Nesta an international not-for-profit innovation organisation based in the United Kingdom.

The training program is designed to strengthen innovation capacity across governments and develop the next generation of public innovation learning. Ten government departments and agencies from around Australia and New Zealand are participating in the program.

The innovation approach adopted by the department will be to focus on a small number of key business challenges each year and to work with subject matter experts to understand why the issues are occurring and to identify options to trial. Solutions that have been successfully piloted and approved will then be implemented by the department.

In 2019–20, the department will:

- » continue to progress an innovation project to reduce the volume of unwanted fire alarms in consultation with first responders, business partners and clients
- » establish an innovation and research governance function to oversee and direct this work
- » develop and implement an innovation and research framework.

## Service agreements with PSBA

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) report *Delivering shared corporate services in Queensland Report 3: 2018–19* tabled in Parliament on 27 September 2018 included a recommendation to customers of shared corporate service providers to ensure Queensland Government's shared service providers are delivering value for money now and positioned to successfully deliver into the future.

QFES acknowledges the recommendations of the QAO report and is committed to driving the effectiveness and efficiency of corporate services delivered by Queensland Shared Services and PSBA through proactive engagement, quality process inputs, collaborative improvement initiatives and effective monitoring of service level agreement performance.

As at 30 June 2019, the following service agreements with PSBA are in place:

- » Asset and Procurement Services
- » Finance Services
- » Frontline and Digital Services
- » Human Resources.

QFES is undertaking an annual review of the service agreements and service catalogues to assess if the department's needs are being effectively supported.

## Document and records management

As part of the department's goal of building organisational information management capabilities, QFES is progressing plans to implement a solution to support the department with managing its documents and records. An enterprise wide electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS) will enable QFES 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 improving accessibility, reduction in duplication and promoting information-sharing across the department. The eDRMS solution will also enhance life-cycle management of records by automating controls governing information security and disposal.

## Information management

In August 2018, QFES commenced maturing its Information Management and Information Security environments drafting associated policies and frameworks.

QFES will continue to mature its Information Management Framework and Information Security Management System to enable the business to perform its key capabilities and work towards Strategy 2030 aspirations.

## Payroll system

QFES is scheduled to transition to the Aurion payroll system in February 2020. Aurion is the whole-of-government payroll system and will replace QFES' ageing and unsupported Lattice system.

This transition required all QFES staff to be aligned to a consistent pay cycle and in April/May 2019, QFES aligned its operational officers' and auxiliary officers' pay cycles to corporate public servant pay cycles in preparation for the 2020 go live.

## White Ribbon Accreditation

In May 2019, QFES achieved accreditation as a White Ribbon Australia workplace. The accreditation recognises QFES' commitment to preventing violence against women, supporting employees affected by domestic and family violence, and promoting a safe and respectful workplace for all.



# Supporting those in need

QFES personnel continue to provide support for causes and people in need in many ways including raising awareness and fundraising activities. Events in 2018–19 include:

- » **QFES Regional Challenge 2018:** This challenge pitched region against region (including State Office), over a three-month period to see which region could raise the most funds, with \$8,000 being donated to the Children's Hospital Foundation and the provision of support to the Children's Hospital Foundation's 'City Blitz' leading into the Channel 9 Telethon fundraising.
- » **Climb for Cancer:** In June 2019, emergency services personnel, including QFES, QAS and QPS, raced up 37 floors of Brisbane's Waterfront Place and raised funds for the Mater Hospital Climb for Cancer with more than \$15,000 raised.
- » **Bike 4 Burns:** The seven-day tour started on 15 May 2019 in Bundaberg and travelled south through Biggenden, Goomeri, Nanango, Crows Nest, Clifton and Ipswich before finishing at the Queensland Children's Hospital in South Brisbane. In its thirteenth year, the annual ride raises awareness and funds for research and treatment for children suffering from burns and injuries through the Queensland Children's Hospital Foundation. This year's 50 riders from QFES, QAS and QPS raised approximately \$55,000 for the cause.
- » **Hummingbird House:** The Public Safety International Women's Day event held on 8 March 2019 celebrated the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women across the world. The event also raised \$33,000 in support of Hummingbird House, Queensland's only children's hospice, supporting children affected by a life-limiting condition and their families.
- » **Darkness to Daylight:** participation in the 110km event in Brisbane on 29 to 30 May 2019 supporting domestic and family violence. QFES had a record number of walkers and runners and raised more than \$3,500.





# Governance

## Executive management

As at 30 June 2019

### Board of Management profiles

#### Mike Wassing

AFSM BAppSc (EnvMgt & LandUsePolicy) GradDipBusiness (StratMgt) GAICD

##### Commissioner (Acting)



The Commissioner is responsible for leading and managing the efficient functioning of FRS, RFS and SES, and emergency management and disaster mitigation programs and services throughout Queensland.

The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums including the Board of AFAC and the Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee.

The Commissioner is a member of the PSBA BoM (the position of Chair is rotated annually with the Commissioner in the role for the period 16 September 2017 to 15 September 2018).

*Katarina Carroll APM commenced relieving as Commissioner in December 2014 and was appointed as Commissioner on 1 August 2015. Commissioner Carroll served as the Chair of the QFES BoM and Vice President of AFAC until 27 June 2019 when she commenced special duties with the QPS before taking up her appointment as the Commissioner, QPS on 8 July 2019.*

*Mike Wassing was appointed Acting Commissioner on 6 June 2019.*

#### Mark Roche

AFSM GradCertAppMgmt GAICD

##### Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services

##### Chief Officer, FRS



The Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services and Chief Officer, FRS is responsible for the leadership and management of operations for FRS and emergency management functions across the state incorporating seven regions as well as the Specialist Response and Planning functions of Specialist Response and Communications, Scientific and Research, and Community Infrastructure and the State Operational Coordination Branch.

The Deputy Commissioner is also the President of the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation which is the peak body in Australasia for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and skills in road rescue.



## Kevin Walsh

AFSM



**Deputy Commissioner,  
Emergency Management, Volunteerism  
and Community Resilience (Acting)**

**Chief Officer, RFS (Acting)**

**Chief Officer, SES (Acting)**

The Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience, Chief Officer, RFS and Chief Officer, SES is responsible for leading and managing the prevention and community preparedness and recovery functions for QFES. The role has oversight of the QERMF, emergency management planning for before and after disasters, volunteerism, and strengthening community partnerships to build safe, healthy, confident and connected communities across Queensland.

The Deputy Commissioner is a member of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre Board of Directors and also represents QFES on a number of state and national bodies.

*Mike Wassing was appointed Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience on 21 September 2015 and was appointed Acting Commissioner on 6 June 2019.*

*Kevin Walsh was appointed Acting Deputy Commissioner for the period 10 June 2019 to 5 July 2019.*

## Doug Smith

APM MPubAdmin BA  
GradCert(HRM) FAIM GAICD



**Deputy Commissioner,  
Strategy and Corporate Services**

**Chief Strategy Officer**

The Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services and Chief Strategy Officer is responsible for leading the department's strategic framework and vision, driving performance and integrated capability across QFES. The division includes Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services; HCM; Strategic Services; and Organisational Engagement Directorates; and works closely with the public safety agencies.

The Deputy Commissioner and Chief Strategy Officer represents QFES on a number of major committees and boards including the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre and the AFAC/ Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre Joint Board Working Group.

## Peter Griffin

BBus(Comm) GradDipAppFin  
F Fin GAICD



**Chief Operating Officer, PSBA**

The Chief Operating Officer reports to the PSBA's governing BoM and supports the Board in performing its functions and gives effect to any direction of the Board. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for leading the PSBA in its provision of public safety corporate and air services.

The Chief Operating Officer represents the public safety agencies on a number of major committees and Boards including the Head of Corporate Working Group and the Queensland Shared Services Government Shared Services Customer Board as well as being a member of the PSBA and Office of the IGEM ARCC.

## Jennifer Robertson

**Independent Member**



Ms Jennifer Robertson was appointed to the BoM in December 2018, attending her first meeting in February 2019.

Ms Robertson is a practising lawyer and has been working in the corporate governance space for more than a decade advising both public and private sector organisations on best practice.

As well as sitting on several Boards, Ms Robertson is the Deputy Chair of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Chair of the Defence Reserves Support Council Queensland.

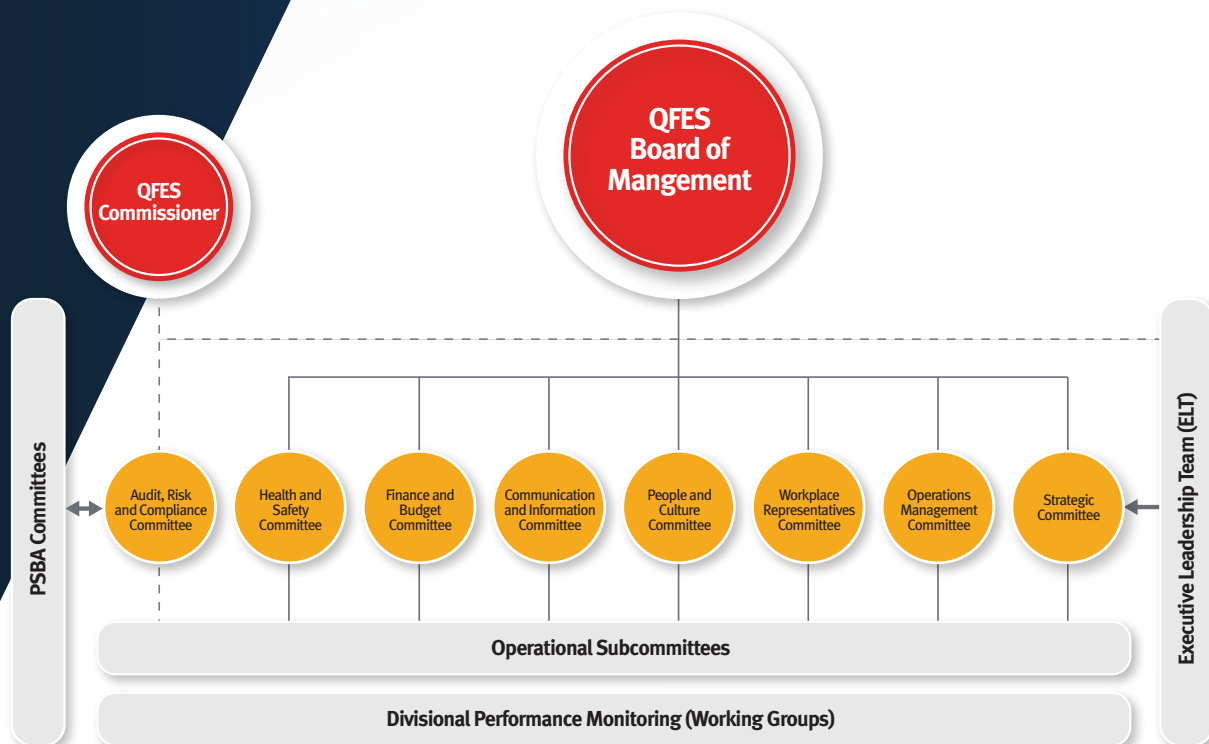


# Board and committees

## The QFES governance structure comprises the:

- » Board of Management (BoM)
- » Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC)
- » Health and Safety Committee
- » Finance and Budget Committee
- » Communication and Information Committee
- » People and Culture Committee
- » Workplace Representatives Committee
- » Operations Management Committee
- » Strategic Committee
- » Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

## The QFES governance structure and the line of reporting with other bodies is as follows:



QFES committees support the Commissioner in decision-making and play an assurance role. Each committee has a clear purpose that aligns with achievement of the strategic plan and is charged with monitoring performance of QFES in designated areas.

The governance committees are reviewed annually by the BoM to ensure their structure, membership and purpose continue to support the governance needs of QFES.

Following the annual review of the Charter of the Public Safety Agencies Audit and Risk Committee which had primary responsibility for audit and risk matters as they related to PSBA and the Office of the IGEM, the committee was renamed and repurposed as the PSBA and Office of the IGEM ARCC effective 11 January 2019. Part of this review was a change in the membership composition which included the cessation of partner agency representation including QFES representation. QFES and QPS continue to maintain their own ARCC and Audit and Risk Committee respectively.



