

2019–2020 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.

This annual report provides information about Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' financial and non-financial performance for 2019-20. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

The annual report includes significant highlights against the priority areas and strategic initiatives, and service area detailed in the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2019-2023* and the 2019-20 Service Delivery Statement.

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This annual report is available on the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services website at www.qfes.qld.gov.au or a paper copy can be provided on request by calling (07) 3635 3859.

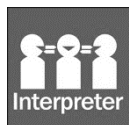
Open data

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).

Feedback

Feedback on the annual report can be provided through the *Get Involved* website: www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/gi

Other languages and formats



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

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Letter of compliance



Office of the
Commissioner

**Queensland Fire and
Emergency Services**

9 September 2020

The Honorable Craig Crawford MP
Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 2019-20 annual report including the financial statements.

I certify that this annual report complies with:

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

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Leach", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Greg Leach
Commissioner

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Commissioner's message

I am pleased to present the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) 2019-20 annual report.

I was honoured to be appointed as QFES Commissioner in December 2019. In my time leading the department, I have been impressed by the commitment of all QFES staff, volunteers and partner agencies in providing world-class emergency services. This report outlines how we have contributed to safer, more resilient and capable communities during a very challenging year.

In September 2019, fires started in Queensland on an unprecedented scale and continued for many months, with a State of Fire Emergency declared for the first time in November 2019. As 2020 began and the bushfire threat subsided in Queensland, further fires ignited in other states with Australia experiencing one of the worst bushfire seasons in recent history. Despite the ongoing operations in Queensland, our firefighters and incident management specialists were able to provide valuable support to communities in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.

In February and March 2020, Queensland experienced severe weather and cyclone activity with above average rainfall leading to significant river level rises and flooding in southern and western Queensland communities.

Concurrent to these events, a public health emergency was declared in January 2020 in response to the global outbreak of COVID-19. QFES continues to perform a vital role in the Queensland Government's response to and recovery from the pandemic. Our staff and volunteers have displayed remarkable resilience and agility in an uncertain environment, going above and beyond to implement innovative approaches to service delivery and community engagement.

While 2020 has proved to be an exceptionally busy year operationally, QFES has maintained a strong focus on working with our partners and communities on activities across disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Over the past 12 months, the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework Strategic Workplan was developed with local governments to further improve our shared understanding and management of disaster risk. Queensland's fire management arrangements have been strengthened through the Area Fire Management Groups, providing an integrated, proactive and localised approach to managing bushfire risk in communities. QFES is also contributing to national discussions through the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements with findings due for release later in 2020.

Queensland communities are at the heart of everything we do at QFES. The QFES workforce comes from all walks of life and every corner of Queensland — we are uniquely positioned to ensure that our services are delivered side by side with our communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Deputy Commissioner Mike Wassing for his strong leadership as Acting Commissioner prior to my appointment. I would also like to thank the Executive Leadership Team, all QFES staff, volunteers and partners agencies for their continuing dedication and contribution to building safer and more resilient communities.

I look forward to working with you all as we continue to deliver contemporary emergency services into the future.



Greg Leach
Commissioner

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
9 September 2020

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 commitment to Queenslanders

To achieve the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) *Strategy 2030* and our vision for a connected and capable Queensland, we commit to helping Queenslanders before, during and after a wide range of emergency and disaster events. We will connect people with the right knowledge, practical skills and resources to strengthen their community's capability and adaptive capacity.

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). The department 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. This is supported by assisting communities to understand their local hazards and ensuring they have the right knowledge, information and resources to strengthen their capability and resilience.

FRS is responsible for ensuring the capacity of operational staff to respond in emergent situations as legislated in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*. Traditionally the primary response has been to fire in the built environment and landscape environments, however this has evolved over time to meet the changing needs of the community to become a multi-hazard response which includes bushfire, road crash rescue, vertical rescue and swiftwater rescue. FRS also focuses on prevention and preparedness to avert emergency incidents as well as response and recovery. These activities include regional and community education; building fire safety; hazard identification and risk assessment;

and working with communities to plan and mitigate 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 and provides firefighting, fire prevention and community education services; permits to light fires; and deployments and assistance during emergencies and disasters. SES is a community-based, not-for-profit volunteer emergency service enabled by state and local governments and sponsor partnerships. SES is the primary responder for cyclone, storm and flood events. It also provides support to other agencies such as the Queensland Police Service (QPS) by providing search and rescue, emergency traffic management and road crash rescue functions.

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

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).

In 2019-20, QFES administered an operating budget of \$750.4 million. This funding supports the delivery of essential emergency, safety and PPRR services to Queensland. The department's capital program of \$6.3 million provided an investment of \$5.5 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. In addition, the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) capital budget provided an investment of \$97.7 million to fund QFES capital works, information and communications technology (ICT), vehicles and other essential equipment (refer to pages 16-20 for further information).

PSBA provides professional ICT, financial, procurement, asset management and human resource services to the public safety agencies including QFES, QPS and Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (Office of the IGEM). PSBA also provides ICT services to the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) and Queensland Corrective Services and network services to a number of agencies. 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 and comprises the QFES Commissioner (Chair), QPS 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 agencies.

Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2020* and *Administrative Arrangements Amendment Order (No. 1) 2020*, the QFES Commissioner administers the following Acts, and subordinate legislation, on behalf of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships:

- » *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*
 - *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*
 - *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*
- » *Disaster Management Act 2003*
 - *Disaster Management Regulation 2014.*

Our accountabilities

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

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

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

- a) rescue or similar operations in an emergency situation
- b) search operations in an emergency or similar situation
- c) other operations in an emergency situation to
 - i) help injured persons
 - ii) protect persons or property from danger or potential danger associated with the situation

- d) other activities to help communities prepare for, respond to and recover from an event or a disaster
- e) activities to raise the profile of the SES or raise funds to support the SES in the performance of its other functions.

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

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

Queensland Government priorities

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



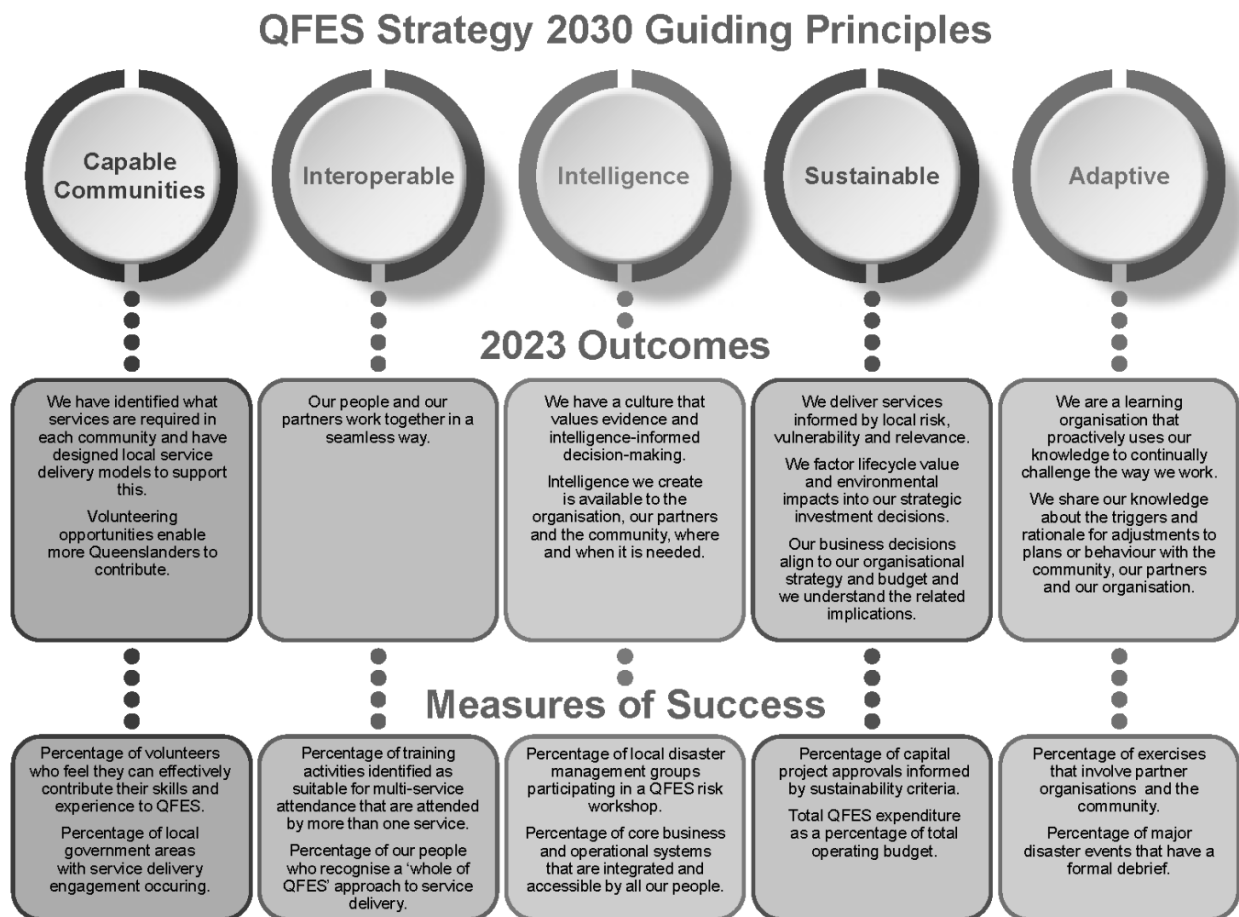
QFES contributes to the Queensland Government's priorities for the community:

- » Keep communities safe by:
 - recruiting additional frontline firefighters and fire communications officers
 - designing and delivering services according to local risk and community need
 - supporting informed decision-making with relevant and reliable knowledge products
 - leading locally trusted networks to prioritise risk reduction, preparedness and information sharing
 - supporting Queenslanders' understanding of, and ability to respond to, climate-related disaster risks
 - empowering Queenslanders to contribute and/or volunteer by providing flexible opportunities.
- » Be a responsive government by:
 - empowering our people to lead meaningful engagement with our stakeholders
 - connecting the community, our partners and our people with skills and knowledge about emergency and disaster risks
 - involving volunteers early in decision-making and lessons management processes
 - promoting inclusion and valuing the diversity of our people
 - streamlining and digitising business processes so they are accessible and intuitive.
- » Protect the Great Barrier Reef by:
 - investing in sustainable, interoperable systems, equipment and infrastructure that are integral to the delivery of our capability
 - influencing land-use planning and building standards for Queensland
 - supporting Queenslanders' understanding of, and ability to respond to, climate-related disaster risks.

Strategy 2030

Strategy 2030, launched in June 2019, reflects how QFES proposes to meet future challenges and realise the opportunities that will present in Queensland through to 2030. The five guiding principles of *Strategy 2030* are embedded across governance, risk, planning and performance mechanisms to further support and ensure alignment and execution.