## Board of Management

<b>Role and Responsibilities</b>	<p>The BoM provides stewardship of QFES by providing information and advice to the Commissioner as the accountable officer of the department. The BoM assists the Commissioner with strategic leadership to meet QFES' outcomes including the vision, purpose and direction setting to ensure compliance and to improve performance. The Board provides direction and guidance, along with oversight of all governance committees within QFES.</p> <p><b>The objectives of the BoM include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» approving the strategic narrative, directions and priorities of QFES, enabling coherent messaging with the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and QFES workforce</li> <li>» adopting a long-term perspective, anticipating and responding to changes in the external environment to ensure responsiveness to change in community need and expectation</li> <li>» ensuring investment planning and capability development and costing is appropriately embedded into organisational decision-making</li> <li>» carrying out collective discussion and providing constructive challenge, leadership and input on significant strategic and operational challenges to inform and shape key decisions of the Commissioner and the Minister</li> <li>» being accountable for the delivery and achievement of QFES' outcomes</li> <li>» monitoring QFES' performance and compliance assurance</li> <li>» considering, approving and communicating the QFES risk appetite</li> <li>» ensuring alignment between QFES' risk appetite and strategy</li> <li>» continuing a focus on cultural transformation</li> <li>» reviewing and approving strategy referred by the Strategic Committee</li> <li>» reviewing and approving expenditure referred by the Finance and Budget Committee</li> <li>» embedding a coordinated research and innovation capability in QFES.</li> </ul>
<b>Membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Mike Wassing AFSM, Acting Commissioner (Chair)</li> <li>» Mark Roche AFSM, Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services</li> <li>» Kevin Walsh AFSM, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience</li> <li>» Doug Smith APM, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services</li> <li>» Peter Griffin, Chief Operating Officer, PSBA</li> <li>» Jennifer Robertson, Independent Member</li> </ul> <p><i>Katarina Carroll APM commenced relieving as Commissioner in December 2014 and was appointed as Commissioner on 1 August 2015. Commissioner Carroll served as the Chair of the QFES BoM until 27 June 2019 when she commenced special duties with the QPS before taking up her appointment as the Commissioner, QPS on 8 July 2019.</i></p>
<b>Remuneration</b>	<p>The Independent Member received \$3,300 in remuneration (including GST) in 2018–19. There were no other on-costs.</p>
<b>Meetings</b>	<p>The BoM meets bi-monthly with emergency or special meetings convened as required. During 2018–19 the BoM met on six occasions.</p>



## Achievements

In 2018–19, BoM's achievements include approving:

- » QFES BoM Strategic Outcomes
- » QFES Strategy 2030
- » *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2019–2023*
- » QFES Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2019–2023
- » *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Annual Report 2017–18*
- » QFES Engagement Strategy
- » QFES Risk Appetite Statement
- » QFES Visual Identity Manual (July 2018)
- » QFES ISDM
- » GWN SES On-Boarding Project
- » Remote Piloted Aircraft System Capability
- » a number of departmental policies including:
  - Supporting Employees affected by Domestic and Family Violence
  - Information Privacy
  - Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme
  - Transfers.

## Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

### Role and Responsibilities

The ARCC provides independent assurance and assistance to the Commissioner in discharging responsibilities under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and subordinate legislation, to establish and maintain appropriate systems of internal controls and risk management.

The committee operates in accordance with its Terms of Reference which were developed in line with Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines: Improving Accountability and Performance*. The ARCC's Terms of Reference is reviewed annually to ensure it remains consistent with the committee's objectives and responsibilities.

The committee provides independent assurance and assistance to the Commissioner and the BoM on the department's:

- » risk, internal controls and compliance frameworks and systems
- » external accountability responsibilities as prescribed in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and other relevant legislation
- » internal and external audits including identifying internal audit topics, endorsing final reports and overseeing the adequate implementation of recommendations.

### Membership

- » Sue Ryan (Independent Chair)
- » Glenn Poole (Independent Member)
- » Doug Smith APM, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services
- » Adam Stevenson, Executive Director, Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services
- » Gary McCormack, Acting Assistant Commissioner, RFS
- » Neil Reid, Assistant Commissioner, South Eastern Region (ELT member on a 12 monthly rotational basis)



<b>Remuneration</b>	The Independent Chair received \$7,725 (including GST) in remuneration for services provided in 2018–19 and the Independent Member received \$3,500 (including GST). There were no other on-costs.
<b>Meetings</b>	The committee meets quarterly with emergency or special meetings convened as required. In 2018–19, the committee met on five occasions.
<b>Achievements</b>	<p>In 2018–19, the committee's achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» overseeing the delivery of the internal and external audit programs including monitoring compliance with the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2018–19 and the status of open recommendations</li> <li>» endorsing the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2019–20 and Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2020–2023</li> <li>» endorsing the QFES Risk Management Framework</li> <li>» monitoring the establishment of a central repository for other reviews, reports and government inquiries</li> <li>» overseeing key areas of compliance including the RFS volunteer application and recordkeeping processes; SES Support Groups; workplace health and safety; and departmental application of blue card accreditation</li> <li>» reviewing and endorsing the 2017–18 financial statements and Chief Finance Officer's Statement of Assurance</li> <li>» noting the 2018–19 financial statements project plan and financial statements preparation and providing recommendations to improve clarity and transparency</li> <li>» noting current and future accounting standard changes and disclosure enhancements relating to Queensland Treasury's <i>Financial Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies</i>.</li> </ul>

## Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee provides stewardship of health and safety related matters within QFES. It provides a forum for discussion and determination of key departmental priorities regarding health, safety and wellness matters, providing connection between regional health and safety committees and QFES executive management.

## Finance and Budget Committee

The Finance and Budget Committee provides stewardship of finance and budgetary related matters within QFES. The committee oversees QFES' financial performance and provides advice on the effective strategic development and coordination of the financial management and budget policy and prioritisation of QFES expenditure while seeking to foster a culture of fiscal responsibility.

## Communication and Information Committee

The Communication and Information Committee provides stewardship of information management pathway related matters within QFES and holds accountable those who have responsibility for delivering these requirements.



## People and Culture Committee

The People and Culture Committee provides stewardship of people and culture related matters within QFES. The committee maintains broad oversight, evaluation and monitoring of the development and implementation of strategies and activities to promote a positive organisational culture and alignment of QFES' human resource capacity and capabilities.

## Workplace Representatives Committee

The Workplace Representatives Committee provides a consultation mechanism to monitor the progress and effectiveness of QFES programs, initiatives and culture, which connects to QFES' frontline workforce, both paid and volunteer.

## Operations Management Committee

The Operations Management Committee provides strategic oversight and an advisory role to the BoM to ensure operational efficiency and effectiveness is maximised. The committee also fosters strategies and activities that promote a positive organisational culture, while seeking to achieve the outcomes in the QFES strategic plan and manage appropriate risk.

## Strategic Committee

The Strategic Committee provides oversight of the relevance and integration of strategies developed within QFES. The committee assesses the impact of programs and strategies against QFES' ability to deliver and keep the community safe, remaining balanced against fiscal responsibility and accountability. The committee is the executive review panel for matters relating to strategic projects within QFES.

## Executive Leadership Team

The ELT leads the stewardship of QFES by providing information, advice and support to the BoM and working to translate the BoM's strategic vision and direction for QFES into operations, while having regard to the BoM's appetite for risk. The ELT provides the BoM with accurate, timely and clear information, advice and support to enable the BoM to perform its responsibilities.



# Ethics and Code of Conduct

## Public sector ethics

The *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* applies to all QFES personnel whether permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time or casual including volunteers, contractors and consultants or anyone who works with QFES 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* (the Act). It also contains standards of conduct for each of the ethics principles. The ethics principles are:

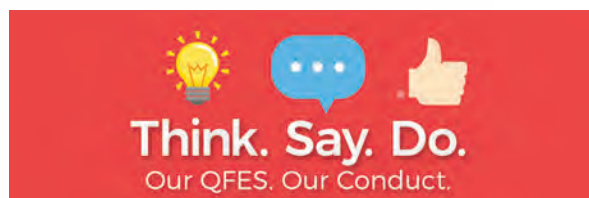
- » Integrity and impartiality
- » Promoting the public good
- » Commitment to the system of government
- » Accountability and transparency.

Employees are required to undertake public sector ethics education and training upon commencement of their employment with the department. This training relates to the operation of the Act, the application of ethics principles and obligations to employees' daily work, and the contents of the Code.

The QFES *Think. Say. Do.* awareness package, available to all QFES personnel, was launched in August 2018 to promote awareness of and provide information about positive workplace behaviour. The package combines workplace behaviour and code of conduct awareness training into one, easy to follow interactive package. Modules include Code of Conduct, Ethical decision making, Positive workplace behaviours, Complaint management and reporting, Financial management, Conflicts of interest, Diversity and inclusion, and Social media.

As well as ensuring employees are aware of their ethics related rights and obligations through targeted education and training, these principles are embedded in the department's strategic plan, operational plans, individual employee performance plans, policy instruments and procedures.

The QFES Gateway (staff intranet) contains information about the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service*, Ethics, and Probity and Conflicts of Interest. Links are also provided to external sites such as the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* and *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* as well as contact details for the QFES Ethical Standards Unit.



## Ethical Standards

The QFES Workplace Conduct Branch, established on 1 July 2017, consists of the Conduct Intelligence Unit, Ethical Standards Unit, Workforce Liaison Unit and PSBA Employee Relations Unit.

During 2018–19, the branch worked on initiatives to ensure a safe, secure and positive workplace that allows people to perform at their best and enjoy coming to work. As QFES grows and evolves to meet emerging local and global challenges, it is important that a wide range of support services are provided to its diverse and widespread workforce.

The branch continued its focus on providing staff with tools to support responsible and ethical decision-making in the workplace and encouraging a culture of honesty and respect where staff have the courage to stand up and speak out about unethical, dishonourable behaviour and poor conduct.

QFES personnel can be confident that any complaint they lodge about inappropriate behaviour or misconduct in the workplace will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. To reinforce this, the outcomes of a range of disciplinary matters are published on the QFES Gateway. This ensures accountability and transparency, demonstrates QFES takes workplace conduct seriously and gives an insight into the range of issues that emerge, what leads to these situations, the process involved and the lessons learned.

A two-day Ethical Decision-Making workshop was held in April 2019 bringing together senior managers and the ELT. Workshop participants heard from the Queensland Ombudsman and Queensland Integrity Commissioner and tested their decision-making with a series of complex workplace scenarios that challenged them to weigh up regulations, morals, ethics and the QFES values as well as community perceptions and expectations to arrive at appropriate decisions.

The Workplace Support Unit, established in April 2018 within the Workplace Conduct Branch, consists of the Conduct Intelligence and Workforce Liaison Units. Conduct intelligence involves proactively analysing data to form meaningful intelligence that can be acted upon by managers in the workplace. Workforce liaison involves formal correspondence and advice on high level disciplinary and industrial matters. The Workplace Support Unit's seven Workplace Conduct Consultants located throughout the state, coach and mentor managers to effectively handle and supervise workplace conduct and diminished performance matters. In addition, they collate conduct intelligence and implement conduct related training within their respective regions.



# 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. During 2018–19, the following state bodies examined the operations of QFES or other agencies with findings or issues requiring consideration by, or impacting on, QFES.

### Coronial inquests

Under the whole-of-government coronial reporting arrangements, Ministers are required to inform the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice within six months of coronial findings being handed down as to whether the recommendations are supported. Ministers must also provide six monthly progress updates until the accepted recommendations are implemented.

The inquest findings and implementation progress updates are accessible at [www.courts.qld.gov.au](http://www.courts.qld.gov.au)

### Inquest into the death of Miss Holly Winta Brown

On 12 June 2019, the Northern Coroner delivered the inquest findings into the death of Miss Holly Winta Brown at the Laura Horse Sports, Races and Rodeo on 27 June 2015.

The Coroner determined that Miss Brown died from a fatal arrhythmia caused by heart muscle scarring as a result of a previously undiagnosed rheumatic fever whilst camping at the Laura Rodeo and Race grounds for an annual horse event.

The Coroner found that the emergency medical response provided to Miss Brown was inadequate and was a result of an absence of appropriate protocols in relation to event planning and risk assessment in the context of a mass gathering event.

The Coroner recommended that within six months of the delivery of findings, an interagency executive group be convened to consider reform for mass gathering events in Queensland and specifically to establish a standardised protocol to provide for an out-of-hospital emergency medical response at the annual Laura Rodeo and Race event. The Coroner directed a number of organisations and state government departments be represented on the interagency executive group including QFES.

The Coroner also recommended that Miss Holly Brown's name be attributed to the standardised process.

The lead agency for the interagency group is the Department of Health. QFES will support the Department of Health and other agencies including QAS and QPS, in considering the Coroner's recommendations.

## Crime and Corruption Commission

Each financial year the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) conducts a program of audits to examine how agencies have responded to particular types of complaints and the robustness of their complaints management and corruption prevention frameworks. The CCC also undertakes audits aimed at controlling the risks of corruption.