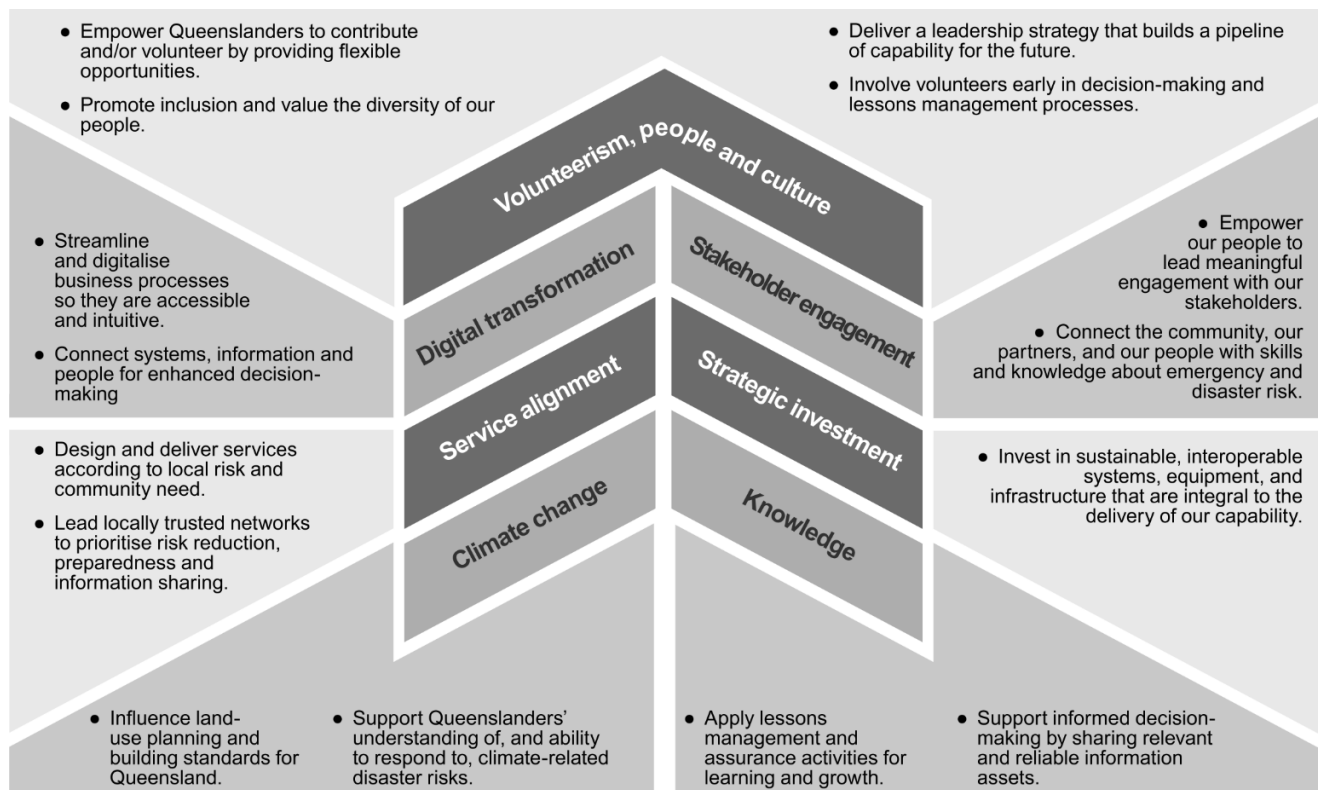
Strategy 2030 can be accessed at www.qfes.qld.gov.au



Refer to Key performance measures on pages 21-25.

2019-2023 strategic initiatives

The department's strategic initiatives for achieving the 2023 outcomes as outlined in the 2019-2023 strategic plan are:



Our values

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



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



Customers first

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



Ideas into action

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



Unleash potential

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



Be courageous

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



Empower people

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

Our environment

The environment in which QFES operates is 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 26-52).

Our challenges

- » **Climate change:** Increases in the frequency, severity and location of weather events caused by climate change, may lead to an increased demand on QFES services and reduce our ability to service communities.
- » **Service delivery:** Failure to adapt the QFES service delivery model caused by the increasing complexity and scope of the operating environment and changes in demographics and community needs, may result in a reduction in our ability to provide services to communities.
- » **Digital and information systems:** Damage or loss to QFES' digital and information systems, caused by unauthorised or inappropriate access, use or disclosure, may impact QFES' ability to respond to emergencies in a timely manner, putting the community at risk.
- » **Fiscal sustainability:** an increasingly volatile economic environment poses significant challenges for QFES to balance increasing costs with growth in the service needs of Queensland communities, as a result of more severe and frequent large-scale events, population and corresponding development growth and infrastructure demands.

Information about how QFES is responding to these challenges can be found in Our performance (refer pages 26-52).

Outlook

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

Key priorities for the department during 2020-21 include:

- » continuing to develop a highly capable, adaptive and interoperable workforce equipped with the skills, knowledge and information to better support the community
- » incorporating technological solutions that enable effective and timely decision-making
- » integrating enhanced aerial capability into firefighting operations
- » working with PSBA to deliver capital initiatives. (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.)

During 2020-21, key strategic challenges for the department are:

- » increasing 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
- » 1,399 volunteer-based rural fire brigades, including 493 with sheds/stations
- » 75 SES units consisting of 296 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.

Frontline staff and volunteers are trained throughout the state in various education and training campuses including the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training (SFEST) at Whyte Island (Port of Brisbane).

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

A list of contacts and key locations for QFES is available in the appendices of this report (refer page 121).

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 37,000 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network, AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Peer Support Officers and Chaplains.

Rural Fire Service

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

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 and 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 2020, there are approximately 31,000 RFS volunteers.

State Emergency Service

The SES is a community-based, not-for-profit, volunteer emergency service enabled by 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. The SES also provides bespoke support for RFS during bushfires such as airbase management capabilities.

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. SES is the primary response agency for cyclone, storm and flood events within Queensland and may be deployed to assist other states during disasters.

As at 30 June 2020, there are approximately 5,000 active SES volunteers. Approximately 1,000 probationary and reserve SES volunteers support active SES volunteers bringing the total number of SES volunteers to approximately 6,000.

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 2019-20, a range of incidents were attended including chemical reactions, spillages, discoveries of suspicious substances and fires causing hazardous materials releases.

As at 30 June 2020, there are 50 research and scientific volunteers including 45 regional based Volunteer Scientific Officers and five Queensland Health Brisbane-based Scientific Support Officers.

AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team

The AUS-1 DART includes the Queensland Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team. This is a multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary USAR Team made up of full-time and volunteer members, including firefighters, paramedics, doctors, engineers, Hazardous Materials (HazMat) specialists, 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 2020, the AUS-1 DART has 25 volunteers including five doctors, six engineers and 14 canine handlers.

Peer Support Officers

QFES is committed to providing a broad range of support options 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 comprises 153 active Peer Support Officers from various roles, ranks and positions across the state. Peer Support Officers 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. Peer Support Officers 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 2019-20, a total of 4,070 hours was invested in peer support activities and peer support was provided to a total of 1,473 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.

Across the state, the QFES Chaplaincy Service support network provides personal support services to our members and their families, both current service and retired, relating to both personal and work life. Support is also available to community members who are victims or witnesses of incidents or disasters involving a QFES response. Our volunteer Chaplains are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week through personal contact, incident response systems or referrals.

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

At 30 June 2020, there are 21 Chaplains.

Partners

QFES works closely with the public safety agencies—the Office of the IGEM, PSBA and QPS—and other government departments including the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

The department also has strong relationships with its partners including national bodies and 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.

National bodies

QFES contributes to national fire and emergency management policy and coordination through its membership of a range of national forums. The QFES Commissioner is one of two Queensland members on the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) and represents Queensland at the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee. Other forums include the AFAC National Council and its range of technical and working groups and the Community Outcomes and Recovery and Mitigation and Risk Sub-Committees of ANZEMC.

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. 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 page 28 or visit the PCYC website: www.pcy.org.au

Structure

QFES comprises the:

- » Office of the Commissioner
- » Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Division
- » Readiness and Response Services Division
- » Strategy and Corporate Services Division.

The **Office of the Commissioner** provides support and advice to the Commissioner and QFES senior executive team to aid decision-making and ensure achievement of key commitments and objectives.

The **Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Division** is responsible for providing overall strategic leadership, direction and support to RFS, SES and other volunteer groups involved in emergency response.

The division is responsible for introducing innovative strategies to support the recruitment and retention of a sustainable, skilled volunteer workforce that meets 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. This includes the provision of operational and volunteering support services supporting a unique mix of approximately 31,000 RFS volunteers and approximately 5,000 active SES volunteers.

The Emergency Management and Community Capability Directorate, within Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience, provides strategic oversight for all aspects of emergency management for the department and works collaboratively with the emergency management community and stakeholders to guide, contribute to and support the resilience of local communities across the phases of PPRR. The directorate adopts a broad 'all hazard' approach to its work that is based on building and supporting community capability and capacity. Additionally, Emergency Management and Community Capability maintains QFES' state of operational readiness and operations of the SDCC and the SOC.

The **Readiness and Response Services**

Division is responsible for ensuring the response capacity of QFES operational staff and volunteers 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 its contribution to fire and emergency service operational activities across Queensland.

The division comprises skilled fire and emergency service professionals across seven regions statewide, working in partnership with other state government departments, local governments and communities to improve resilience and enhance operational capacity during times of emergency.

An integral area of the division is the FRS Directorate which provides state policy and standards for the FRS, as well as specialist services such as Community Infrastructure including Fire Investigation and Research and Scientific, and Specialist and Technical Response including Technical Rescue, Breathing Apparatus (BA)/HazMat and State Air Operations.

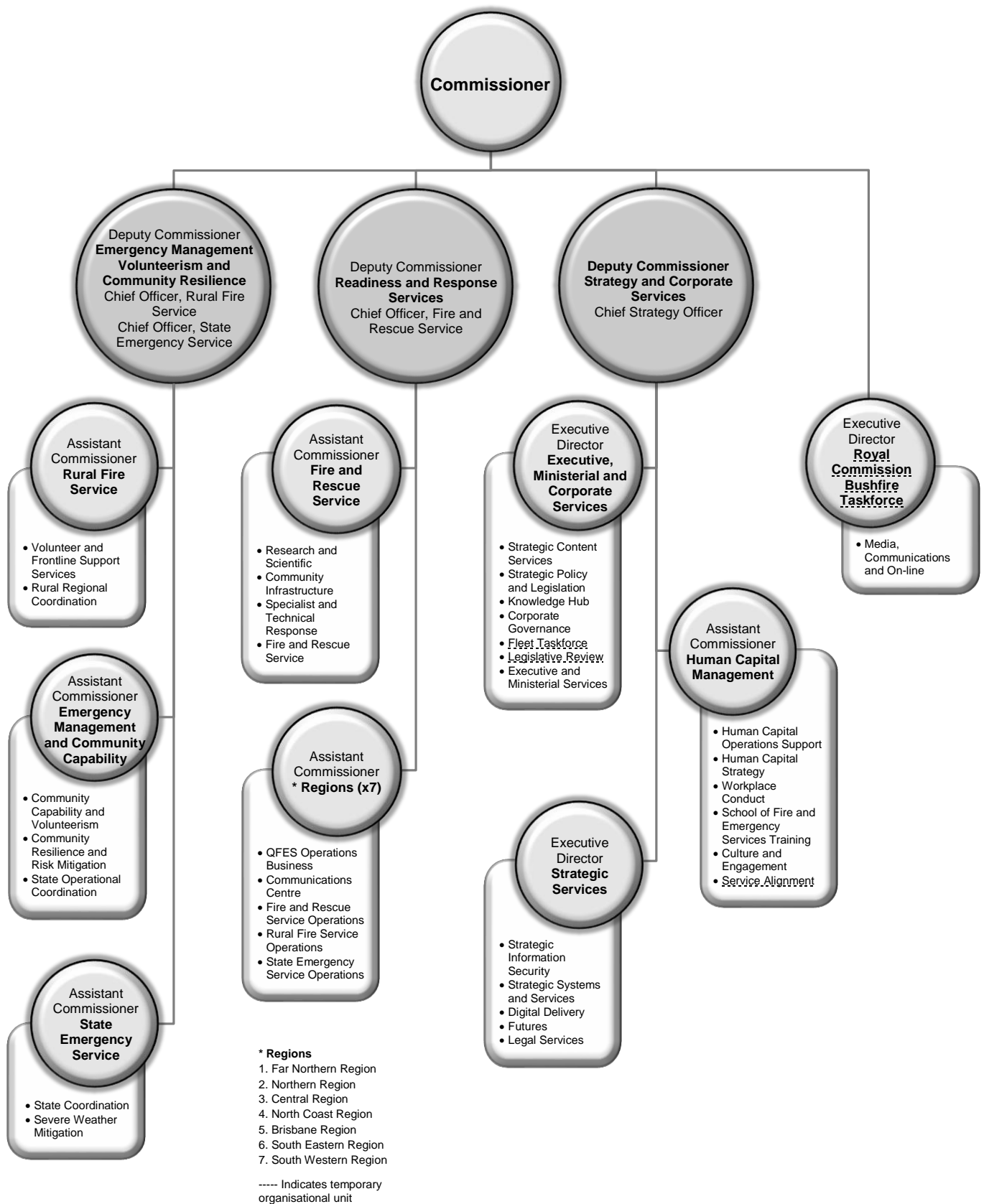
The **Strategy and Corporate Services Division** is responsible for leading the department's strategic framework and vision, driving performance and providing the tools and systems for frontline service delivery across QFES.