### *Managing corruption risks associated with secondary employment (Summary audit report) October 2018*

In October 2018, the CCC finalised an audit undertaken in 2017–18, examining how effectively departments and statutory bodies manage corruption risks associated with secondary employment. QFES was a participating agency in the audit. The objectives of the audit were to, as related to secondary employment:

- » assess whether agencies adequately identified, analysed and evaluated the corruption risks
- » evaluate the adequacy of agencies' control frameworks for mitigating corruption risks
- » evaluate the effectiveness of agencies' risk management strategies in controlling corruption risks
- » assess how each agency appropriately dealt with allegations of corrupt conduct.

QFES prepared and sought to implement a Secondary Employment Policy and Procedure for the mandatory reporting and management of secondary employment. To facilitate this, the Secondary Employment Working Group was established in 2017 to ensure that relevant stakeholders were involved in a collaborative approach to deliver workable, agreed and compliant outcomes.

The draft Secondary Employment Policy and Procedure and a Declaration Form address the recommendations of the CCC report. Consultation will be undertaken with stakeholders to finalise and progress implementation.



In addition, in support of the CCC's recommendations with regards to the engagement of external contractors, QFES works closely with PSBA to ensure procurement practices are accountable and transparent and is committed to ongoing process refinements and improvements. All QFES and PSBA officers undertaking or involved with procurement activities must do so in accordance with the *Queensland Procurement Policy*, the PSBA Procurement and Contracts Practice Manual, and all other relevant government legislation, policies and agreements.

## Queensland Audit Office

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

The QFES ARCC oversees the implementation of QAO recommendations and actions that have been accepted by management.

### ***Follow-up of Bushfire prevention and preparedness Report 5: 2018–19***

In 2014–15, the QAO undertook a performance audit *Bushfire prevention and preparedness Report 10: 2014–15*. The report made two key recommendations with seven parts. Of these recommendations, QFES agreed in full with five of the seven parts and partially agreed with two parts (refer Appendix A of the 2014–15 report for QFES' response to the recommendations).

In 2018–19, QAO conducted a follow-up audit of the 2014–15 audit, assessing the progress toward completion of the initial audit report recommendations. The *Follow-up of Bushfire prevention and preparedness Report 5: 2018–19* was tabled on 9 October 2018.

In response to the follow-up audit, QFES undertook a further analysis of the department's bushfire prevention and preparedness activities since its inception in November 2013, to help inform continuous improvement and increase stakeholder awareness of the current and future state. The department's progress, status and plans as at January 2019 are addressed in the *Bushfire Prevention & Preparedness: Current & future state analysis: January 2019*. The report also examines the operating and authorising environment between 2014 and 2018.

The report is available at:  
[www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)

## Internal audit

The PSBA Internal Audit Unit is an independent unit that provides advice across a wide range of disciplines including risk, assurance, information technology, finance, compliance and general consulting activities for the public safety agencies (PSA) including QFES.

The Head of Internal Audit, PSBA is the nominated Head of Internal Audit for QFES in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

The work of the Internal Audit Unit is undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' standards and under an approved charter which is consistent with relevant audit and ethical standards.

In accordance with the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, an annual internal audit plan and three-year strategic audit plan sets the direction of the unit. The PSBA Annual Internal Audit Plan 2018–19 and Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2019–2022 was endorsed by the QFES ARCC and approved by the Chair of the PSBA BoM on 29 May 2018.

The Internal Audit Unit ensures all relevant guidelines, particularly Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines: Improving Accountability and Performance*, are adhered to, and the functioning of the unit complies with these guidelines in all material respects.

The unit assists management to achieve its objectives by using a systematic, disciplined approach to review and improve the effectiveness of risk management and internal control and governance processes, improving the overall level of compliance and accountability. Under its approved charter, the unit can undertake a series of review types including compliance (effectiveness), performance (efficiency), financial management and information technology, to identify areas of risk and to improve outcomes. Systems are in place to ensure the effective, efficient and economic operation of the audit function.



Achievements for 2018–19 include:

- » progressed delivery of the approved annual internal audit plan 2018–19 through a combination of inhouse and co-sourced delivery. Specific QFES audit coverage included:
  - an overtime review
  - a community safety operations system review
  - a security culture review
- » commenced a number of ad-hoc or unplanned reviews within QFES including:
  - governance and decision-making
  - risk framework maturity assessment.
- » indirect audit coverage provided to QFES through the following audit activities within the PSA or PSBA:
  - social engineering review (PSA)
  - data breach readiness (PSA)
  - open data (PSA)
  - social media (PSA)
  - cloud computing governance and cybersecurity (PSA)
  - procurement (PSBA)
  - construction and capital projects (PSBA)
  - build and maintenance program delivery (PSBA)
  - Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement 2018–19 (PSBA)
  - core controls (PSBA)
- » no carry forward of 2018–19 audit activities into 2019–20. For all planned reviews, fieldwork is completed and reports are being finalised. All reports are expected to be issued by 30 September 2019.

## Risk management

QFES' risk management framework provides a consistent and effective approach to identifying, mitigating and monitoring organisational risks. It also ensures QFES complies with the risk management requirements documented in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and appropriately positions the department to deliver its strategic objectives.

QFES manages risks at the strategic and operational level through ongoing scanning of the risk environment, risk discussion in committees and decision-making processes, the development of risk registers and by reviewing the effectiveness of identified controls. To support this approach, the ELT and BoM play an active role in the management of the department's risks through risk identification and participation in regular reviews of risk registers.

The ARCC provides independent oversight of the department's risk management approach and ensures the management of strategic and operational risks is appropriate and effective.

In 2018–19 the department:

- » redrafted its Risk Management Framework to allow the transition to an enterprise risk management approach and the ability to consider positive risk in addition to negative risk
- » undertook an extensive review of previous internal and external reports, risk scanning of the state, national and global risk environment, interviews with subject matter experts within QFES and targeted research to identify emerging risks
- » held a series of consultation sessions and opportunities for feedback with various levels of the organisation including ELT on existing and proposed risks
- » developed an enterprise risk register which includes significant strategic, external and operational risks and replaces the previous strategic risk register
- » held workshops around the state to support regions and directorates in reviewing their operational risk registers
- » supported the ARCC to provide independent oversight of QFES' risk management activities.

## Information systems and recordkeeping

The PSBA provides support, advice and assistance to QFES in relation to its recordkeeping procedures and information management systems. During 2018–19, PSBA worked closely with the Queensland State Archives to deliver improved efficiencies for QFES and enabled the digitisation of QFES records to be expanded into the regions.

Further initiatives which support QFES' recordkeeping procedures and information management systems include:

- » continuing development of a Records Management Framework and supporting processes and procedures which will identify areas of non-compliance with records management policies and legislative requirements. This includes a risk assessment and the development of options to mitigate the risk
- » commencement of an upgrade of RecFind (the department's recordkeeping database) to the latest version
- » development of a Corporate Card Source Records Policy which will enable scanned hard copy invoices and receipts to be destroyed after being stored electronically, resulting in savings on resources, off-site storage costs and hard copy file folders



- » drafting of a Central Region Source Records Policy to support the digitisation of Community Safety records such as building plans. On approval of the policy and completion of the digitisation project, the hard copy building plans and records will be destroyed. Assistance will be provided to South Western Region for the development of a Source Records Policy to enable digitising of its building plans and records
- » drafting of an annexure to the new digitisation policy for Community Safety (Brisbane Region) which will enable access to QFES building plans and records maintained on microfiche
- » continuing identification of Emergency Management function record categories to be incorporated into the QFES retention schedule
- » defining user requirements and identifying suitable options for an eDRMS or an Electronic Content Management System
- » determining how systems such as SharePoint and MinCor (the department's information systems) can be utilised to meet business needs and enhance compliance with applicable legislation and regulatory instruments that relate to recordkeeping.

Training and advice are provided by PSBA in all aspects of recordkeeping to ensure QFES staff are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities.

Public records are kept for the periods specified in both the general and core retention schedules and only destroyed once the owner agrees and approval is received from the authorised QFES delegate. No QFES records were transferred to Queensland State Archives during 2018–19.



# Human resources

## Strategic workforce planning and performance

### Workforce profile

The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff for QFES including auxiliary firefighters was 3,337.85 at 30 June 2019 (due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters, they are represented as 0.1 of an FTE).

The increase of 104.23 FTE staff from 2017–18 is mainly attributable to 159 new permanent staff that commenced in 2018–19 of which 115 were firefighting staff. The FTE total was further impacted by separations and other FTE changes over the period.

Between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019, the QFES permanent separation rate was 3.6 per cent, with 56 per cent of the number of permanent staff separations due to retirements.

### Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

No early retirement, redundancy or retrenchment packages were paid to QFES staff during 2018–19.

### Strategic workforce planning framework

QFES adopts the Public Service Commission's strategic workforce planning framework to align its service delivery with organisational strategy. In accordance with Strategy 2030, QFES will realign its strategic workforce planning framework with a future-focused, whole-of-department approach to attracting and recruiting talent (for both a paid and volunteer workforce), developing our people, and retaining and supporting our people.

### Attraction and recruitment

QFES' recruitment attraction campaign 'ALL IN. ALL FRONTS.', launched in February 2018, is designed to attract new members to the workforce and promote QFES as an employer of choice. The campaign website contains detailed information on a variety of 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 website can be accessed at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/employment](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/employment)

QFES 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, budgeting, 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 attract a larger number of candidates.

### Employee performance management framework

Nexus is a contemporary HCM platform providing QFES with the ability to manage its human resources over the entire lifecycle of an employee or volunteer. With configuration of the Nexus performance and goals module, and succession and development modules completed in January 2018, a graduated implementation plan will commence in July 2019. Implementation will include information forums, face-to-face training and system familiarisation prior to the official launch to the first target groups in late 2019.

The underpinning performance achievement and development framework supports the modules through a non-punitive and contemporary approach focusing on employer and employee expectations, employee success and recognition of employee achievement.





QFES is committed to flexible working arrangements and work-life balance. It offers whole-of-government flexible work practices including job-sharing, telecommuting and family-friendly work arrangements and a wide range of whole-of-government leave arrangements. QFES continues to review the arrangements for flexible work practices to ensure it continues to improve as a contemporary workplace.

QFES values, supports and promotes the appropriate recognition of its workforce, paid and volunteer, for their bravery, dedication and outstanding service above and beyond what is expected in their roles.

The QFES Honours and Awards system continues to provide rewards and recognition offerings to highlight and celebrate the achievements and successes of the QFES workforce. The QFES Honours and Awards booklet is available on the QFES Gateway and website to ensure accessibility to all QFES personnel and includes links to nomination forms.

### **Fairness, equity and inclusion**

QFES implemented the Fairness, Equity and Inclusion Framework in May 2019. The framework supports a whole-of-government effort to improve diversity and inclusion across several priority areas to promote and support safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces. The framework sets the foundation for specific annual plans and programs to promote and support greater diversity in the department.

In May 2019, QFES released its Inclusion and Diversity Policy, which provides direction to QFES personnel on the requirements for how QFES engages with communities and partners and how the QFES workforce engages with each other.

### **Industrial and employee relations framework**

QFES appoints employees pursuant to either the *Fire and Emergency Service Act 1990* or the *Public Service Act 2008*.

As a State of Queensland employer, QFES' industrial and employee relations framework is established to comply with the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*. Negotiation of employment conditions for QFES employees is subject to the collective good faith bargaining provisions within this Act.

Consultative arrangements for QFES employees and their respective unions are outlined in Certified Agreement provisions (in either the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Service Certified Agreement 2016* or in the *State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2015*). These arrangements provide for regularity of consultative committee meetings (bi-monthly or quarterly with each union) and terms of reference outline the nature of matters which can be tabled for discussion.

The four unions representing the various employment streams within QFES are:

- » United Firefighters Union Queensland
- » Queensland Fire and Rescue Senior Officers' Union of Employees
- » Together Queensland
- » Rural Fire Service Branch of Together Queensland

Generally, 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, grievances and industrial disputes may be accessed for Award, Agreement or Industrial Matters as described in the Industrial Relations Act.

The employee complaints process and fair treatment appeals may be accessed for other matters.

The QFES Gateway provides employees with ready access to policies and procedures pertaining to Human Resource Management and Employee Relations topics.

### **Leadership Framework**

The intent of the QFES Leadership Framework is to establish a contextualised, whole-of-workforce leadership development continuum that complements current specific to service programs. This will include consulting with QFES' volunteers to design and package the programs for delivery in a volunteer environment.