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 comprises Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services, Strategic Services and Human Capital Management Directorates.

Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2020



Regions

As at 30 June 2020



	State	Far Northern	Northern	Central	North Coast	Brisbane	South Eastern	South Western
Fire and rescue stations	242	25	20	38	46	38	35	40
SES units	75	19	16	14	7	3	5	11
SES groups	296	53	40	69	47	21	25	41
Rural fire brigades	1,399	179	180	392	202	29	81	336
Regional offices	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Communication centres	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Queensland population * 5,129,996

* Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue no. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics (December 2019 quarter)

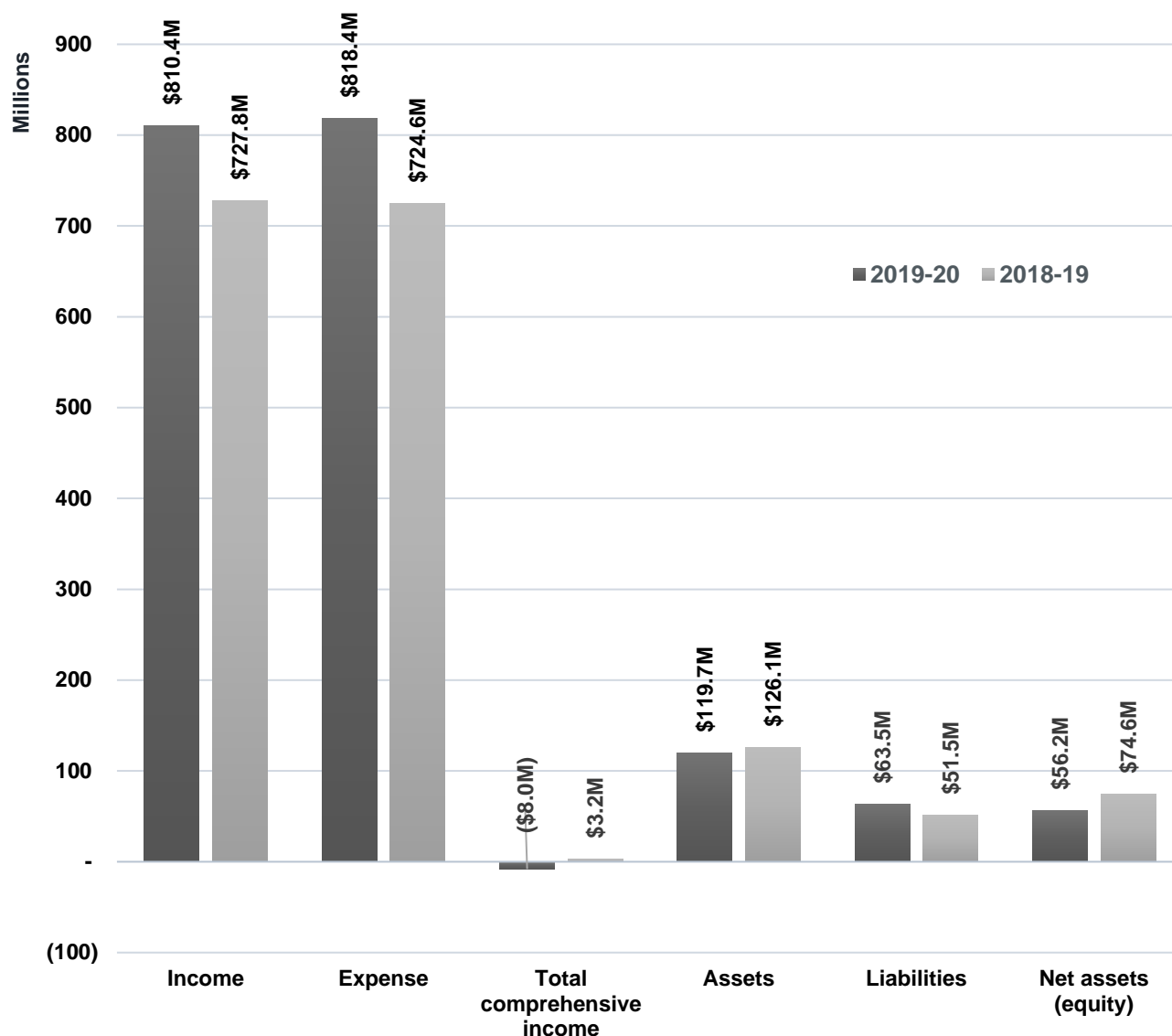
Financial summary

Summary of financial performance

The following table summarises the operating result and financial position for QFES 2019-20 and 2018-19.

Statement of comprehensive income	2019-20 \$'000	2018-19 \$'000
Total income from continuing operations	810,357	727,752
Total expenses from continuing operations	818,353	724,558
Total comprehensive income	(7,996)	3,194
Statement of financial position	2019-20 \$'000	2018-19 \$'000
Total assets	119,682	126,078
Total liabilities	63,499	51,458
Net assets (equity)	56,182	74,620

Operating result and financial position



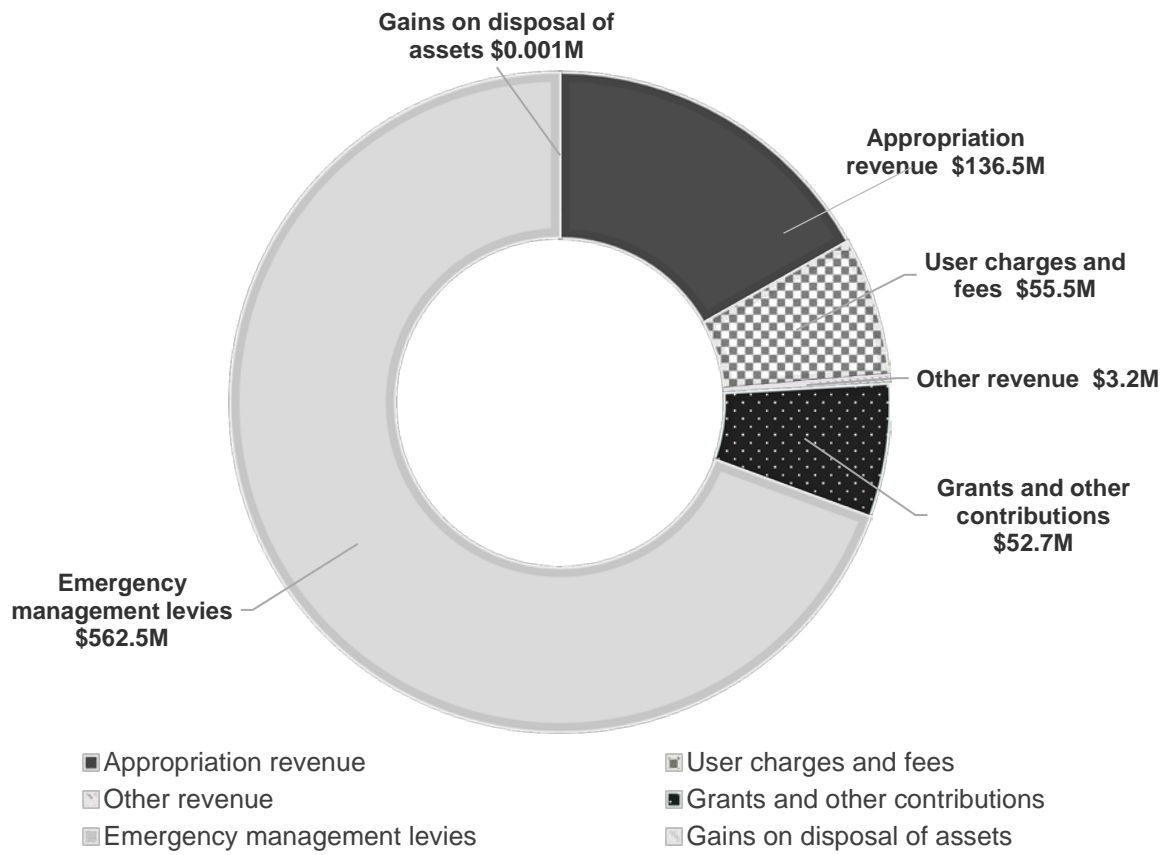
Income and expenses from continuing operations

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.

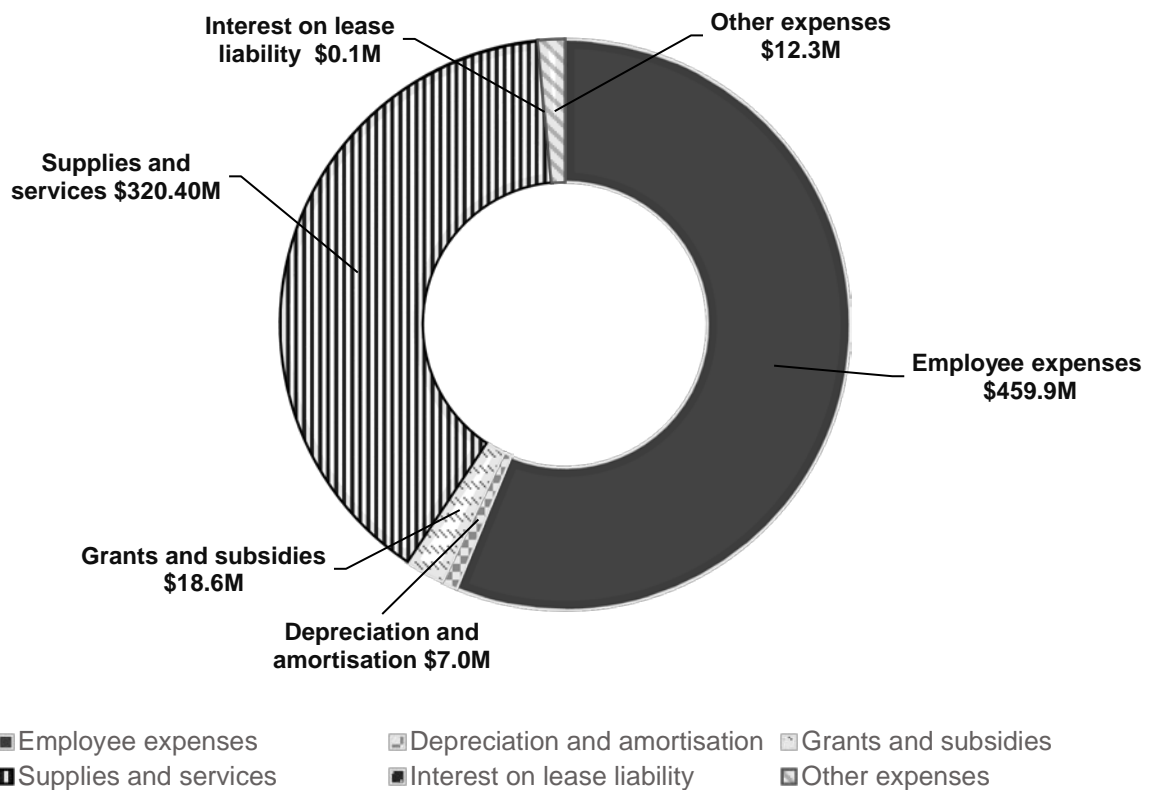
QFES also receives income from other revenue sources including user fees and charges from building and infrastructure fire safety and alarm monitoring services, training and contract services, charges for attendance at incidents, parliamentary appropriations, Australian Government grants and contributions. QFES aims to protect persons, property and the environment through the delivery of emergency services, awareness programs, response capability and capacity, incident response and recovery for a safer Queensland. The expenses incurred in the delivery of these services are summarised further on page 18.

For 2019-20, QFES received income from continuing operations totalling \$810.357 million and incurred total expenditure from continuing operations of \$818.353 million. This comprises:

Income



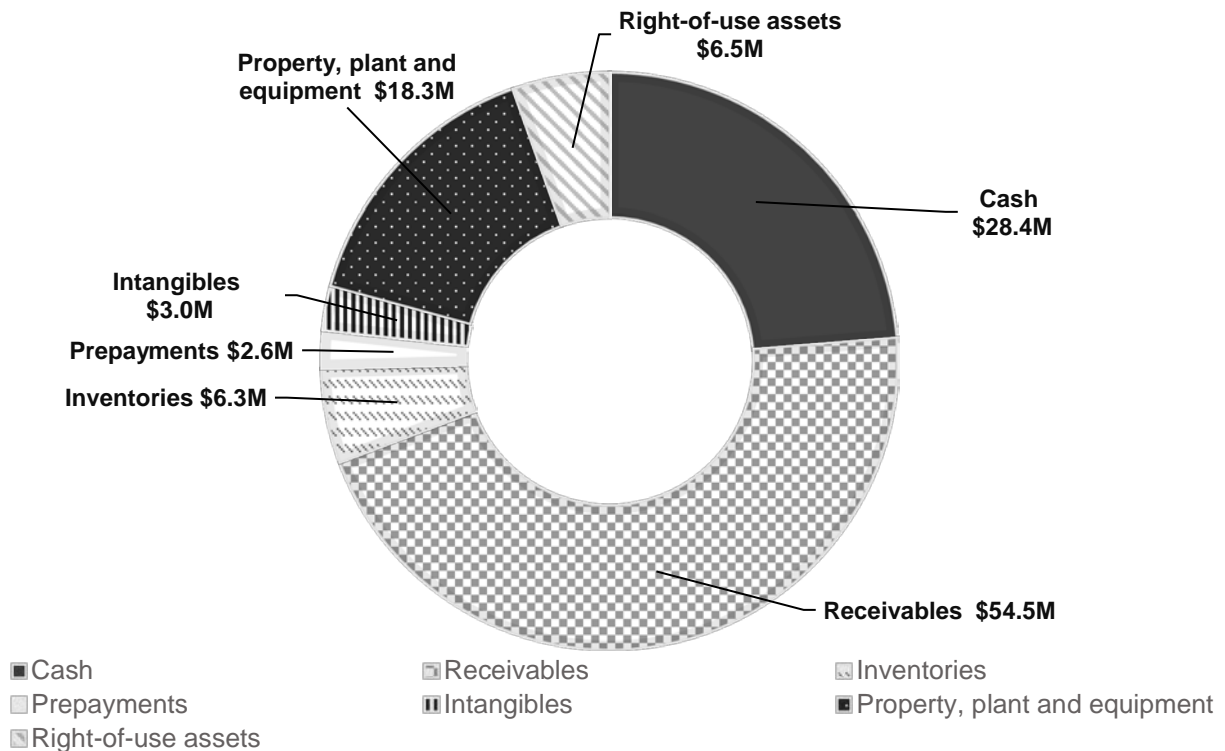
Expenses



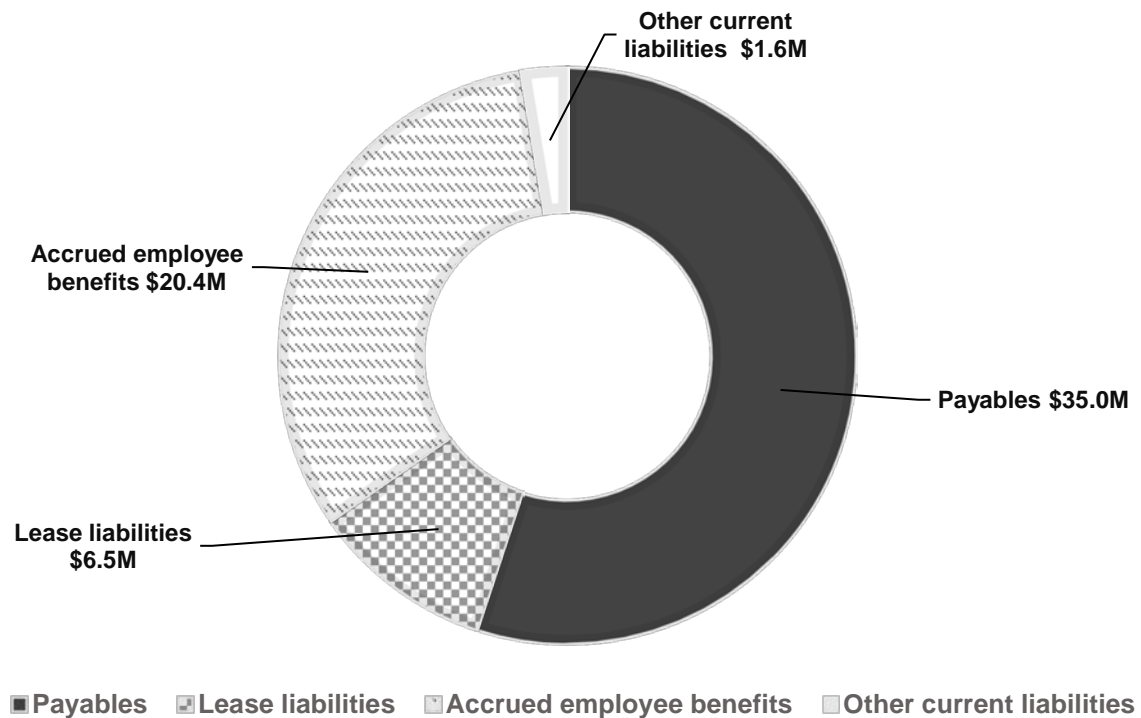
Summary of financial position

QFES was in a positive financial position at the end of the financial year. The total equity (assets less liabilities) of QFES at the end of 2019-20 was \$56.182 million. This predominantly comprises:

Assets



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 and the majority of these assets are recognised and reported in the financial statements of the PSBA. As a result of a shift in assets accounting management and policy for the department which was endorsed by the Queensland Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, QFES operational assets will transfer from PSBA to QFES in 2020-21. The net book value of these assets as at 30 June 2020 are as follows:

- » land \$176.7 million
- » buildings and infrastructure \$256.6 million
- » plant and equipment \$198.6 million
- » software \$30,000
- » heritage and cultural assets \$200,000
- » work in progress \$57.8 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 2020.

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 2019-20.

Service area: Fire and Emergency Services							
Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2019-20 SDS	RoGS	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Target/ Estimate	2019-20 Actual
Rate of accidental residential structure fires reported (per 100,000 households)	1, 2, 3		✓	✓	56.3	<60	57.7
Response times to structure fires including call taking time:	3, 4, 5		✓	✓			
• 50 th percentile	6				8.1 minutes	<7.8 minutes	8.1 minutes
• 90 th percentile	7				12.6 minutes	<14.0 minutes	12.5 minutes
Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin	3, 4, 8		✓		82.7%	≥80%	82.1%
Estimated percentage of households with smoke alarm/detector installed	9		✓	✓	97.4%	95%	97.8%
Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	10		✓		55.8%	50%	59.2%
Rate of Unwanted Alarm Activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment	11		✓		2.3	<4	2.2
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the Rural Fire Service	12		✓		72%	-	-
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the State Emergency Service	12		✓		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		✓		88%	75%	94%

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

Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2019-20 SDS	RoGS	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Target/ Estimate	2019-20 Actual
Fire and Emergency Services expenditure per person	15		✓		\$142.29	\$143.00	\$157.99
Percentage of volunteers who feel they can effectively contribute their skills and experience to QFES	16	✓			58%	-	-
Percentage of local government areas with service delivery engagement occurring	17	✓			-	-	100%
Percentage of training activities identified as suitable for multi-service attendance that are attended by more than one service	18	✓			-	-	77%
Percentage of our people who recognise a 'whole of QFES' approach to service delivery	19	✓			67%	-	66%
Percentage of local government areas that have taken part in a Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework workshop	20	✓			-	-	83%
Percentage of Indigenous councils that have taken part in a Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework workshop	20	✓			-	-	31%
Percentage of core business and operational systems requiring integration that are connected	21	✓			-	-	35%
Percentage of capital project approvals informed by sustainability criteria	22	✓			-	-	-
Total QFES expenditure as a percentage of total operating budget	23	✓			103%	100%	111%
Percentage of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community	24	✓			-	-	94%
Percentage of major disaster events that have a formal debrief	25	✓			-	-	100%

Key

- Not available / not applicable

RoGS: 2020 Report on Government Services

SDS: Service Delivery Statement

Strategic plan: *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2019-2023*

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. RoGS uses a different methodology to calculate this measure.
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 where research is conducted with Queenslanders via an online survey, with representative samples gathered across the seven QFES regions.
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 indicates the effectiveness of QFES strategies to help reduce the number of unwanted alarm activations. This measure compares the number of system initiated false alarms responded to by departmental fire personnel with the number of connected Alarm Signalling Equipment devices per annum. 'Unwanted Alarm Activations' are defined as any activation of the fire alarm and detection system that could have been avoided. 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. Data 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 workforce experiences. The survey was in field from 25 February 2019 to 7 April 2019. The 2018-19 results for RFS satisfaction were impacted by the significant workload undertaken by volunteers throughout the 2018-19 bushfire season. This survey has historically been conducted biennially, therefore no data is available for 2019-20. From September 2020, QFES workforce experience surveys will be conducted annually.
13. This measure represents the percentage of active SES volunteers who have completed the most common minimum training competency of Storm Damage Operations. The 2019-20 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.

Notes (cont'd):

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. The higher than anticipated 2019-20 Actual for this measure can be partially attributed to the delivery of further sessions in the Operational Leadership and Crisis Management Masterclass series. Masterclass sessions are specifically designed to build on other QDMTF programs, extend learning and enhance the capability of disaster management stakeholders.
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 a proxy measure for efficiency, reported in line with the RoGS methodology. The 2019-20 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 2018-19 Actual was 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). The 2019-20 Actual is above the Target/Estimate of \$143.00 due to significant bushfire events in 2019-20, costs associated with the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) public quarantine accommodation and additional investment for public safety regional radio communications (\$13.8 million in 2019-20).
16. New strategic plan measure. Data is sourced from the QFES Volunteering for Queensland survey which commenced in 2014. The survey measures the percentage of volunteers who indicated they 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the statement 'QFES recognises and utilises the skills and experience I bring to my volunteer role'. This survey has historically been conducted biennially, therefore no data is available for 2019-20. From September 2020, QFES workforce experience surveys will be conducted annually.
17. New strategic plan measure. The 2019-20 Actual is measured against the seven QFES regions. A new system to more accurately track engagement activities at a local level is being developed in 2020-21.
18. New strategic plan measure. The QDMTF underpins responsibilities and requirements for QFES and its partner agencies. More work will be undertaken in 2020-21 to identify the baseline internal training courses suitable for multi-service attendance and a more accurate tracking mechanism across the regions for enhanced consistency in reporting. Training in 2019-20 was impacted by the extreme bushfire season and COVID-19.
19. Data is sourced from the annual Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey. The 2018-19 and 2019-20 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'.
20. This measure has been amended from 'Percentage of local disaster management groups participating in a QFES risk workshop'. Implementation of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) commenced in 2017, with QFES responsible for facilitating the ongoing development and implementation across Queensland's disaster management arrangements. This measure has been split to identify Indigenous councils separately, as the QERMF risk management process is delivered via a different mechanism of engagement and support to non-Indigenous councils. Engagement in 2019-20 was impacted by the extreme bushfire season and COVID-19.
21. This measure has been amended from 'Percentage of core business and operational systems that are integrated and accessible by all our people' as accessibility is complex to measure and differs depending on role and need. Integration in QFES is defined as the ability to share user accounts and information between systems. QFES has identified 10 key systems that should be integrated. This measure may be refined in the future to ensure alignment with the delivery of ICT programs of work for QFES.
22. New strategic plan measure. QFES capital works builds support and encourages sustainable practices wherever possible, however a system is not yet in place to accurately capture this data. In 2020-21, more concise sustainability measures will be introduced on capital works builds for ongoing reporting.