Coaching and mentoring will feature prominently within the framework. As part of this work, the Step-Up program successfully delivered training to 270 executive and senior leaders between January 2018 and June 2019. Step-Up is designed to provide executive and senior leaders coaching and mentoring capability across the department. Effective coaching and mentoring can shift teams towards being more cohesive, curious and collaborative.

The Step-In program, which commenced in January 2018, is a one-day coaching program specifically designed for QFES' frontline leaders to have more connected conversations with their team members and stakeholders. The number of Step-In participants to 30 June 2019 was 360 including 82 volunteers.

Both programs will provide the basis for the development of the future QFES mentoring program.



## Firefighter recruitment

In February 2019, following a feasibility study, a recruit firefighter training course commenced in Townsville, the first time this training has been conducted outside Brisbane. A further training course is scheduled to commence in Townsville in July 2019. The capacity to conduct training in Townsville has provided the opportunity for up to five training courses to be conducted per year, three in Brisbane and two in Townsville.

The recruit course is a four-month intensive course to prepare recruits for their role as operational firefighters. Those recruits completing their training in Townsville will complete all operational skills and drills in Townsville before travelling to Brisbane for a 15-day intensive live-fire program at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy live fire campus. Brisbane-based recruits will complete all their training in Brisbane. Graduation ceremonies are held in Brisbane and Townsville.

Conducting recruit firefighter training in Brisbane as well as Townsville enables QFES to work collaboratively with other regionally-based services expanding recruits' knowledge and understanding of the range of services that QFES provides to the people of Queensland.

QFES monitors staffing levels, profiles of operational staff and current and projected attrition rates to identify accurate recruitment needs. In addition, a 2017 Government Commitment provides an additional 100 firefighters and 12 fire communications officers over the four-year period 2018–19 to 2021–22. As at 30 June 2019, an additional 49 firefighters have been appointed under this election commitment with the fiftieth commencing training on 8 July 2019. Planning is underway to fulfil the remaining additional 50 firefighter and 12 fire communications officer positions.

Highlights for the reporting period include:

- » four recruitment courses were held or commenced in 2018–19, with three courses in Brisbane and one course in Townsville
- » the 2018–19 recruitment courses are expected to deliver 119 recruit firefighters
- » the highest intake of female recruit firefighters commenced in January 2019 with 11 females or 34 per cent of recruits.

## Workplace health and safety

QFES treats the health and safety of its personnel as a high priority with this commitment articulated in Strategy 2030 and the implementation of a QFES Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Workplace health and safety is an embedded consideration in all we do at QFES, and as a department ensures the continual improvement and maturing of its Safety Management System.





## Creating safer workplaces

Domestic and family violence can affect people of all cultures, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, education backgrounds and income levels. Domestic and family violence 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.

In May 2019, QFES achieved accreditation as a White Ribbon Australia workplace. The 12-months of work undertaken by QFES built on the department's existing gender equality and diversity initiatives and strengthened QFES' culture of respect at all levels of the department. The work program included mandatory training for managers and supervisors, online training for QFES personnel, the provision of a range of resources, implementation of new policies and procedures, hosting events to raise awareness of violence and communicating with the workforce.

QFES is continuing work in this area developing training packages for its volunteers, providing ongoing education campaigns and continually improving policies, procedures and guidelines that support its workforce.

## Supporting mental health and wellbeing

QFES is committed to providing a broad range of support services for members to promote mental health and wellbeing.

The FESSN delivers the following support services to assist QFES members and their immediate family with personal or work-related challenges:

- » confidential professional counselling is available to all QFES members 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 – after hours telephone support is available to all QFES personnel and their immediate families
- » Peer Support Program – a network of specially trained QFES PSOs who assist colleagues with personal or work-related difficulties
- » information and education sessions tailored to address a range of mental health topics
- » advice and support services for leaders and managers.

During the reporting period, QFES FESSN staff designed and delivered a mental health leadership training program – Careful Leaders: Mental Health Leadership. This training and awareness program is based on current, best practice methods to provide QFES leaders with the confidence and support they need in their role supporting teams to remain safe and well. This initiative provides QFES leaders with the ability to identify and prevent, intervene early, or relieve and manage the effects of mental health conditions.

QFES celebrated the fifth annual PSO Week in March 2019 recognising the important work PSOs do in improving the health and wellbeing of QFES' workforce.

QFES is also an active contributor to the continual development of mental health within emergency services through groups such as AFAC and participates in knowledge development through initiatives like the Beyond Blue National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services.

## QFES Chaplaincy Service

The QFES Chaplaincy Service is a statewide, locally based, people-focused chaplaincy service that nurtures and supports the spiritual needs and holistic wellbeing of all active and retired members of QFES' paid and volunteer workforce, as well as their immediate and extended families and victims or witnesses of incidents involving a QFES response. Services include pastoral care and visitation, crisis response, counselling support, ceremonial involvement and community engagement.

Chaplains work in conjunction with the QFES Safety and Wellbeing Unit and FESSN to provide holistic care.

The statewide network of QFES chaplains ensures that these support services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## International recognition as an inclusive workforce

As part of the Women and Firefighting Australasia Conference held in New Zealand in September 2018, the QFES Transforms through Leadership Initiative was acknowledged with the Member Organisation Diversity, Fairness and Inclusion Award.

Three further awards were presented to QFES officers with Station Officer Quinn Cramer receiving the Outstanding Contribution by a Female Firefighter Award; Emergency Services Cadet Skye Bover-Groen was the recipient of the Youth Leadership Award; and Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience, Mike Wassing, receiving the Male Champion Award for his role in supporting and encouraging his female colleagues.



# Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Financial Statements For the year ended 30 June 2019

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**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of comprehensive income**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

	Notes	2019 Actual \$'000	2019 Original Budget \$'000	2019 Budget Variance* \$'000	2018 Actual \$'000
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>					
Appropriation revenue	3	106,395	97,709	8,686	87,635
User charges and fees	4	56,724	53,210	3,514	53,685
Emergency management levies	5	540,855	535,569	5,286	511,924
Grants and other contributions	6	20,538	13,733	6,805	29,405
Other revenue		3,224	2,271	953	2,861
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>727,736</b>	<b>702,492</b>	<b>25,244</b>	<b>685,510</b>
Gains on disposal/remeasurement of assets		16	-	16	-
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>		<b>727,752</b>	<b>702,492</b>	<b>25,260</b>	<b>685,510</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>					
Employee expenses	7	414,918	404,929	9,989	381,624
Supplies and services**	9	264,379	124,349	140,030	226,329
Grants and subsidies**	10	26,588	156,443	(129,855)	52,474
Depreciation and amortisation	13,14	5,243	5,042	201	4,982
Impairment losses / (gains)		(315)	-	(315)	162
Other expenses	11	13,745	11,729	2,016	16,666
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>		<b>724,558</b>	<b>702,492</b>	<b>22,066</b>	<b>682,237</b>
<b>Operating result for the year</b>		<b>3,194</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,194</b>	<b>3,273</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 24.

\*\* Amounts paid to the Public Safety Business Agency previously included under grants and subsidies have been recategorised to supplies and services as per Note 9.

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of financial position**  
**As at 30 June 2019**

	Notes	2019 Actual \$'000	2019 Original Budget \$'000	2019 Budget Variance* \$'000	2018 Actual \$'000
<b>Assets</b>					
<b>Current assets</b>					
Cash		45,496	15,410	30,086	53,521
Receivables	12	50,704	48,081	2,623	50,545
Inventories		5,569	1,940	3,629	5,227
Prepayments		2,407	2,325	82	975
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>104,176</b>	<b>67,756</b>	<b>36,421</b>	<b>110,268</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>					
Intangible assets	13	5,066	7,805	(2,739)	7,404
Property, plant and equipment	14	16,836	20,481	(3,645)	17,378
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>21,902</b>	<b>28,286</b>	<b>(6,384)</b>	<b>24,782</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>126,078</b>	<b>96,042</b>	<b>30,036</b>	<b>135,050</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>					
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Payables	15	28,022	14,890	13,132	44,166
Accrued employee benefits	16	20,855	19,787	1,068	14,792
Other current liabilities	17	2,581	8,604	(6,023)	4,935
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>51,458</b>	<b>43,281</b>	<b>8,177</b>	<b>63,893</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>51,458</b>	<b>43,281</b>	<b>8,177</b>	<b>63,893</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>74,620</b>	<b>52,761</b>	<b>21,859</b>	<b>71,157</b>
<b>Equity</b>					
Contributed equity		36,522			36,272
Accumulated surplus		37,810			34,616
Asset revaluation surplus		288			269
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>74,620</b>			<b>71,157</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 24.

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of changes in equity**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Contributed equity</b>		
Opening balance	36,272	36,272
Transactions with owners as owners:		
Net transfers from/(to) other departments - non current assets	250	-
Closing balance	<b>36,522</b>	<b>36,272</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus/(deficit)</b>		
Opening balance	34,616	31,343
Operating result	3,194	3,273
Closing balance	<b>37,810</b>	<b>34,616</b>
<b>Asset revaluation surplus</b>		
Opening balance	269	269
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	19	-
Closing balance	<b>288</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>74,620</b>	<b>71,157</b>



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

Notes	2019 Actual \$'000	2019 Original Budget \$'000	2019 Budget Variance* \$'000	2018 Actual \$'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Service appropriation receipts	104,089	97,709	6,380	93,985
User charges and fees	57,987	56,006	1,981	63,074
Emergency management levies	540,277	535,569	4,708	509,827
Grants and other contributions	10,363	3,918	6,445	19,106
GST input tax credits from ATO	16,486	-	16,486	13,441
GST collected from customers	3,803	-	3,803	3,853
Other	3,224	16,379	(13,155)	2,861
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Employee expenses	(409,270)	(404,929)	(4,341)	(385,834)
Supplies and services**	(283,857)	(138,457)	(145,400)	(207,986)
Grants and subsidies**	(26,588)	(156,443)	129,855	(52,474)
GST paid to suppliers	(16,294)	-	(16,294)	(13,476)
GST remitted to ATO	(3,803)	-	(3,803)	(3,853)
Other	(2,202)	(4,710)	2,508	(5,977)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>(5,785)</b>	<b>5,042</b>	<b>(10,826)</b>	<b>36,547</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Sales of property, plant and equipment	1,524	-	1,524	-
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(4,004)	(5,750)	1,746	(3,468)
Payments for intangibles	(10)	-	(10)	-
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(2,490)</b>	<b>(5,750)</b>	<b>3,260</b>	<b>(3,468)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Equity injections	250	250	-	-
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Equity withdrawals	-	(4,230)	4,230	-
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>(3,980)</b>	<b>4,230</b>	<b>-</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(8,025)	(4,688)	(3,337)	33,079
Cash at beginning of financial year	53,521	20,098	53,521	20,442
<b>Cash at end of financial year</b>	<b>45,496</b>	<b>15,410</b>	<b>50,184</b>	<b>53,521</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 24.

\*\* Refer to Note 9 and Note 10 for prior year reclassification.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities</b>		
<b>Operating result</b>	3,194	3,273
<b>Non-cash items included in operating result:</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	5,243	4,982
Net (gains)/losses on disposal of property, plant and equipment	146	53
<b>Change in assets and liabilities:</b>		
(Increase)/decrease in emergency management levies	(576)	(2,097)
(Increase)/decrease in trade debtors	1,128	(1,830)
(Increase)/decrease in net GST receivable	192	(35)
(Increase)/decrease in annual leave receivables	(246)	24
(Increase)/decrease in long service leave receivables	(180)	119
(Increase)/decrease in departmental services revenue receivables	-	2,030
(Increase)/decrease in accrued debtors	(68)	10,021
(Increase)/decrease in other receivables	(408)	1,433
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(344)	(3,286)
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(1,432)	1,252
Increase/(decrease) in payables	(16,144)	21,227
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	6,063	(4,995)
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	(2,353)	4,375
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<b>(5,785)</b>	<b>36,547</b>

**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 authorisation to operate in overdraft within a specified limit in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*. The approved overdraft limit is \$110m.



## **1 Basis of financial statement preparation**

### **(a) General information**

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is a Queensland Government public sector department established on 1 November 2013 under the *Public Service Act 2008*.

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 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 42 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*.

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations. In addition, the financial statements comply with Queensland Treasury's Minimum Reporting Requirements for the year beginning on 1 July 2018 and other authoritative pronouncements.

### **(c) Taxation**

The department is a State body as defined under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936 (Cwth)* 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 13 and Note 14
- Services received below fair value - Note 6 and Note 11.

### **(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 \$500 or less, 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 year reporting period.