Notes (cont'd):

23. The 2018-19 additional expenditure was funded by additional income received in that financial year. The 2019-20 additional expenditure was largely funded by additional income received in that financial year, however a deficit of \$8 million remained due to the timing of reimbursement for disaster event costs and COVID-19 public quarantine accommodation costs. The outstanding reimbursement will be received in 2020-21.
24. New strategic plan measure. Sixteen exercises were held across QFES regions throughout 2019-20. QFES' ability to run exercises in 2019-20 was impacted by the extreme bushfire season and COVID-19.
25. A seasonal debrief of the 2019-20 bushfire season was undertaken by QFES. In 2020-21 this measure will be amended to 'Percentage of level three incidents with a formal review undertaken' to ensure a lessons management approach can be understood and applied at a more localised, incident specific level as opposed to a rolled-up, whole-of-season approach.

Our performance

This section reports on the priority areas and strategic initiatives of the QFES Strategic Plan 2019-2023 and is a sample of the department's performance highlights from 2019-20. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.

During 2019-20, the delivery of fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services was impacted by the Queensland Government's response to and recovery from the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) which was supported by the department. QFES staff and volunteers were required to be flexible and agile in an ever-changing environment, at times assuming roles that were outside the norm and implementing innovative approaches to service delivery and training.

Priority area

1. Volunteerism, people and culture

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Empower Queenslanders to contribute and/or volunteer by providing flexible opportunities.
- » Involve volunteers early in decision-making and lessons management processes.
- » Deliver a leadership strategy that builds a pipeline of capability for the future.
- » Promote inclusion and value the diversity of our people.

Volunteerism Strategy

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy 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 Volunteerism Strategy's implementation program, approved by Board of Management (BoM) on 9 October 2019, was reviewed due to the impact on implementation largely associated with the 2019-20 bushfire season and the planning and response to COVID-19.

The revised implementation program contains nine projects with 23 deliverable activities that align with the strategy's strategic priorities and guiding principles. Key themes include:

- » recruitment and onboarding
- » leadership development
- » honours and awards
- » training
- » communication and engagement
- » capability
- » identity promotion
- » well-being
- » consultation.

The implementation program has been developed to realise the intention of the Volunteerism Strategy through tangible projects that will strategically and sequentially facilitate the improvements that have been identified as priorities for volunteers, volunteering and volunteerism within the department and the Queensland community. The implementation program is expected to be completed by June 2022.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » continued membership of the AFAC Volunteer Management Technical Group. The group is exploring a number of projects to address volunteering challenges and opportunities across the nation such as youth recruitment and retention and volunteer workforce sustainability
- » distributed more than 11,900 Emergency Service Volunteer Pins to QFES' emergency services volunteer partners including Australian Red Cross (Queensland), AVCGA, RLSSQ, SLSQ, VMRAQ, PCYC and QAS Local Ambulance Committees. The pin acknowledges the commitment and value eligible volunteers bring to the community.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy is available at www.qfes.qld.gov.au

RFS and SES grants

QFES continued to provide support to SES groups and units and rural fire brigades to identify, plan, apply for and complete grant applications. During the reporting period:

- » RFS sponsored 16 external grant applications for rural fire brigades with 12 brigades successful. These grants totalling \$294,000 provided for facility improvements, support vehicles and brigade equipment.
- » RFS State Office awarded 71 RFS grants to rural fire brigades totalling \$689,000. These grants provided for the supply and installation of security systems; station construction and extensions including bathroom facilities; supply and installation of solar systems, generators, water tanks; and the supply of support/command vehicles.
- » QFES sponsored 51 grant applications for SES groups through external grants programs with 36 successful. These external grants provided equipment for training and emergency activations, trailers and facility upgrades.

Safety for children (Blue cards)

QFES committed to, and commenced, the significant implementation of blue cards in June 2019 for over 30,000 staff and volunteers who were identified as performing functions that fall within 'regulated employment' under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (WWC Act).

The safety of children is of paramount importance to the Queensland Government and blue cards are one of a range of measures in place to protect children in Queensland along with the government's 'No Card, No Start' system which was scheduled to come into effect in early 2020.

At the 31 March 2020 deadline there were over 4,500 members of the QFES workforce who had not applied for a blue card. As a result, a further deadline was announced allowing these remaining members until after the next bushfire season to apply for their blue card.

As at 30 June 2020, 84 per cent (23,196) of the QFES workforce who are required to hold a blue card had applied. This breaks down into 99 per cent (4,244) of the FRS, 95 per cent (5,593) of the SES and 76 per cent (13,359) of the RFS.

QFES is continuing to support staff and volunteers who need to apply for their blue card to be able to continue in their role protecting the community. In 2020-21, QFES will move into managing the

ongoing requirements for blue cards such as renewals.

Supporting the implementation of blue cards is the development of the inaugural *QFES Safety for Children Risk Management Strategy*, which fulfils one of the department's obligations under the WWC Act. Implementation of this strategy will commence in 2020-21.

Supporting inclusion and diversity

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

QFES values the inclusion of individuals who contribute to our organisation through their diverse skills, knowledge and experience.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » continued to assist 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, with 219 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms provided
- » provided Auslan interpreters when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information
- » developed, in consultation with Multicultural Development Australia Ltd and Moreton Bay Regional Council, a home fire safety pictorial guide for use in culturally and linguistically diverse communities to complement the suite of translated materials (Smoke alarms in Queensland, Fire Safety in Share Housing and Emergency Triple Zero brochures—refer www.qfes.qld.gov.au).
- » translated the Home Fire Safety radio campaign and targeted social media posts to Samoan, Arabic, Mandarin and Indian English. The campaign is timed around winter when there is typically a peak in the number of house fires encouraging residents to prepare their home for a quick escape, and discuss and practice their escape plan
- » provided culture-related training to all users (staff and volunteers) of the QFES Learning Management System (Nexus) and the QFES Learning Cache. The interactive course provides insights into interpreting a person's own culture and an opportunity to gain an understanding of the lived experiences for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland

- » partnered with CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program to provide opportunities for Indigenous university students to gain industry experience in a variety of roles. Interns are hosted across a diverse range of QFES business areas working with their peers and participating in activities relating to their field of study and their role with the department. QFES hosted four interns during the summer program and two interns during the winter program
- » connected with its partner agencies and workforce to recognise the skills and knowledge of women and those who support them through the Public Safety and Associated Agencies International Women's Day event held in Brisbane on 6 March 2020. The event's theme for 2020 was 'Be Brave, Be True, Be You'.

Working for Queensland 2019

The WfQ survey (September 2019) results revealed the majority of staff feel positively about their job with 81 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that 'my job gives me a sense of personal accomplishment'. Staff are also seeing QFES' values in action with 86 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that 'people in my work group are committed to delivering excellent service to customers'.

Effective teamwork is constantly being demonstrated, with 82 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that 'people in my work group work effectively with others to deliver services to customers'.

The survey enables QFES to continuously strengthen and improve as an organisation. Forums continue to involve staff in developing actions to respond to the survey results.

PCYC Emergency Services Cadets

QFES continued to support the Emergency Services Cadet Program, aimed at building community resilience through the fostering of the next generation of emergency services personnel.

At 30 June 2020, the program has 375 young Queenslanders (aged 12-17 years) supported by 115 adult leaders and 58 active emergency services personnel in 18 cadet units. During the reporting period, two new Emergency Services Cadet Units were established located at Cook Shire (Cooktown) and Tablelands (Herberton) and the Hervey Bay Unit was put into recess. This unit will be relaunched in 2020-21.

QFES continued the rollout of the Certificate II in Public Safety (SES) to Emergency Services Cadets across the state and established a pathway for the course to be accessed online which is expected to be available during the third school term of 2020.

Other key achievements include:

- » Developed the QFES Leadership Framework which was approved for implementation by BoM on 22 May 2020. Aligned to the human capital lifecycle, the framework will provide a continuum of leadership development from emerging leader through to executive.
- » Appointment of 92 additional firefighters at 30 June 2020 in line with the government's 2017 election commitment providing increased capability in several regions and ensuring communities continue to receive quality services. The recruitment of the remaining eight positions from the 100 additional firefighters commitment and the recruitment of the 12 fire communications officers is expected to be finalised by 30 September 2020.
- » Rolled-out 360-degree video training to new firefighter recruits ensuring the recruits have a good base of knowledge and skills that can be drawn on when they progress to live-fire environments and reducing some of the risks and costs involved in the early stages of recruit development. Additional benefits the technology provides include bridging distances to more-readily educate and train staff and volunteers, particularly those in regional or remote areas. Additional training packages focusing on firefighting aircraft and storm and severe weather event response are being developed.
- » Redeveloped the requirements of the Certificate III in Public Safety (Emergency Communications Centre Operations) to meet the contemporary needs of QFES and the updated National Industry Standards. Delivery of the redeveloped course commenced in February 2020.
- » Finalised the assessment of QFES documentation, such as policies, procedures and templates, against the *Human Rights Act 2019*. Where human rights were limited through operational activities, justification was provided. In addition, an assessment tool was developed to align future documents to the Act with the assessment of QFES documents against the human rights legislation now a business-as-usual activity.

- » Produced a training video on decision-making for human rights in operational scenarios. The video is available on the QFES Gateway (staff intranet).
- » Conducted the 2019 Senior Leaders' Conference in Brisbane for 150 senior leaders from across the department. Conference participants had direct access to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and senior officers responsible for the delivery of a range of strategic projects. Participants identified a range of opportunities for improvement, including that workforce planning should be more aligned to priorities and capabilities, business processes which could be streamlined and that training should be more demand driven, more flexible and place-based.
- » Conducted the biennial SES Local Controllers' Conference in August 2019 with the theme *Engaging with Purpose*. Conference outcomes included workshopping the development of the SES Executive Leadership Framework. A review of the SES was announced at this conference (refer page 32).
- » Celebrated the 10-year milestone of the delivery of the Certificate II Public Safety (Firefighting Operations) Program. The program provides high school students with credits towards their Queensland Certificate of Education and brigades with new young volunteers to support members and increase youth volunteer firefighter numbers. The program has been delivered to over 650 high school students across all QFES regions since 2010.
- » Transitioned to a new payroll system, Aurion, on 3 February 2020 enabling self-service capabilities for QFES' paid workforce providing greater visibility and control of payroll information. The transition was supported by a range of learning material and face-to-face information sessions delivered around the state.
- » Developed uniform guidelines and standards that balance traditions of dress, diverse community expectations, and operational and environmental factors.
- » Explored options for interoperability, standardisation and continuous improvement of uniform, personal protective equipment (PPE) and equipment as procurement activities were undertaken.
- » Developed and implemented a highly complex site response plan enabling the SFEST Academy Services to mitigate the threat posed by COVID-19. Cleaning, sanitising and reconfiguring of the site, along with minimising access and implementing additional processes, enabled the continuation of essential training of recruit firefighters and recruit fire communications officers and ensured compliance with COVIDSafe measures.
- » Celebrated Peer Support Week in March 2020 with the hosting of a variety of events across the state to recognise the valuable work of QFES' Peer Support Officers. Peer Support Officers provide confidential and informal support to QFES personnel who may be experiencing personal and/or work difficulties.
- » Celebrated RFS Week in September 2019 and June 2020. The celebrations in September 2019 coincided with the RFS' 70th year anniversary, with Glass House Mountains, Lagoon Pocket, Byfields, Kandanga, Thangool and Gordonbrook rural fire brigades celebrating 70 years of dedication to the service. In June 2020, statewide celebrations highlighted the dedication and commitment of the RFS volunteers who keep Queensland communities safe. The inaugural RFS Regional Volunteer of the Year and the Assistant Commissioner RFS State Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented at the RFS Awards Ceremony held in September 2019. These awards recognise volunteers who have demonstrated a special contribution to the service.
- » Celebrated SES week in October 2019 shining the spotlight on the spirit of volunteering. Regional events were held across the state and included award presentations for volunteers and units who have gone above and beyond their duties to support their communities. The State Awards Ceremony held in October 2019 included the inaugural Life Member Award with 16 SES volunteers recognised for their outstanding individual commitment and special contribution to the service.

Priority area

2. Digital transformation

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Connect systems, information and people for enhanced decision-making.
- » Streamline and digitalise business processes so they are accessible and intuitive.

Common Operating Picture

A scalable Common Operating Picture (COP) was developed, enabled by Geospatial Information Systems (GIS), as a critical tool in the development and maintenance of situation awareness. COP also provides a basis for operational decision support at all tiers within the QFES command, control, coordination, communications and intelligence environment.

Underpinned by an internationally recognised methodology in the determination of decision requirements, a minimal viable COP was trialled by QFES Central Region in December 2019 and subsequently introduced in all QFES regions during 2020.

There are several advantages to the design and methods undertaken:

- » identified realistic task requirements in an operational setting so the data is more meaningful
- » collected and verified data from officers with direct knowledge of the skills needed
- » clearly established the importance of key decisions and planning
- » aided in articulating cognitive elements that are otherwise difficult to articulate
- » provided information about decision-making and cognition from the perspective of the people performing the task
- » identified cognitive elements that are central to expert performance of the task.

Catalyst

Catalyst, a multi-tenure online system created by QFES, was introduced in April 2020. Catalyst is a significant capability enhancement that provides the ability for Area Fire Management Group (AFMG) partners and fire management stakeholders, to contribute to high priority risk reduction activities and report on activities undertaken during Operation Cool Burn (refer page 35).

Catalyst leverages off existing QFES systems such as the Simulation Analysis-Based Risk Evaluation (SABRE) decision support tool, and data held within the GIS, that when combined provides meaningful insights for hazard reduction, risk-based planning activities, recording and longitudinal views on risk management.

Through the provision of up-to-date fire behaviour forecasts, community information, fuel load and fire history information, Catalyst enables improved fire behaviour predictions and demonstrates the collaborative approach to community protection and estate (such as national parks and state forests).

Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements Data Sharing Group

QFES continued to support whole-of-government disaster management data sharing through the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements Data Sharing Group on ArcGIS Online. The group allows data relevant to disaster PPRR to be shared amongst members. At 30 June 2020, there are more than 210 members from local, state and Australian Government bodies as well as non-government organisations, with over 360 shared datasets. This data powers two interactive webmaps and eight operational situational awareness dashboards.

QFES also created an operational COVID-19 Dashboard in conjunction with Queensland Health to support situational awareness across the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements.

Emergency Management Spatial Information Network Australia

QFES established and chaired the Queensland chapter of Emergency Management Spatial Information Network Australia. The aim of the group is to bring together GIS practitioners and disaster management subject matter experts to facilitate advice on spatial information to:

- » aid effective decision-making for emergency and disaster management
- » facilitate the sharing of spatial information resources and knowledge for emergency and disaster management
- » encourage robust networks and partnerships between government and industry spatial groups.

Core membership of the group consists of Queensland Government agencies, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and LGAQ, with support from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of the IGEM, Geoscience Australia and other industry partners.

Other key achievements include:

- » Conducted a review of the proposed Digital Transformation Program that proposes a wide-ranging reform agenda for QFES ICT to ensure consolidation and a revised focus. QFES reassessed departmental ICT priorities in line with fiscal sustainability and has prioritised initiatives and projects that were within the program to form the Emergency Response Intelligence Network (ERIN) Program. The program will focus on Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) including Station Turn-Out (STO) and Field Mobility for Emergency Services (FMES).
- » Commenced delivery of the SES Onboarding Project which will enhance operational communications capability through the roll-out of new radio equipment and processes to the SES to improve communications, response and safety.
- » Developed an Asset Management System (AMS) enabling QFES to record, track and report on assets including premises, fleet and PPE providing improved management of assets and equipment.

- » Released a new, scalable Virtual Private Network (VPN) enabling secure connections to QFES workplaces significantly increasing QFES' ability to support remote working arrangements in response to COVID-19. The VPN and other remote working enablers such as Office 365 were supported by new user guides that provided self-help for seven different methods to connect to the workplace enabling QFES members to safely isolate and continue to work productively.
- » Celebrated 10 years' utilisation of the Operations Management System (OMS)—QFES' primary planning, rostering and reporting tool. OMS covers almost all aspects of QFES from vehicle crewing to incident reporting, training and community education. OMS provides strategic information to help QFES meet the operational requirements for frontline operations and large-scale events. Situational awareness in relation to personnel enables QFES to determine capability and capacity during events and can assist in assessing when reinforcements are necessary.
- » Continued implementation of the Information Management Framework with the finalisation of the Information Asset Management, Information Access and Use Management, Records Management and Information Security Policies.
- » Implemented a new Ministerial and Executive Correspondence System (MECS) streamlining business processes for the progression and endorsement of correspondence and enabling QFES to securely register, track and store ministerial and executive correspondence and briefing material. The system has enhanced business performance and decision-making and ensured compliance with relevant privacy, security and recordkeeping regulations.

Priority area

3. Service alignment

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Design and deliver services according to local risk and community need.
- » Lead locally trusted networks to prioritise risk reduction, preparedness and information sharing.

Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework

QFES continued to support the implementation of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) risk management process across 14 Local Disaster Management Groups including Cairns, Mareeba, City of Gold Coast, Livingstone and Central Highlands. Implementation of the QERMF supports risk-based planning within Queensland's disaster management arrangements.

In addition, a QERMF Local Government Forum was held in July 2019 on the future direction and maturation of the framework. The forum led to the development of the QERMF Strategic Workplan under which three goals for refreshing the framework were established and delivered:

- » improve training resources and training delivery
- » increase stakeholder engagement and participation
- » enhance risk governance and assurance.

State assessments

The *Queensland State Earthquake Risk Assessment 2019* and *Tsunami Guide for Queensland* were released in July 2019. These reports provide a comprehensive overview of earthquake and tsunami risk in Queensland and are intended to be utilised by all levels of government in conjunction with the QERMF to inform the development of risk-based disaster management.

A series of regional engagements with disaster management stakeholders were held in Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton to support the development of the State Disaster Risk Report.

In addition, QFES supported the delivery of the Department of Environment and Science's (DES) *State of the Environment 2020* report through the provision of authoritative hazard-based risk information.

Local governments and the SES

An independent review of the SES was undertaken, and consideration of the review is ongoing. In total, 51 local governments were consulted, 34 workshops were undertaken and a further 488 responses were provided to the online questionnaire informing the review.

A new Governance Framework including a Memorandum of Agreement was established between the SES Support Groups and QFES SES. The SES Support Groups assist the Queensland SES by raising funds, which in turn supplies local SES units and groups with resources that enable a better operational response. The new framework respects the independent nature of each support group and also establishes the standards the incorporated association would need to comply with in order to operate and be recognised as an SES Support Group.

In addition, during the reporting period:

- » QFES commenced implementation of the Disaster Management Group Auspice Program. The program offers support and sponsorship of disaster management group grant applications through external grant programs to fund risk mitigation projects identified as an outcome of the QERMF risk assessment process.
- » 31 local government applications were successful under the annual SES Support Grant Program. The available grant funding more than tripled from \$320,000 to \$1 million in 2019-20, in a one-off boost by the Queensland Government, to provide grants to local governments for SES facility upgrades and vehicles.
- » 28 local government grants were awarded for the 2020-21 round of the annual SES Support Grant Program, with projects to commence from 1 July 2020.
- » QFES distributed \$1,654,000 across 75 local governments with active SES units or groups as part of the SES annual local government subsidy. Funding is provided to assist local governments in defraying administrative and operational costs as a result of supporting their local SES.

Blue Water Review

In November 2019, following significant consultation, the QFES Blue Water Review Working Group delivered its response to the *Review into Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations in Queensland* (January 2019).

The QFES Blue Water Review Team undertook significant stakeholder engagement, visiting volunteers at squadrons and flotillas across Queensland. These engagements provided the opportunity for volunteers to meet the review team and enabled the team to gain valuable insight into blue water operations and needs and to gather input into the future of volunteer marine rescue. The Blue Water Review Team continues to focus on engaging with and providing support to the sector.

QFES also renewed service agreements with the AVCGA and VMRAQ up until 31 December 2020, increasing funding by 26 per cent on the previous agreement, to assist in the delivery of water safety programs, white water rescue, and blue water search and rescue capabilities. The AVCGA and VMRAQ provide QFES with weekly service status reports for awareness of the service availability for all flotillas and squadrons across the state. This oversight assists with response planning for a range of activities in addition to marine search and rescue and public messaging.

Olympic Games Bid

A QFES Olympic Bid project team was established in August 2019 to conduct an evaluation of QFES' resource requirements to inform the Queensland Government bid submission for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The QFES submission involved a comprehensive analysis of QFES' capability to contribute to a successful 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

As part of the QFES submission, a number of value propositions and an economic assessment were included for capability requirements, concept of operations, infrastructure planning (existing versus needed), resource implications and costs for the QFES workforce and equipment, QFES operational deployments as well as exercising, training, policy and legislation, and business-as-usual impact. The QFES submission provided a future focus to align with the department's strategic plan, as well as investing in future legacy.

Other key achievements include:

- » Continued implementation of *Strategy 2030* supported through the delivery of the QFES Strategic Plan 2019-2023
- » Responded to 72,655 incidents including FRS and RFS response:
 - 2,630 structure fires including 1,921 residential structure fires
 - 8,851 landscape fires
 - 13,497 mobile property crashes
 - 47,677 other.
- » Continued to delivery timely response times to structure fires including call taking time with 8.1 minutes at the 50th percentile and 12.5 minutes at the 90th percentile.
- » Continued to reduce the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms per Alarm Signalling Equipment connection from 2.3 in 2018-19 to 2.2 in 2019-20 ensuring the department can more effectively manage priority emergency responses and resources.
- » Completed 5,592 SES tasks including 1,289 Agency Support Requests.
- » Hosted the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting in Cairns from 15-16 August 2019. Delegates, including 81 senior heads, diplomatic officials and search and rescue experts from 15 countries along with the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, joined QFES, Fire and Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to discuss the Asia-Pacific's disaster preparedness including advances in search and rescue operations. Participants considered the strategic priorities from the 2019 INSARAG Steering Group meeting, focusing on enhancing preparedness activities and bolstering partnerships. Under Australia's leadership, the meeting sought to advance INSARAG strategic and operational priorities in the region, taking into account broader humanitarian reform efforts, particularly protection, human rights and localisation.
- » Conducted a trial of a Tropical Cyclone Impact Model (TCIM) during the 2019-20 severe weather season. TCIM is a collaborative capability developed by Geoscience Australia in partnership with QFES and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Australia. TCIM will provide operational (forecast) severe wind impact analysis to support prevention, preparedness and response to Tropical Cyclone events. TCIM contributes to the ongoing

development of a nationally consistent approach to tropical cyclone hazard and impact-based forecasting and warning services. The TCIM was endorsed as a nationally consistent tool by the Australian Tropical Cyclone Advisory Group in June 2020. Training is expected to be delivered to SES regional managers on the use of the model prior to the 2020-21 severe weather season.