**1 Basis of financial statement preparation (continued)**

**(g) Future impact of accounting standards not yet effective**

The department did not voluntarily change any of its accounting policies during 2018-19. As at the date of authorisation of the financial report, the expected impacts of the following accounting standards and interpretations issued but with future effective dates are set out below:

**AASB 15 Revenue for Contracts with Customers**, effective 2019-20

This Standard will become effective from reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and contains detailed requirements for the accounting for certain types of revenue from customers.

The department has commenced analysing the new revenue recognition requirements under this standard and potential impacts identifiable at the date of this report are as follows:

Grants that are not enforceable and/or not sufficiently specific will not qualify for deferral, and continue to be recognised as revenue as soon as they are controlled. Grants received whereby performance obligations exist will be recognised as a liability, and subsequently recognised progressively as revenue as the department satisfies its performance obligations under the grant. At present, such grants are recognised as revenue when received (refer to Note 6).

Depending on the specific contractual terms, the new requirements may potentially result in a change to the timing of revenue from sales of the department's goods and services, such that some revenue may need to be deferred to a later reporting period to the extent that the department has received cash but has not met its associated obligations (such amounts would be reported as a liability i.e. unearned revenue). The department has completed its analysis of current arrangements for sale of its goods and services. The department does not currently have any revenue contracts with a material impact for the period after 1 July 2019, and will monitor the impact of any such contracts subsequently entered into before the new standards take effect.

**AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities**, effective 2019-20

This Standard will become effective from reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and the standard contains detailed requirements for the accounting for Income of Not-for-profit (NFP) entities.

AASB 1058 amends AASB 16 Leases so that the right-of-use assets arising from 'peppercorn leases' are measured at fair value (instead of cost under AASB 16 paragraphs 23-24). However, this has been amended by AASB 2018-8 which provides a temporary option for NFP lessees to not initially recognise at fair value the right-of-use asset arising from leases that have significantly below market terms when AASB 1058 and AASB 16 become effective for the 30 June 2020 year end. The option relief is expected to remain in place until further guidance has been developed to assist NFP entities in fair valuing such right-of-use assets and the financial reporting requirement have been finalised. The department has identified 404 peppercorn leases for rural fire brigade properties and has elected to apply this temporary option resulting in these leases being measured at cost with no change to current financial reporting in the financial statements.



## **1 Basis of financial statement preparation (continued)**

### **(g) Future impact of accounting standards not yet effective (continued)**

#### AASB 16 Leases, effective 2019-20

This standard will become effective from reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019.

Under AASB 16, a number of operating leases (as defined by the current AASB 117 and shown at Note 19) will be reported on the statement of financial position as right-of-use assets and lease liabilities.

Under this standard, lessees will be required to recognise a right-of-use asset (representing rights to use the underlying leased asset) and a liability (representing the obligation to make lease payments) for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying assets are of low value.

The right-of-use asset will be initially 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. The right-of-use asset will give rise to a depreciation expense.

The lease liability will be initially recognised at an amount equal to the present value of the lease payments during the lease term that are not yet paid. Current operating lease rental payments will no longer be expensed in the statement of comprehensive income. They will be apportioned between a reduction in the recognised lease liability and the implicit finance charge (the effective rate of interest) in the lease. The finance cost will also be recognised as an expense.

Treasury intends to mandate the modified retrospective approach. Under this transition approach, agencies will not need to restate comparative figures in the 2019-20 financial statements. For leases that were operating leases under AASB 117, agencies will measure their new lease liability at 1 July 2019 by discounting the remaining lease payment at the agency's incremental borrowing rate.

The department has completed its review of the impact of adoption of AASB 16 on the statement of financial position and statement of comprehensive income and has identified the following major impacts which are outlined below.

During the 2018-19 financial year, QFES held operating leases under AASB 117 from the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) for non-specialised, commercial office accommodation through the Queensland Government Accommodation Office (QGAO). Lease payments under these arrangements totalled \$2.724m p.a. The department has been advised by Queensland Treasury and DHPW that, effective 1 July 2019, amendments to the framework agreements that govern QGAO will result in the above arrangement being exempt from lease accounting under AASB 16. This is due to DHPW having substantive substitution rights over the non-specialised, commercial office accommodation assets used within these arrangements. From 2019-20 onwards, costs for these services will continue to be expensed as supplies and services expenses when incurred.

The department has quantified the transitional impact on the statement of financial position and statement of comprehensive income of all qualifying lease arrangements that will be recognised on-balance sheet under AASB 16, as follows.

Statement of financial position impact on 1 July 2019:

- \$7.706m increase in lease liabilities
- \$7.706m increase in right-of-use assets
- \$Nil impact in opening accumulated surplus.

Statement of comprehensive income impact expected for the 2019-20 financial year, as compared to 2018-19:

- \$1.250m increase in depreciation and amortisation expense
- \$0.115m increase in interest expense
- \$1.396m decrease in supplies and services expense
- This results in a net decrease of \$0.031m in total expenses.

#### Other Standards and Interpretations

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



## 1 Basis of financial statement preparation (continued)

### (h) Accounting standards applied for the first time

QFES applied AASB 9 *Financial Instruments* for the first time in 2018-19. Comparative information for 2017-18 has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 139 *Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement*. The nature and effect of the changes as a result of adoption of this new accounting standard are described below.

Under AASB 9, debt instruments are categorised into one of three measurement bases - amortised cost, fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) or fair value through profit or loss (FVTPL). The classification is based on two criteria:

- whether the financial asset's contractual cash flows represent 'solely payments of principal and interest', and
- the department's business model for managing the assets.

The department's debt instruments comprise of receivables disclosed in Note 12. They were classified as Receivables as at 30 June 2018 (under AASB 139) and were measured at amortised cost. These receivables are held for collection of contractual cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest. As such, they continue to be measured at amortised cost beginning 1 July 2018.

AASB 9 requires the loss allowance to be measured using a forward-looking expected credit loss approach, replacing AASB 139's incurred loss approach. AASB 9 also requires a loss allowance to be recognised for all debt instruments other than those held at fair value through profit or loss.

The adoption of AASB 9's new impairment model has not resulted in a material impact. Below is a reconciliation of the ending impairment allowance under AASB 139 to the opening loss allowance under AASB 9.

AASB 139 measurement category	AASB 9 measurement category	Impairment allowance 30 June 2018 \$'000	Re-measurement* \$'000	Loss allowance 1 July 2018 \$'000
Receivables				
- Trade debtors	Amortised cost	952	2	950
		952	2	950

\* The loss allowance was not re-measured at 1 July 2018 due to management's determination as noted above.

There is no change to either the classification or valuation of the cash item and all financial liabilities listed in Note 20 will continue to be measured at amortised cost.

## 2 Objectives and principal activities of the department

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is the primary provider of fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services throughout Queensland. QFES encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), disaster management services, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), the State Emergency Service (SES) and also supports other volunteer groups that provide emergency responses to Queenslanders.

QFES protects persons, property and the environment through the provision of effective prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities across a range of fire and emergency events including natural and human induced disasters.

QFES' outcomes, as outlined in the 2018-2022 strategic plan are:

- 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 that minimise their effects
- appropriate relief and support is provided after responses to fire and emergency events until a managed transition occurs
- QFES is strategically capable and agile
- QFES' business enabling services enhance, integrate and support the department's service delivery and are compliant, authorised and fit-for-purpose.

QFES contributes to the Queensland Government's priorities to be a responsive government and keep communities safe.

QFES is currently assessing the complex legal status of rural fire brigades to develop solutions that will support a modern RFS into the future. As at the date of this report, the financial, administrative and human resource implications for RFS, if any, are yet to be determined. It is anticipated that this review will be completed in the future to inform QFES for future planning.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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### 3 Appropriation revenue

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

	2019 \$'000	2018 \$'000
Budgeted appropriation revenue	97,709	81,068
Unforeseen expenditure	4,366	8,597
<b>Total appropriation receipts (cash)</b>	<b>102,075</b>	<b>89,665</b>
Less: opening balance of appropriation revenue receivable	-	(2,030)
Plus: opening balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	4,320	-
Less: closing balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	(2,014)	(4,320)
<b>Net appropriation revenue</b>	<b>104,381</b>	<b>83,315</b>
Plus: deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund (expense)	2,014	4,320
<b>Appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income</b>	<b>106,395</b>	<b>87,635</b>

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

Budgeted equity adjustment appropriation	250	-
Equity adjustment receipts	250	-
<b>Equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>-</b>

**Accounting Policy - Appropriation revenue**

Appropriations provided under the *Appropriations Act 2018* are recognised as revenue when received or receivable. Where appropriation revenue has been approved but not yet received, it is recorded as departmental services revenue receivable at the end of the reporting period.

### 4 User charges and fees

Alarm maintenance and monitoring	21,667	20,244
Attendance charges	12,335	11,949
Building and infrastructure fire safety	16,561	15,152
Sale of goods and services	6,161	6,340
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,724</b>	<b>53,685</b>

**Accounting Policy - User charges and fees**

User charges and fees are recognised as revenues when the revenue has been earned and can be measured reliably with a sufficient degree of certainty.

### 5 Emergency management levies

Gross emergency management levies	550,755	521,353
Less: pensioner discount	(9,900)	(9,429)
<b>Total</b>	<b>540,855</b>	<b>511,924</b>

**Accounting Policy - Emergency management levies**

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

### 6 Grants and other contributions

Commonwealth contributions	1,568	1,368
Grants from Queensland Government departments *	5,609	14,192
Motor Accident Insurance Commission	2,631	2,790
Services received below fair value **	10,267	10,299
Other	463	756
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,538</b>	<b>29,405</b>

\* Includes Natural Disaster Relief & Recovery Arrangements and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Assistance of \$4.671m (2017-18: \$5.730m).

\*\* 2018-19 services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Housing and Public Works.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**6 Grants and other contributions (continued)**

**Accounting Policy - Grants and other contributions**

Grants, contributions and donations that are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the department obtains control over them (control is generally obtained at the time of receipt). Where grants are received that are reciprocal in nature, revenue is recognised over the term of the funding arrangements as it is earned.

**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.

**7 Employee expenses**

**Employee benefits**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Wages and salaries - General	276,604	264,817
Wages and salaries - Overtime	33,550	22,236
Employer superannuation contributions	37,175	35,250
Long service leave levy	7,276	6,846
Annual leave levy	38,095	36,637

**Employee related expenses**

Workers' compensation premiums	12,681	10,433
Fringe benefits tax expense	522	664
Training expenses	4,809	4,062
Other employee related expenses	4,206	679
<b>Total</b>	<b>414,918</b>	<b>381,624</b>

<b>Full-Time equivalent employees (number)</b>	<b>3,338</b>	<b>3,234</b>
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**Accounting Policy - Employee expenses**

*Wages, salaries and sick leave*

Wages and salaries due but unpaid at reporting date are recognised in the Statement of financial position at the current salary rates.

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 Qsuper defined benefit plan 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 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.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**7 Employee expenses (continued)**

**Accounting Policy - Employee expenses (continued)**

*Workers compensation premiums*

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee compensation. Workers' compensation insurance is a consequence of employing employees, but is not included in an employee's total remuneration package.

**8 Key Management Personnel disclosures**

**(a) Details of Key management personnel (KMP)**

The department's responsible Minister Fire and Emergency Services is identified as part of the department's KMP, consistent with additional guidance included in the revised version of AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures*. The Minister is the Minister Fire and Emergency Services.

The other non-Ministerial KMP personnel include those positions that 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.

Position	Position Responsibility
Commissioner	Leading and managing the efficient functions of FRS, RFS and SES, and emergency management and disaster mitigation programs and services throughout Queensland. The Commissioner is the rotational Chair of the PSBA Board of Management and represents QFES at local, community, state, national and international forums.
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	Leadership and management of FRS operations for the seven QFES Regions. This service primarily provides the response to emergencies and includes Specialist Response and Planning. The Deputy Commissioner is also the President of the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation which is the peak body in Australasia for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and skills in road rescue.
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience	Leading and managing the prevention and community preparedness, and recovery functions for QFES. The role has oversight of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF), emergency management planning for before and after disasters, volunteerism, and strengthening community partnerships to build safe, healthy, confident and connected communities across Queensland. The Deputy Commissioner is a member on the National Aerial Firefighting Centre Board of Directors and represents QFES on a number of state and national bodies.
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy and Corporate Services	Leading the department's strategic framework and vision, driving performance and integrated capability across QFES. The Division includes Strategy, systems, Standards and Performance; Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services; and Human Capital Management Directorates and works closely with the public safety agencies. The Deputy Commissioner and Chief Strategy Officer represents QFES on a number of major committees and boards including the BNHCRC, the Government Wireless Network Governance Board and the Public Safety Portfolio Audit and Risk Committee.
Chief Operating Officer (PSBA)	The Chief Operating Officer, Public Safety Business Agency, supports the Board to perform its functions. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the PSBA and for leading that agency to deliver high quality, sustainable corporate services in alignment with the priorities and policies of the state government. The Chief Operating Officer represents the department on a number of major committees and boards including the Directors-General ICT Council and the Government Shared Services Customer Board.