- » Introduced a new activity within the Fire Suppression capability for fighting bushfires known as Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT). These teams are trained to navigate to remote locations inaccessible by road or track and fight fires with no appliances and limited support, often being dropped off by vehicle at the nearest location accessible by road, or by helicopter, and hiking to the fire. This capability enables a rapid, initial attack by RAFT, with air support key to keeping fires small and manageable. The RAFT project was introduced into the Caboolture, West Moreton and South Coast RFS. A total of 27 volunteers have entered the training program since the project's inception. The training program includes advanced first-aid, RAFT theory training delivered by New South Wales RFS volunteers; and RAFT practical exercises and field assessment. The training program was completed in August 2019, and New South Wales RFS will issue two nationally recognised competencies to successful volunteers. Nine RAFTs were deployed during the 2019-20 bushfire season. A presentation to QFES executives on the effectiveness of the project is scheduled for September 2020 to determine the future of the program.
- » Conducted Operation Community Connect - a multi-agency, state-wide initiative, led by QFES in partnership with the Red Cross, SLSQ, VMRAQ, LGAQ and the QRA. Operation Community Connect was conducted throughout August 2019 and was aimed at raising awareness of the importance of resilience, preparation for hazards, and community connectedness. Thousands of volunteers assisted through engagement at local events, shopping centres and door knocking to build a greater understanding of shared responsibility for disaster preparedness. More than 50,000 tea bags with targeted messages and emergency plans were distributed to encourage people to connect with neighbours and households to build a resilient Queensland in the face of disasters and emergencies.
- » Engaged with the community to raise awareness about the services provided by QFES and inform the community on action they can take to prepare for natural disasters and improve their home and personal safety. Methods of engagement included attendance, displays, presentations and workshops at local community events such as the Brisbane Home Show in September 2019 and March 2020 where QFES personnel discussed smoke alarm legislation, home fire safety and preparing homes for bushfire and storm seasons.
- » Delivered the Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) program supporting parents and guardians with their efforts to educate children and young people (3 to 17 years) about fire safety. There were 114 FFF enquiries received and actioned by QFES with 28 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, and 16 cases referred from young people living in alternative care. There are 33 FFF practitioners located throughout Queensland at 30 June 2020.
- » Delivered 182 Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program presentations in Queensland schools and education facilities to approximately 21,600 students. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers, facilitated by operational firefighters. Delivery of the program throughout Queensland included RAAP tours to schools in regional areas such as St. George. At 30 June 2020, there are 138 RAAP program presenters located throughout Queensland.
- » Introduced new classifications to the Emergency Management Levy ensuring craft brewers and distillers pay a lower rate than their larger counterparts with the levy assessed on the floor size of breweries and distilleries rather than at a flat rate. The amendments will come into effect on 1 July 2020.

Bushfire prevention and preparedness— Operation Cool Burn

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 activities undertaken by a wide range of stakeholders. QFES is also the primary response agency for fires in Queensland.

During Operation Cool Burn, QFES supports its land management agency partners to prepare for the coming bushfire season. This includes the DES (Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service), the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, HQ Plantations Pty Ltd (Queensland's largest plantation forest company) and local governments as well as landholders across the state.

Operation Cool Burn is a period of heightened mitigation activity, generally held from the beginning of April to the end of August each year, with bushfire mitigation activities focussed on high-risk areas, coordinated across the state, such as:

- » hazard reduction burning to reduce fuel loads
- » fire break or fire trail works
- » targeted community engagement to inform residents in the highest priority areas of actions they can take to better prepare for bushfires.

QFES is continuing to mature its relationship with partners during Operation Cool Burn, enabling recognition that the focus on the protection of life and property in these high-risk areas is a shared responsibility.

Whilst Operation Cool Burn provides a useful focus for bushfire preparation, mitigation activities occur all year-round.

The overall priority for Operation Cool Burn is the protection of Queensland's communities from the impacts of bushfires. Since 2016, priority areas for risk mitigation activities during Operation Cool Burn have been based on an AFMG consensus approach to identify areas of highest bushfire risk to the community. AFMGs are made up of QFES representatives and key stakeholders such as land management agencies and local governments. Planning is based on available evidence including local knowledge, mapping information and predictive analysis. Many of these priority at-risk areas are at the interface between bushland and urban or rural-residential areas and are difficult to burn because of access and other restrictions. In these areas, land parcel sizes are often smaller, the tenure situation is complex and a range of different mitigation activities are often needed, with a higher level of coordination to achieve results.

Through identification of priority areas and risk treatments by AFMGs, education activities have been

targeted to a finer scale. Prioritisation also assists land managers to plan fire trail and firebreak activities, which also helps to facilitate future prescribed burning or fire suppression during the bushfire season.

The early onset of bushfire season hampered efforts to conduct hazard mitigation burns during Operation Cool Burn in 2017 to 2019. However, with the prioritisation process used by AFMGs, attention is given to conducting hazard reduction burns or other risk mitigation activities in areas at greatest risk.

The hazard reduction activities that QFES plans are based around ideal conditions. During Operation Cool Burn, QFES assesses the landscape and conditions to identify the locations where reduction burning is the best strategy to provide the greatest reduction in risk. Sometimes conditions do not remain favourable long enough and alternative mitigation strategies may need to be implemented such as fire breaks and community education.

Operation Cool Burn 2019 commenced on 1 April 2019 and continued through to 31 August 2019. A total of 240 activities were completed out of 329 that had been planned (73 per cent). This is comparable to previous years:

- » 2018—368 were planned and 153 were completed (42 per cent)
- » 2017—468 were planned and 306 were completed (65 per cent)
- » 2016 - 547 activities were planned and 341 were completed (62 per cent).

Operation Cool Burn 2020 commenced on 1 April 2020 and will continue through to 31 August 2020, unless varied for climatic reasons. There has been a strong focus this year on recognising the community as a key partner, sharing messages about local bushfire risks and supporting them to prepare their families and properties. As at 30 June 2020, QFES and its partners conducted more than 300 activities.

Progressively narrower windows of opportunity for carrying out safe and effective hazard reduction burns reinforce the need to consider changing climate conditions when setting mitigation targets, in addition to local trends in bushfire risk.

Bushfire season 2019-20—Operation Redux

In 2019, Queensland experienced record warm days and very dry conditions in the southeast. Large areas of inland southeast Queensland had their driest year on record. Temperatures were more than a degree warmer than average for the mean, maximum and minimum temperatures, with record warm days persisting in the south-eastern quarter of Queensland.

The 2019-20 bushfire season, known as Operation Redux, officially commenced on 1 August 2019 and continued through to 31 January 2020, during which Queensland faced some of the worst bushfires in 130 years. Redux means ‘bring back’ which is the objective for QFES during times of hazard—to bring back normality. QFES faced significant challenges with fires igniting at lower fire danger ratings than expected, drier fuels, steep and difficult terrain and fires burning through the night—with the number of bushfires peaking at close to 100 on a single day.

In early August 2019, the Commissioner’s Intent for the bushfire season was released outlining the strategies and objectives for the season, noting that a key focus was the critical analysis of operational preparedness.

The Bushfire Pre-Season Preparedness Assessment was conducted in August 2019 to determine the organisation’s readiness for the season. Regions critically assessed their preparedness based on regional requirements and evidence.

QFES Regional Assistant Commissioners, supported by their RFS Regional Manager as the bushfire lead and the Regional Leadership Team, determined the regional strategies for achieving the Commissioner’s Intent. They were supported by the SOC and SDCC.

In early September 2019, areas of southeast Queensland had warmer than average daytime temperatures, very low humidity, and gusty winds leading to dangerous fire weather conditions. In spring, very warm temperatures were recorded across most of the state and a very dry landscape led to a continuation of dangerous fire weather conditions right through spring and into December 2019. It was Queensland’s warmest December on record with a mean temperature 2.74 C above average, and the December mean maximum temperature for Queensland was also the highest on record at 3.65 C above average.¹

A State of Fire Emergency was declared for the first time in Queensland on 9 November 2019, applying to 42 Local Government Areas, prohibiting the lighting of all types of outdoor fires and banning certain activities that can cause fires to ignite. The Declaration was lifted from 36 Local Government Areas on 20 November 2019 and revoked on 22 November 2019.

During Operation Redux, QFES provided over 34,000 responses to more than 8,000 incidents from close to 3,000 appliances. More than 7.7 million hectares of land was burnt², with 49 houses, 68 sheds and 33 other structures destroyed.

The severity and duration of the bushfire season pushed more than 35,000 QFES staff and volunteers to respond to and fight fires burning faster, harder and longer than ever before. Support was received from 715 interstate colleagues from Tasmania, Victoria, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia, and more than 50 international colleagues from New Zealand and the United States of America.

Additional support was also received from the ADF in November 2019, with personnel assisting with clearing land and creating firebreaks, logistics, transport engineering and air observations.

Queenslanders turned to social media for bushfire updates, with the QFES Facebook page increasing by more than 54,000 followers. More than 3,000 Bushfire Community Warnings were issued to residents, with many forced to evacuate as blazes burned near their homes, along with 83 Emergency Alert campaigns to keep communities informed.

¹ Bureau of Meteorology—Annual Climate Summary for Queensland titled *Queensland in 2019: record warm days and very dry in the southeast; flooding in the north and west*.

² Figure of 7.7 million hectares is calculated from a range of data sources and includes a proportion of planned burns in Northern and Far Northern Regions due to limitation of remote sensed burn area data.

Aircraft, including military aircraft, played a major role in supporting firefighters to contain the fires, with 74 utilised across the state with more than 6,680 hours flown (double the hours flown in the 2018-19 bushfire season). SES volunteers contributed to the successful air operations by refueling aircraft enabling them to get back in the air as quickly as possible. A 737 Large Air Tanker was deployed from New South Wales to complete three drops of fire retardant on Pechey State Forest ahead of the fire front. Queensland also became the first emergency services jurisdiction in Australia to contract a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter to boost air response. Based at Toowoomba Aerodrome, it was

converted to carry up to 3,400 litres of water. With a range of 630 kilometres and a cruise speed of 250 kilometres per hour it was able to travel further, faster and deliver more water than the current Helitak aircraft.

Volunteers from the RFS and SES, operation support and corporate staff, along with the ADF and QFES' interstate and international colleagues, united as one in complex and trying conditions ensuring cohesive processes, committed outcomes and connection to the community.

The tireless efforts of all involved resulted in no loss of life and minimal property losses.

Following Operation Redux, an extensive debrief program was undertaken across the state, providing personnel with the opportunity to reflect on performance during the bushfire season, with evidence, data and feedback gathered. Almost 3,000 observations were collected in relation to Operation Redux. Staff and volunteers were also encouraged to submit positive and negative observations to a dedicated email address and inbox. All data was analysed and categorised with 17 broad categories emerging. Across each category, key themes were identified and formed the learnings of what worked well and the positive outcomes achieved, and the opportunities for improvement. The themes have been reviewed in terms of systemic impact and risk and aligned to learnings from the 2018-19 bushfire season (Operation Synergy). The learnings from Operation Redux will be harmonised with the improvement activities progressing from Operation Synergy.

Broad categories

1	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS)/Roles/Functions	10	Partnerships and Stakeholder Management
2	Command and Control	11	Facilities
3	Aircraft Operations	12	Planning
4	Financial Management	13	Resource Management
5	Information Management/Reporting/Records Management	14	Safety
6	Communications/ICT	15	Emergency Alerts/Warnings and Public Information
7	Interstate Support	16	Data/Intelligence
8	Logistics	17	Lessons/Knowledge
9	Culture		

Source: *Operation Redux Operational Review Report 2019-2020*

COVID-19 planning and response— Operation Exigent

Queensland was the first state to declare a public health emergency on 29 January 2020 in response to the global outbreak of COVID-19.

QFES' planning and response to COVID-19, known as Operation Exigent, recognised the requirement for urgent and immediate action to address the demanding, evolving and significant impacts of the pandemic.

QFES supported the whole-of-government response to and recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 while continuing to provide emergency services support in partnership with the community. A Pandemic Response Taskforce was established to guide all aspects of QFES' response and assist with coordination of internal and external stakeholders. In addition, QFES stood up a Crisis Management Team chaired by the Commissioner and consisting of the Deputy Commissioners and senior QFES officers. The Crisis Management Team was responsible for active oversight, strategic decision-making and ensuring key messaging was delivered to QFES staff and volunteers.

The situation changed so quickly, the QFES workforce had to be flexible by attending incidents and performing roles they would not normally undertake. However, the continuing safety of QFES personnel was the key priority when devising response measures and performing operations.

During this period:

- » the SDCC was activated on 2 February 2020 to support Queensland operations in response to COVID-19, led by the State Health Emergency Coordination Centre, including the provision of logistical support for quarantine accommodation.
- » QFES worked with the QPS to support the Department of Justice and Attorney-General in developing a whole-of-government Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Team to support frontline management of quarantined members of the community across Queensland.
- » COVIDSafe measures were implemented to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and the community.
- » business continuity plans were implemented ensuring continuity of service delivery to the Queensland community.
- » staff were offered a range of flexible work arrangements such as working from home.
- » the most up-to-date information was provided to QFES personnel via the QFES Gateway and regular Commissioner updates.