There was one external member appointed to the QFES Board of Management in January 2019. For 2018-19 the independent external member received \$3,300 in remuneration. There were no other on-costs.

**(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 with the 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 Service Commission as provided for under the *Public Service Act 2008*. The remuneration and other terms of employment for the KMP are specified in employment contracts.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**8 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 fringe benefits tax applicable to the benefit.
- 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.
- No KMP remuneration packages provide for performance or bonus payments.

**(c) Remuneration Expenses**

**1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019**

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Termination Benefits	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Benefits \$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Commissioner	357	-	7	73	-	437
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	250	-	5	51	-	306
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience	251	1	5	50	-	307
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy & Corporate Services	270	-	5	50	-	325
Chief Operating Officer (PSBA)	Remuneration is reported by the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA).					



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**8 Key Management Personnel disclosures (continued)**

**(c) Remuneration Expenses (continued)**

**1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018**

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Termination Benefits	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Benefits \$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Commissioner	357	14	7	41	-	419
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	252	-	5	29	-	286
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience	254	-	5	28	-	287
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy & Corporate Services	247	-	5	26	-	278
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience (Acting)	28	-	1	3	-	32
Chief Operating Officer (PSBA)	Remuneration is reported by the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA).					

**(d) Related party transactions with people/entities related to KMP**

There were no material related party transactions associated with the department's KMP during 2018-19 (2017-18:nil).



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>9 Supplies and services</b>		
Aircraft related costs	14,410	2,619
Cleaning and laundering	1,653	970
Communications	27,770	19,845
Computer expenses	6,769	5,731
Contractors	15,136	8,238
Emergency management levy administration fees	6,846	6,787
Marketing expenses	2,207	2,293
Minor equipment purchases	9,383	8,691
Motor vehicle expenses	19,917	17,822
Operating leases	5,907	4,986
Property expenses	4,680	5,367
Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) - operating expense *	106,566	110,077
Repairs and maintenance	11,378	12,402
Rural fire brigade operating costs	3,566	2,414
Travel and accommodation	11,391	8,567
Other	16,800	9,520
<b>Total</b>	<b>264,379</b>	<b>226,329</b>

\* Operating expense has been reclassified from grants and subsidies and represents the financial contribution made to the PSBA to support the provision of corporate services by the PSBA to the department. This contribution provides for information and communication services, financial services, procurement services, fleet, property and facilities management, Queensland government air services, human resource services and other corporate services. The operating expense also includes a contribution for depreciation and amortisation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets owned by PSBA but used by QFES to deliver fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services throughout Queensland. Refer also to Note 14.

**Accounting Policy - Operating leases rentals**

Operating lease payments are representative of the pattern of benefits derived from leased assets and are expensed in the periods in which they are incurred. Material incentives received on entering into an operating lease are recognised as liabilities.

**10 Grants and subsidies**

Air sea rescue, coast guard and life saving organisations	9,146	8,854
Local authorities	2,709	3,248
Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA)-capital grant *	9,638	35,657
State emergency services	3,114	2,594
Volunteer rural fire brigades	591	753
Other	1,390	1,368
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,588</b>	<b>52,474</b>

\* Capital grant paid to PSBA represents funding to deliver the increased capital program including new, replacement and upgraded facilities, vehicles and information and communication technology.

**11 Other expenses**

Audit fees *	256	369
Insurance premiums-QGIF	936	1,071
Insurance premiums-other	12	7
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	162	53
Services received below fair value **	10,175	10,299
Special payments ***	81	101
Deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Funds	2,014	4,320
Other	109	446
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,745</b>	<b>16,666</b>

\* Total audit fees quoted by Queensland Audit Office for the 2018-19 financial statements are \$225,000 (2017-18: \$235,750). The balance of the fees for the 2017-18 audit were incurred and paid in 2018-19.

\*\* 2018-19 services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Housing and Public Works.

\*\*\* Special payments made in 2018-19 relate to a separation agreement ex gratia payment.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**11 Other Expenses (continued)**

**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.

**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.

The department has no contingent liabilities which would have a material impact on the information disclosed in the 2018-19 financial statements.

**12 Receivables**

Emergency management levies  
Trade debtors  
Less: Allowance for impairment loss

GST receivable  
GST payable

Accrued debtors  
Annual leave reimbursements  
Long service leave reimbursements  
Other

**Total**

<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
26,591	26,014
8,080	9,524
(635)	(952)
<b>34,036</b>	<b>34,586</b>
1,741	1,547
(575)	(189)
<b>1,166</b>	<b>1,358</b>
3,269	3,202
9,826	9,580
1,634	1,454
773	365
<b>15,502</b>	<b>14,601</b>
<b>50,704</b>	<b>50,545</b>

**Accounting Policy - Receivables**

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 is 30 days from the invoice date.

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

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 (other than for overdue emergency management levies) and no security is obtained.

**Accounting Policy - Impairment of receivables**

The loss allowance for trade and other debtors reflects lifetime expected credit losses and incorporates reasonable and supportable forward-looking information, including forecast economic changes expected to impact the department's debtors, along with relevant industry and statistical data where applicable.

No loss allowance is recorded for receivables from Queensland Government agencies or Australian Government agencies on the basis of materiality.

Where the department has no reasonable expectation of recovering an amount owed by a debtor, the debt is written-off by directly reducing the receivables against the loss allowance. This occurs after the appropriate range of debt recovery actions. Where the amount of debt written off exceeds the loss allowance, the excess is recognised as an impairment loss.

The amount of impairment losses recognised for receivables is disclosed in the Statement of comprehensive income.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**12 Receivables (continued)**

**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 transaction during the last 5 years preceding 30 June 2019. 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. For QFES, a change in the CPI rate 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.

**13 Intangible assets**

	<b>Software internally generated</b>	<b>Software work in progress</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Gross value	23,081	907	23,988
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(18,922)	-	(18,922)
	<b>4,159</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>5,066</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	6,487	917	7,404
Disposals	-	(10)	(10)
Amortisation	(2,328)	-	(2,328)
Closing balance	<b>4,159</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>5,066</b>

	<b>Software internally generated</b>	<b>Software work in progress</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Gross value	23,081	917	23,998
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(16,594)	-	(16,594)
	<b>6,487</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>7,404</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	8,816	-	8,816
Acquisitions	-	917	917
Amortisation	(2,329)	-	(2,329)
Closing balance	<b>6,487</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>7,404</b>



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**13 Intangible assets (continued)**

**Accounting Policy - Recognition thresholds for intangible assets**

Intangible assets with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of \$100,000 are capitalised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition. Items purchased or acquired for a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

**Accounting Policy - Amortisation of intangible assets**

All intangible assets are amortised on a straight line basis over the asset's estimated useful life against a 10% amortisation rate.

**Accounting Policy - Impairment of intangible assets**

All intangible assets are assessed for indicators of impairment on an annual basis. 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.

**14 Property, plant and equipment**

	Land	Buildings	Heritage and cultural	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2019	2019	2019	2019	2019	2019
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross value	521	4,805	21	36,997	607	42,951
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(4,351)	-	(21,764)	-	(26,115)
	<b>521</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15,233</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>16,836</b>

**Reconciliation**

Opening balance	514	455	-	16,119	289	17,377
Acquisitions	-	-	-	2,106	318	2,424
Donations received	-	-	-	92	-	92
Donations made	-	-	-	(4)	-	(4)
Transfers from/(to) other agencies	-	-	21	-	-	21
Disposals	-	-	-	(178)	-	(178)
Net revaluations increments/(decrements)	7	12	-	-	-	19
Depreciation	-	(13)	-	(2,902)	-	(2,915)
Closing balance	<b>521</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15,233</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>16,836</b>

	Land	Buildings	Heritage and cultural	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross value	514	4,679	-	36,991	289	42,473
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(4,224)	-	(20,872)	-	(25,096)
	<b>514</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,119</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>17,377</b>

**Reconciliation**

Opening balance	514	468	-	16,397	155	17,534
Acquisitions	-	-	-	2,426	134	2,560
Disposals	-	-	-	(63)	-	(63)
Depreciation	-	(13)	-	(2,641)	-	(2,654)
Closing balance	<b>514</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,119</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>17,377</b>



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

**14 Property, plant and equipment (continued)**

**Accounting Policy - Ownership and acquisitions of assets**

Section 7 of the *Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014* requires the PSBA to hold and maintain infrastructure, fleet and communication technology assets for public safety entities. As a result, land, buildings, fleet and the majority of information and communication technology non-current assets utilised by QFES to deliver fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services throughout Queensland are recognised and reported in the financial statements of the PSBA.

The Net Book Value (NBV) of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets reported by PSBA but utilised by QFES are as follows:

Class	NBV (\$'000)
Infrastructure	17
Land	186,955
Buildings	342,088
Heritage and cultural assets	181
Major plant and equipment	27,588
Plant and equipment	202,542
Software - Internally generated	3,910
Software - purchased	120

Historical cost is used for the initial recording of all intangibles and 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.

**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 they reach service delivery capacity. Service delivery capacity relates to when construction is complete and the asset is first put to use or is installed ready for use in accordance with its intended application. These assets are then reclassified to the relevant asset classes 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 used:

Class	Rate (%)
Buildings	1% to 5%
Plant and equipment	1% to 33.3%

**Accounting Policy - Revaluations of property, plant and equipment**

Land and buildings are measured at fair value in accordance with *AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment*, *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* and Queensland Treasury's Non-Current Asset Policies for the Queensland Public Sector. Land is reported at revalued amounts, being fair value at the date of valuation. This is undertaken on a rolling basis over a four-year period with relevant indices applied during the intervening years as provided by the Australis Asset Advisory Group (AAAG).

All other plant and equipment are measured at historical cost in accordance with the Non-Current Asset Policies.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

**14 Property, plant and equipment (continued)**

**Revaluation methodology**

Fair value was determined using a current replacement cost approach for buildings and market value for land. The current replacement cost was based on a combination of internal records of the original cost of the specialised fit outs, adjusted for more contemporary design and construction approaches, and published construction rates for various standard components of buildings.

**15 Payables**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Trade creditors	24,453	18,294
Accrued creditors	1,500	25,361
Tax liabilities	160	151
Other	1,909	360
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,022</b>	<b>44,166</b>

**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.

**16 Accrued employee benefits**

Annual leave levy payable	10,784	10,175
Long service leave levy payable	1,794	1,754
Salaries and wages outstanding	7,579	2,480
Other	698	383
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,855</b>	<b>14,792</b>

**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*.

**17 Other current liabilities**

Unearned revenue	456	477
Deferred appropriation payable to Treasury	2,014	4,320
Other	111	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,581</b>	<b>4,935</b>

**18 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 which are provided in cash via Queensland Treasury. Refer Note 3 and the Statement of changes in equity.

Services below fair value transactions with other departments are disclosed in Note 6 and Note 11.

**19 Commitments**

**(a) Non-cancellable operating lease commitments**

Operating lease commitments inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits at the reporting date are payable as follows:

Not later than one year	5,844	5,592
Later than one year and not later than five years	14,907	15,494
Later than five years	1,026	2,294
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,777</b>	<b>23,380</b>

Operating leases are entered into as a means of acquiring access to office accommodation and storage facilities. Lease payments are generally fixed, but with inflation escalation clauses on which contingent rentals are determined. The department has entered into significant leasing arrangements for training facilities and office accommodation at Howard Smith Drive, Whyte Island, Brisbane.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

**19 Commitments (continued)**

**(b) Capital expenditure commitments**

Material classes of capital expenditure commitments inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits at the reporting date are payable as follows:

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2019 \$'000</b>	<b>2018 \$'000</b>
<b>Class of asset</b>			
Plant and equipment		270	361
<b>Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>361</b>
Not later than one year		270	361
<b>Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>361</b>

**(c) Other expense commitments**

Other operating expense commitments inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits at reporting date are payable:

Not later than one year	18,302	8,729
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,302</b>	<b>8,729</b>

**20 Financial instruments**

**Financial instruments categories**

The department has the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities:

**Financial assets**

Cash		45,496	53,521
Financial assets measured at amortised cost:			
Receivables	12	50,704	50,545
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>96,200</b>	<b>104,066</b>

**Financial liabilities**

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost:			
Payables	15	28,022	44,166
<b>Total financial liabilities at amortised cost</b>		<b>28,022</b>	<b>44,166</b>

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.

*Classification*

Financial instruments are classified and measured as follows:

- Cash - held at fair value
- Receivables - held at amortised cost
- Payables - held at amortised cost.

Apart from cash and cash equivalents, the department holds no financial assets classified at fair value.

**(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.

All financial risk is managed under policies approved by the department.

The department activities expose it to a variety of financial risks as set out in the following table:



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2019**

**20 Financial instruments (continued)**

**(a) Financial risk management (continued)**

<b>Risk exposure</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Exposure</b>
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 12).
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 credit risk in respect of its payables (Note 15).
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. Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.	The department does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to commodity price changes or other market prices.

**(b) Risk Measurement and Management Strategies**

<b>Risk exposure</b>	<b>Measurement Method</b>	<b>Risk Management Strategies</b>
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 minimum levels of cash are held within the various bank accounts 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 12).

**(d) Liquidity risk**

The following table sets out the liquidity risk of financial liabilities held by the department. It represents the contractual maturity of financial liabilities, calculated based on undiscounted cash flows relating to the liabilities at reporting date. The undiscounted cash flows in these tables differ from the amounts included in the Statement of financial position that are based on discounted cash flows.

<b>Financial liabilities</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>2019 Payable in</b>			
		<b>&lt;1 year \$'000</b>	<b>1-5 years \$'000</b>	<b>&gt;5 years \$'000</b>	<b>Total \$'000</b>
Payables	15	28,022	-	-	28,022

<b>Financial liabilities</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>2018 Payable in</b>			
		<b>&lt;1 year \$'000</b>	<b>1-5 years \$'000</b>	<b>&gt;5 years \$'000</b>	<b>Total \$'000</b>
Payables	15	44,166	-	-	44,166

**21 Administered items**

The department manages the collection of fines imposed in relation to breaches of the fire safety legislation on behalf of the Queensland government.

Total administered receipts from fines for transfer to Queensland government was \$0.051m (2018: \$0.032m).



## **22 Trust transactions and balances**

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 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.

Hanrick Curran Audit Pty Ltd are the auditors for the Queensland Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades Donations Fund.

Donations received for payment to brigades totalled \$0.100m (2018: \$0.060m).

Total cash at bank at reporting date was \$0.001m (2018: \$0.006m), total donations payable to brigades was \$0.001m (2018: \$0.006m).

### **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.

## **23 Events occurring after balance date**

There were no events occurring after the balance date that management considers would have a material impact on the information disclosed in these financial statements.

## **24 Budgetary reporting disclosures**

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of comprehensive income**

*Appropriation Revenue*: additional funding over budget was received for QFES' public safety regional radio networks digital readiness and ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

*User charges and fees*: building and infrastructure fire safety fees (\$2.260 million) exceeded revenue expectations, predominately in the Brisbane and South East Regions, as well as increased alarm monitoring (\$1.775 million) and unwanted alarm attendance charges (\$0.587 million). The additional revenues is partly offset by reduced commercial training revenues (\$1.108 million).

*Grants and other contributions*: exceeded budget due to the receipt of Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) revenues associated with both current and prior year severe weather events (\$4.671 million), sponsorships and contributions for State Emergency Services and Rural Fire Brigades (\$1.427 million), contributions for aerial operations from the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC), and commonwealth grants for international urban search and rescue capability (\$0.707 million).

*Employee expenses*: exceeded budget due to additional overtime expenditure (\$13.252 million) associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and workers compensation premiums (\$1.982 million), partly offset by lower than anticipated expenditure on uniforms and personal protective equipment (\$5.245 million).

*Supplies and services*: exceeded budget due to the reclassification of contributions paid to PSBA as procured supplies and services rather than grants, the transfer of funding from PSBA to QFES for Queensland Shared Services (QSS) expenses, additional funding for QFES' public safety regional radio networks digital readiness and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the ACMA, and expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments.

*Grants and subsidies*: below budget mainly due to the reclassification of contributions paid to PSBA as procured supplies and services rather than grants, and the transfer of funding from PSBA to QFES for QSS expenses.



## **24 Budgetary reporting disclosures (continued)**

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of financial position**

*Cash*: higher than budget due to timing of payables, as well as capital expenditure being less than anticipated, and rescheduling of capital programs delivered by PSBA on behalf of QFES.

*Intangible assets*: below budget due to delays with operational information systems projects in 2018-19 and capital projects that commenced in 2018-19 but are scheduled for completion in 2019-20.

*Property, plant and equipment*: below budget due to delays with operational equipment acquisitions in 2018-19 and capital acquisitions that are scheduled for completion in 2019-20.

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of cash flows**

*Cash*: Rescheduling of capital programs delivered by PSBA on behalf of QFES to 2019-20, along with timing of payables, has resulted in lower than budgeted cash outflows.



**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Management Certificate for the year ended 30 June 2019**

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These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), section 42 of the *Finance and Performance Management Standard 2009* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with section 62(1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

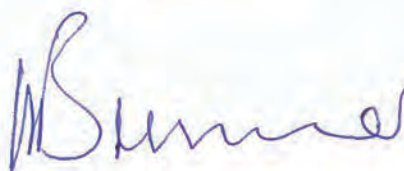
- (a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects;
- (b) the statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for the year ending 30 June 2019 and of the financial position of the department at the end of that year; and
- (c) The Commissioner, as the accountable officer of Queensland Fire and Emergency, acknowledges responsibility under s.8 and s.15 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009* 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.



M. Wassing AFSM  
**BAppSc (EnvMgt & Land Use Policy)**  
**GradDipBusiness (StratMgt), GAICD**

**A/Accountable Officer**  
**A/Commissioner**

23 August 2019



W. Brummer  
**B.Bus (Acctg), Grad Cert Prof Acctg**  
**MIPA, GAICD**

**Chief Finance Officer**

23 August 2019



## 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.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the department's financial position as at 30 June 2019, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended
- b) complies with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009 and Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2019, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including summaries of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the management certificate.

#### Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland 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 of Queensland 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

I have determined that there are no key audit matters to communicate in our report.

#### Responsibilities of the department 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 2009 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.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the department's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the department.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the department's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the department's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. I base my conclusions on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the department to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Officer regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year 30 June 2019:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- b) In my opinion, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.



John Welsh  
as delegate of the Auditor-General

28 August 2019

Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane



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# Appendices

## Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Regulator Performance Framework 2018–19 Annual Performance Report

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) regulatory activities include enforcing compliance with legislated fire safety standards and processing applications for advice on building work assessable against the *Building Act 1975*. Business entities regulated include small and medium businesses across retail, tourism, construction, hospitality, accommodation and agriculture.

QFES provides critical fire safety advice to building certifiers on both the technical and practical components of building fire safety, which facilitates the installation of appropriate fire safety installations. Building certifiers are required to seek QFES advice as part of the building approval process detailed in the *Planning Act 2016* and *Building Act 1975* for certain building fire safety matters. Advice includes the assessment of building plans prior to construction for the

suitability of fire safety installations and onsite inspections to ensure compliance and correct installation to the agreed design upon completion of the building.

QFES conducts regular building inspections to ensure legislated fire safety systems are maintained and routinely serviced throughout the lifecycle of the building. Appropriate enforcement action is initiated where deficiencies are identified.

The Better Regulation Strategy, which includes the Regulator Performance Framework, recognises the actions and performance of regulators in implementing, administering and enforcing regulations plays a significant role in achieving the policy objective of regulation, as well as reducing the regulatory burden on businesses, including small business and the community.

To maximise the effectiveness of the framework, commencing in 2018–19, regulators are required to report annually the extent to which they are implementing the model practices in the framework and to outline plans for future improvements of their business practices.

### 1. Ensure regulatory activity is proportionate to risk and minimises unnecessary burden.

- » A proportionate approach is applied to compliance activities, engagement and regulatory enforcement actions.
- » Regulations do not unnecessarily impose on regulated entities.
- » Regulatory approaches are updated and informed by intelligence gathering so that effort is focussed towards risk.

Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2018–19.

- » QFES works collaboratively with all stakeholders including government agencies, industry providers and the public to provide information and education to ensure the highest level of fire safety is achieved in Queensland buildings.
- » QFES conducts both random and scheduled fire safety inspections of high-risk buildings to ensure the owner/occupiers of those buildings are meeting their fire safety legislative obligations.
- » The percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection with building fire safety regulations (*Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, *Building Act 1975* and *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*) and fire safety procedures in 2018–19 is 55.8 per cent.
- » During 2018–19, QFES prosecuted four entities in the Magistrates Court for building fire safety offences, resulting in a total of \$227,610 in fines being imposed.
- » Additional enforcement activities include:
  - 130 Notices by Commissioner issued to rectify fire safety breaches
  - 27 Requisitions by Commissioner to rectify fire safety breaches
  - 41 Infringement Notices issued totaling \$121,450.



Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2018-19 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices.

- » Under the *Building Act 1975*, budget accommodation buildings (BABs) are required to have fire safety mechanisms in place such as fire safety management plans, emergency lighting and early warning systems. QFES officers conduct joint inspections with local government to identify buildings operating as BABs.
- » The QFES Compliance and Prosecution Unit manages all enforcement and prosecution action against operators of BABs that do not meet the minimum fire safety standard requirements.
- » The Compliance and Prosecution Unit also assists regions with covert surveillance and targeted inspections where illegal and unsafe accommodation practices are suspected.
- » During 2018-19, six successful prosecution cases against five individuals and one company in relation to offences detected at one building resulted in \$46,038 in fines imposed by the courts.
- » At 30 June 2019, there are an additional two prosecution matters progressing in relation to BAB activities conducted during 2018-19.

Actions taken in 2018-19, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices.

- » QFES has provided guidance to other government agencies as part of their legislative review programs. For example, in June 2019, QFES was engaged by Queensland's Building Codes Committee to review amendments to the *Building and Construction Commission Act 1991* with regards to licensing and registration of contractors.
- » QFES is a member of the Ministerial Construction Council Subcommittee – Fire Protection Licensing and Compliance. This committee ensures industry bodies are registered and provide consistent service to the community. Newly formed in May 2019 the subcommittee is set to meet regularly between July – November 2019.
- » Building fire safety activities for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 include:
  - fire investigation inspections (580 structures)
  - Building Approval Officer assessments (1,967) and inspections (1,765)
  - structure inspections by Safety Assessment Officers (958).
- » During 2018-19, QFES conducted 373 inspections of 189 premises suspected of operating as illegal and unsafe BABs. These activities resulted in:
  - 82 Requisitions by Commissioner issued to reduce the risk
  - 25 Notices by Commissioner issued to improve fire safety within the premises
  - 30 Infringement Notices issued for breaches of fire safety, totalling \$43,018 in fines.



## 2. Consult and engage meaningfully with stakeholders.

- » Formal and informal consultation mechanisms are in place to allow for the full range of stakeholder input and government decision-making circumstances.
- » Engagement is undertaken in ways that helps regulators develop a genuine understanding of the operating environment of regulated entities.
- » Cooperative and collaborative relationships are established with stakeholders, including other regulators, to promote trust and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory framework.

Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2018–19.

- » QFES facilitated an industry smoke alarm 'Think Tank' in March 2019 to provide stakeholders including government agencies, industry service providers and relevant associations an opportunity to engage with QFES' community education strategies. Sub groups are being formed to provide an opportunity for interested members to 'champion' and take forward individual pieces of work.
- » QFES' website provides detailed information for the public to access all aspects of legislative requirements for the staged implementation of the smoke alarm requirements which commenced on 1 January 2017. ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms))
- » Where required and appropriate, QFES challenges building industry professionals regarding adherence to regulatory requirements, through the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) complaints process which may include Planning and Environment Court or the Development Tribunal process.
- » QFES regularly engages with a variety of peak industry groups and government stakeholders including, but not limited to, Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC); the Fire Protection Association Australia; the National Fire Industry Association; the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors; the Institution of Fire Engineers; the Society of Fire Safety; the Department of Housing and Public Works; and the QBCC. Engagement with these groups is at a strategic level and deals with matters of national significance such as: public and emergency service workers' safety, community resilience, risk to the community, built environment, fire service operations and capabilities, developing industry doctrine, pursuing innovation and advancements in technology, sharing knowledge and influencing strategic direction, and future evolution of regulatory building codes and Australian Standards.
- » QFES has close links with key regulators, such as the Department of Housing and Public Works and the QBCC, which provides QFES with the ability to refer matters to the relevant regulatory body, as appropriate.

Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2018–19 aligned with the regulator model practices, or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices.

- » Targeted external engagement has been integral to legislative changes progressed by QFES that allow specific assessment fees to be levied against building applications regarding building rectification works.



Actions taken in 2018–19, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices.

- » Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, QFES charges for attendance at unwanted alarms to encourage building owners or occupiers to be continually proactive in managing fire alarm systems.

To reduce instances where building owners are charged for QFES' attendance at unwanted alarms, QFES works extensively with the building industry and building owners and occupiers to further reduce the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms, especially those with high numbers of automatic alarm call-outs. Increased awareness is being achieved through a combination of pre and post construction activities with building designers and owners/occupiers; direct advice to owners of those buildings identified as having a high alarm frequency; the development of the pragmatic test that involves practical cooking and hot shower simulations to prove the strategies outlined in the QFES guidelines work to minimise or eliminate unwanted alarms with 173 pragmatic tests conducted on 108 buildings with a pass rate on first testing of 89 per cent.

As at 30 June 2019, QFES had 7,640 installed alarm connections and responded to 17,514 unwanted alarm activations from monitored fire alarms systems in 2018–19.

The total number of incidents attended by QFES in 2018–19 was 73,363, this means that 24 per cent of all incidents were unwanted alarms. Unwanted alarms have a negative impact on firefighters and the wider community by increasing safety concerns for fire crews and the public, disrupting the community and industry, creating complacency and imposing unnecessary costs to attend these incidents. Reducing unwanted alarm activations ensures that the department can more effectively manage priority emergency responses and resources.

This ongoing work with the building industry has resulted in a continued reduction in the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms per Alarm Signalling Equipment connection from 3.7 in 2005–06 to 2.3 in 2018–19.

- » QFES is part of a Horticulture Workers Interagency Group where representatives of agencies attend horticultural worker information sessions in seasonal worker localities. QFES officers provide accommodation fire safety information and advice to the typically transient workers at these information sessions.



### 3. Provide appropriate information and support to assist compliance.

- » Clear and timely guidance and support is accessible to stakeholders and tailored to meet the needs of the target audience.
- » Advice is consistent and, where appropriate, decisions are communicated in a manner that clearly articulates what is required to achieve compliance.
- » Where appropriate, regulatory approaches are tailored to ensure compliance activities do not disproportionately burden particular stakeholders (for example small business) or require specialist advice.

Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2018–19.

- » The QFES Cladding Support Unit forms part of the Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce established in July 2017 following the fatal Grenfell Tower fire in London (June 2017) and the Melbourne Lacrosse Tower fire (November 2014).

As of 1 October 2018, new laws applied in Queensland that require all building owners in Queensland that are a class 2–9 building (refer the Building Code of Australia), of a type A or B construction, to register their building and complete a combustible cladding checklist.

The taskforce is conducting a statewide review into all class 2–9 buildings in Queensland that possibly have Aluminium Composite Panel (ACP) cladding fitted, ranging from unit blocks to hospitals and healthcare facilities.

If an in-scope building is fixed with ACP cladding, the building owner is required to register the building on the Safer Buildings website ([www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au](http://www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au)). From information supplied by the building owner, the Cladding Support Unit coordinates the appropriate region to undertake an Operational Risk Audit and works with the building owner and building management to develop minimisation strategies including upgraded QFES operational response and building evacuation plans.

- » QFES has developed and published industry policy regarding building cladding which is available on the QFES website. The policy provides information and advice to building owners and industry stakeholders wishing to submit a building application for a building that contains cladding materials.
- » QFES has regulatory timeframes under legislation to provide fire safety advice to building certifiers within 15 days. In 2018–19, of the 3,758 applications received 3,416 activities were completed within the timeframe – a 91 per cent achievement.
- » QFES has provided an external facing portal to reduce the use of paper and allow clients 24-hour access to the QFES building approval lodgement process.
- » The QFES website provides the community with legislative and general advice on all fire safety issues including building fire safety with a series of guidelines, interpretations, fee calculator and links to additional information to assist build a safer Queensland ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)).
- » QFES is in the process of updating the QFES Guide to the Referral of Performance Solutions which will clearly communicate QFES' expectations for referred Performance Solutions, thereby facilitating effective engagement with stakeholders. The guide is expected to be published by September 2019.



Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2018–19 aligned with the regulator model practices, or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices.

- » As part of QFES' ongoing commitment to work collaboratively with industry, QFES introduced the QFES Scope Reduction Initiative in 2015. The initiative offers industry the opportunity to reduce costs under specific circumstances, such as building work involving fire hydrant coverage via a single street hydrant. Detailed information for industry stakeholders is available on the QFES website ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/referral-agency-advice/Pages/sri.aspx](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/referral-agency-advice/Pages/sri.aspx)).



## 4. Commit to continuous improvement.

- » Regular review of the approach to regulatory activities, collaboration with stakeholders and other regulators, to ensure it is appropriately risk based, leverages technological innovation and remains the best approach to achieving outcomes.
- » To the extent possible, reform of regulatory activities is prioritised on the basis of impact on stakeholders and the community.
- » Staff have the necessary training and support to effectively, efficiently and consistently perform their duties

Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2018–19 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices.

- » On 8 April 2019, QFES moved to a new organisational model which is place based and focused on enhancing operational capability, improving efficiency and providing more autonomy to regionally-based QFES personnel to make locally appropriate decisions in the context of community safety activities.  
The model sees regional leaders for the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) and Business Operations report directly to a regional Assistant Commissioner. State-based Assistant Commissioners and their support staff for FRS, RFS and SES will continue to play an important role in providing strategic oversight and guidance to ensure support and consistency across the state.
- » QFES has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Queensland (UQ). Under the banner of the MoU, UQ and QFES have developed a Graduate Certificate in Fire Safety course for QFES Building Approval Officers (BAOs). This course satisfies academic requirements for progression to BAO2 level.

Actions taken in 2018–19, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices.

- » The Cladding Support Unit has completed training of regional Safety Assessment Officers to allow Operational Risk Audits of identified cladding affected buildings to be carried out by regional staff. The Cladding Support Unit still retains oversight of the finished Operational Risk Audit report which is passed to the regional leadership team for action regarding operation response upgrades.
- » The QFES Community Infrastructure Branch has established a number of working groups such as the Technical Reference Working Group to build consistency across QFES when providing industry advice.
- » QFES has transitioned fire investigation training for QFES officers to a nationally accredited Advanced Diploma qualification with the Canberra Institute of Technology, which will further improve service standards of QFES officers. Current qualified fire investigation staff will continue to work with their current qualification. However, a transition program will be offered to staff who opt to upgrade their qualification to the new advanced diploma level.



## 5. Be transparent and accountable in actions.

- » Where appropriate, regulatory frameworks and timeframes for making regulatory decisions are published to provide certainty to stakeholders.
- » Decisions are provided in a timely manner, clearly articulating expectations and the underlying reasons for decisions.
- » Indicators of regulator performance are publicly available.

Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2018–19.

- » Detailed information pertaining to building owner and occupier responsibilities is published on the QFES website.
- » QFES has developed and published the Fire Safety Management Tool for Owner/Occupier to assist owners/occupiers in proactively managing compliance with legislative requirements. The management tool is available on the QFES website.
- » The Cladding Support Unit has contributed to the Guideline for assessing buildings with combustible cladding. The guideline, which is available on the Queensland Government Safer Buildings website, assists building owners and building industry professionals to understand the function of the self- assessment audit process ([www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au](http://www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au)).
- » QFES is updating the QFES Guide to the Referral of Performance Solutions. The guide will clearly communicate QFES' expectations for referred Performance Solutions thereby facilitating effective engagement and providing increased certainty for stakeholders. The updated guide is anticipated to be available on the QFES website in September 2019.



## Acronyms

<b>ACP</b>	Aluminium Composite Panel	<b>FESSN</b>	Fire and Emergency Services Support Network
<b>AFAC</b>	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	<b>FFF</b>	Fight Fire Fascination
<b>AIIMS</b>	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System	<b>FRS</b>	Fire and Rescue Service
<b>ARCC</b>	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent
<b>ARRs</b>	<i>Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies</i>	<b>GST</b>	Goods and Services Tax
<b>AVCGA</b>	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association	<b>GWN</b>	Government Wireless Network
<b>BAB</b>	Budget Accommodation Building	<b>HCM</b>	Human Capital Management
<b>BoM</b>	Board of Management	<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>CCC</b>	Crime and Corruption Commission	<b>IGEM</b>	Inspector-General Emergency Management
<b>CSIRO</b>	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	<b>INSARAG</b>	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
<b>DART</b>	Disaster Assistance Response Team	<b>ISDM</b>	Integrated service determination model
<b>DES</b>	Department of Environment and Science	<b>LGAQ</b>	Local Government Association of Queensland
<b>eDRMS</b>	Electronic Document and Records Management System	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>ELT</b>	Executive Leadership Team	<b>MSRC</b>	Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft
<b>EML</b>	Emergency Management Levy	<b>PCYC</b>	Police-Citizens Youth Club
<b>EM-SAP</b>	Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change	<b>PPRR</b>	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
<b>EVP</b>	Emergency Vehicle Priority	<b>PSA</b>	Public safety agencies



<b>PSBA</b>	Public Safety Business Agency
<b>PSO</b>	Peer Support Officer
<b>QAO</b>	Queensland Audit Office
<b>QAS</b>	Queensland Ambulance Service
<b>QDMTF</b>	Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework
<b>QERMF</b>	Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework
<b>QFES</b>	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
<b>QLDSEVA</b>	Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association Inc.
<b>QPS</b>	Queensland Police Service
<b>QRA</b>	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
<b>RAAP</b>	Road Attitudes and Action Planning
<b>RFBAQ</b>	Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc.
<b>RFS</b>	Rural Fire Service
<b>RLSSQ</b>	Royal Life Saving Society Queensland
<b>RoGS</b>	Report on Government Services

<b>RPAS</b>	Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems
<b>RWTA</b>	Refrigerated Warehouse and Transport Association of Australia
<b>SABRE</b>	Simulation Analysis-based Risk Evaluation
<b>SDCC</b>	State Disaster Coordination Centre
<b>SDS</b>	Service Delivery Statement
<b>SERA</b>	State Earthquake Risk Assessment
<b>SES</b>	State Emergency Service
<b>SFEST</b>	School of Fire and Emergency Services Training
<b>SHRA</b>	<i>Queensland State Heatwave Risk Assessment 2019</i>
<b>SLSQ</b>	Surf Life Saving Queensland
<b>SWHA-Q</b>	Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland
<b>TEM</b>	Training and Emergency Management
<b>TRU</b>	Technical Rescue Unit
<b>USAR</b>	Urban Search and Rescue
<b>VMRAQ</b>	Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland
<b>WBT</b>	Workplace Behaviour Training
<b>WfQ</b>	Working for Queensland



## Compliance checklist

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## Contacts and key locations

<b>State Office</b>	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	13 QGOV (13 74 68)
<b>Brisbane Region</b>	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 2953 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 1921
<b>Central Region</b>	Level 3 34 East Street Rockhampton Qld 4700	PO Box 1531 Rockhampton Qld 4700	(07) 4932 8103
<b>Far Northern Region</b>	Level 8 William McCormack Place 2 5b Sheridan Street Cairns Qld 4870	PO Box 920 Cairns Qld 4870	(07) 4032 8759
<b>North Coast Region</b>	98 Lennox Street Maryborough Qld 4650		(07) 4190 4818
<b>Northern Region</b>	Level 1 Citypoint Building 101 Sturt Street Townsville Qld 4810	PO Box 5845 Townsville Qld 4810	(07) 4796 9023
<b>South Eastern Region</b>	32 Tansey Street Beenleigh Qld 4207	PO Box 927 Beenleigh Qld 4207	(07) 3287 8510
<b>South Western Region</b>	19 Steger Road Charlton Qld 4350		(07) 4592 5201
<b>RFS</b>	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 3834
<b>SES</b>	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 3441
<b>Flood/Storm Emergency</b>		<a href="http://www.132500.qld.gov.au">www.132500.qld.gov.au</a>	132 500
Area offices and local stations: QFES has a network of area offices and fire and rescue stations located throughout Queensland. You can locate or contact your nearest office or station by calling 13 QGOV (13 74 68).			
SES and rural fire brigades: for information relating to the SES and rural fire brigades contact 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or visit <a href="http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au">www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au</a> or <a href="http://www.ses.qld.gov.au">www.ses.qld.gov.au</a>			



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