- » SES with support from RFS and auxiliary firefighters, assisted QPS officers screening nearly 30,000 passengers at Cairns, Brisbane and Gold Coast airports, in support of preventing the virus infecting Queenslanders, especially those living in remote, regional and rural areas.
- » SES volunteers supported border operations at four checkpoints at the Gold Coast, including the Gold Coast Highway and the M1 Pacific Motorway, with a variety of tasks including supporting the QPS in collecting motorist data, supplying and installing marquees, operating hand sanitiser stations and carrying out general duties.

In addition, QFES staff and volunteers implemented innovative ways to enable training and service delivery to continue including:

- » the provision of volunteer training online including videoconferencing enabling RFS and SES recruits to continue with their induction.
- » auxiliary firefighters met regularly via Microsoft Teams working through virtual scenarios such as house fires, car crashes and HazMat incidents.
- » development and implementation of the COVID-19 Disaster Management Training Strategy in March 2020 to ensure a level of continuity in the delivery of QDMTF programs to disaster management stakeholders during the pandemic. The implementation of the strategy includes a transition to alternative delivery methods including distance and remote options in addition to a higher reliance on existing eLearning programs via the Disaster Management Learning Management System.
- » conducted planned burns and mitigation related activities observing COVIDSafe planning and public health directive parameters ensuring RFS member skill sets in such activities were enhanced and maintained in readiness for the 2019-20 bushfire season, as well as reducing the bushfire risk to Queensland communities.
- » the utilisation of social media platforms by rural fire brigades to develop appliance familiarisation videos as training aids to support the theoretical component of their Firefighter Minimum Skills training.

Many of the solutions identified during this period will continue into the future having provided new and effective ways of delivering services.

Severe weather season—Operation Dovetail

The 2019-20 severe weather season, known as Operation Dovetail, meaning ‘to join skillfully to form a whole’, commenced on 1 November 2019 and continued through until 30 April 2020.

Whilst this period overlapped with Operation Redux (bushfire season), all available QFES staff and volunteers worked jointly to protect communities across the state and minimise the consequences and impacts of severe weather conditions.

Severe weather events during this period included:

- » Tropical Cyclone Esther and related flooding 23 February to 9 March 2020
- » South West Queensland Flooding 20-26 February 2020
- » Southern Queensland Heavy Rainfall and Flooding 8-14 February 2020
- » Queensland Monsoonal Flooding 23 January—3 February 2020.

During Operation Dovetail, the SES completed 3,879 tasks and 744 agency support requests including storm damage, floodboat operations and incident management.

Regional operations in preparation for and following events included:

- » the development of seven-day action plans to enable the prioritisation of activities, which in turn enhanced SES capability and capacity
- » the provision of timely and accurate information internally and externally to assist with preparation for and enable effective response and support of community needs
- » response to requests for assistance in impact areas and support to communities affected by severe weather events
- » utilisation of QFES resources to support timely community recovery following disruptive events.

Major Deployments— interstate and international

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

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.

In addition to deployed staff and volunteers, the QFES SOC remained activated from August 2019 with incident coordination staff working continuously to ensure members were mobilised and demobilised safely and efficiently.

Deployments during 2019-20 included:

Northern New South Wales communities— March 2020

SES crews were deployed to the Northern New South Wales communities to assist with localised floodboat operations, supply and resupply activities and general Incident Management Team duties, coinciding with Operation Dovetail (2019-20 severe weather season) operations.

New South Wales, Victoria and Australian Capital Territory—September 2019— March 2020

More than 1,000 RFS, SES and FRS staff and volunteers were deployed to New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory to support prolonged and protracted bushfire operations. QFES staff and volunteers were engaged in frontline firefighting operations, including backburning, asset protection and general incident management duties.

QFES also provided Fire Behaviour Analyst support to Victoria as part of a rotating roster to mitigate fatigue management issues and ongoing continuity of that capability throughout its prolonged bushfire season.

Priority area

4. Stakeholder engagement

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Connect the community, our partners and our people with skills and knowledge about emergency and disaster risk.
- » Empower our people to lead meaningful engagement with our stakeholders.

Engagement strategy

Implementation of the QFES Engagement Strategy, approved by BoM in June 2019, commenced in 2019-20. The strategy provides a new direction for creating better and more sustainable decisions that result in positive actions for Queensland. The objectives of the strategy and implementation activities include:

- » improving outcomes for our people, partners and communities by increasing stakeholders engagement when important decisions are being made
- » increasing the ability of our people to engage effectively through training
- » increasing the ability of our people to engage effectively by providing useful engagement tools and platforms, which are available on the QFES Gateway.

The strategy is available at: www.qfes.qld.gov.au

Community safety education programs

Community safety education programs continued to be developed and launched aimed at assisting members of the public in preventing, preparing for, and responding to fire and emergency events, including:

- » **Bushfire Safety: Are you in the line of fire?** The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of and educate communities on the threat of bushfire and drive action to prepare for the bushfire season. QFES developed an interactive map that enabled Queenslanders to search their postcode to gauge their level of bushfire risk based on local conditions such as vegetation type, topography and other indicators (www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au). The new map generated interest and helped double visits to the bushfire safety website to 182,000 people, improved risk awareness in the community by five percentage points and increased the number

of people visiting the site who then prepared a bushfire survival plan from 21 per cent in 2018-19 to 29 per cent in 2019-20.

- » *If it's flooded, forget it:* This campaign told drivers the smartest and bravest thing they could do when faced with floodwater was to 'back it up'. The vehicle types and the actors were chosen for the campaign to represent the people research showed are most likely to attempt to drive through a flooded road.
- » the QFES Open Day, with the theme of *Stronger Together* was held on 28 September 2019 with more than 4,500 people attending approximately 60 FRS and RFS stations and rural fire brigades across the state to learn about bushfire preparedness, smoke alarm requirements, operational capabilities and response procedures.

In addition, a new Home Fire Safety website was developed incorporating home fire safety and escape plan information. The 2020 Home Fire Safety campaign will launch in July 2020 to raise awareness about reducing the risk of accidental home fires and highlight the importance of planning, discussing and practising a home fire-escape. The website features specific tips for parents of young children as well as older Queenslanders and their carers.

Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum

The Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum held two meetings on 29 November 2019 and 20 May 2020. The aim of the forum is to strengthen the Queensland Government's commitment to engaging with emergency services volunteers and enables representatives to provide advice on issues impacting and emerging on the sector to the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

Topics explored by the forum include flexible volunteering options, transferable volunteer credentials, spontaneous volunteers, volunteer fatigue and psychological first-aid training. Membership of

the forum consists of emergency service organisations across government and the not-for-profit sector.

Social media

QFES engaged with Queensland communities via social media platforms, supporting community resilience with the provision of timely safety messages and warnings. This included supporting the response to one of Queensland's busiest bushfire seasons resulting in more than 390 preparedness posts published to the QFES Facebook page between August 2019 and January 2020, reaching more than 23.6 million people and engaging with more than one million people. There were more than 1.6 million visits to the QFES Twitter account during the bushfire season and an increase in Twitter followers from 14,000 to 75,000. In addition, more than 3,000 bushfire community warnings were published to QFES Facebook and Twitter accounts. A notable mention was a bushfire community warning post for an incident at Bundamba in December 2019 which reached 439,200 people and attracted approximately 4,650 reactions, comments or shares.

This level of interest in QFES social media platforms continued throughout 2019-20, with followers of the QFES Facebook page increasing by more than 141,500 to in excess of 457,000 followers, and followers of the QFES Instagram account increasing from 17,500 to 38,300 followers.

Other key achievements include:

- » Contributed to national fire and emergency management policy developments and participated in coordinated decision-making through a range of national forums. Topics included the National Bushfire Recovery Plan, the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction, mental health support for emergency services workers, the Australasian Arrangement for Interstate Assistance, the Australian Fire Danger Rating System and the National Flood Warning Infrastructure Working Group.
- » Continued to deliver the Safehome program where firefighters visit households to assist in recognising and eliminating fire and safety hazards in and around the home and provide information to support people in increasing fire and general safety measures.

- » Partnered with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of State Development, Tourism and Innovation to deliver the Shark Control Program, particularly the SharkSmart campaign. The primary aim of the Shark Control Program is to protect people swimming and recreating at Queensland beaches from negative encounters with sharks. QFES is a member of the SharkSmart Working Group and SharkSmart Steering Committee and plays a role in linking the program up with key marine rescue organisations whilst also providing community engagement and communications input and support.
- » Entered into a Service Agreement with SLSQ in April 2020 for the provision of funds for the Drone Trial Program, a nine-month program established to integrate 'rescue drone' operations within SLSQ's business-as-usual activities. The program will assist SLSQ with its efforts to increase public safety on Queensland beaches, prevent drownings up and down the coast, and effectively mitigate the potential risks of dangerous marine creatures including crocodiles and sharks through the use of artificial intelligence. The program also facilitates reciprocal training opportunities between QFES and SLSQ drone operators for the enhancement of emergency response capabilities.
- » Renewed a one-year partnership between the SES, Energy Queensland and Powerlink Queensland—*Energising Queensland SES equipment program*—providing \$200,000 of crucial equipment such as chainsaws, stretchers, defibrillators, solar power blankets for recharging devices and thermal imaging equipment for distribution to more than 100 SES groups. The equipment supports the SES in providing local communities with the support needed in emergency situations.
- » Signed a renewed one-year agreement with Energy Queensland in May 2020 that delivers \$75,000 in sponsorship to the RFS. This partnership recognises the value of RFS and the skills and knowledge of volunteers facing emergency events.
- » Announced the contribution of NRMA Insurance in the delivery of a multitool for SES volunteers under the final stage of its SES Principal Partnership in June 2020. The multitool is being delivered to Senior Field Operations members of SES as motivation and recognition of the skills and knowledge of the volunteers in achieving that rank and the service they deliver to the community.

Enhancing disaster management stakeholder capability

Disaster management training, education and capability development is a key element of QFES' responsibility and commitment to Queensland disaster management stakeholders. Training for disaster management stakeholders is provided in accordance with the QDMTF. The QDMTF has been designed to meet the requirements of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (section 16A(c)) to ensure that those with a role in disaster operations are appropriately trained.

During 2019-20, QFES implemented the following key projects and initiatives to support capability development for disaster management stakeholders:

- » a comprehensive refresh process was undertaken to ensure the QDMTF continues to support the legislative intent, remains relevant, contemporary and meets the requirements of disaster management stakeholders. The QDMTF Version 6.0 is the result of the application of two phases of comprehensive consultation with disaster management stakeholders involving the analysis of 50 stakeholder submissions, received from local governments, state government agencies and non-government organisations.
- » two Operational Leadership and Crisis Management Masterclass sessions were delivered—the *High Consequence Decision Making Masterclass* and the *Leadership in Disaster, Crisis and Adversity Masterclass*. The *High Consequence Decision Making Masterclass* focuses on making critical decisions in situations of uncertainty; defensible decision-making; and mitigating the impacts of uncertainty in making evidence-based decisions; the *Leadership in Disaster, Crisis and Adversity Masterclass* aims to enhance disaster manager capability in building and leveraging networks and relationships; crisis communication and engagement. The target audience are stakeholders with key roles including: Local Disaster Management Group Chairs; Local Disaster Coordinators; Local Recovery Coordinators; and District Disaster Coordinators. Indicative of their critical disaster management role, local government comprised 48 per cent of attendees on Masterclass sessions. The Masterclass sessions were conducted in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Longreach, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Gympie, Brisbane, Toowoomba and Roma.
- » the Disaster Management Training Engagement Group was established. The Engagement Group is designed to support QFES' legislative responsibilities for the delivery of training to disaster management stakeholders through the QDMTF and other related education and

capability initiatives for the disaster management sector, more broadly. Chaired by QFES, the group meets quarterly and consists of membership from QFES' key partner agencies: LGAQ; QPS; QRA; and Office of the IGEM.

- » the COVID-19 Disaster Management Training Strategy was developed and implemented in March 2020 to ensure a level of continuity in the delivery of QDMTF programs to disaster management stakeholders during the pandemic. The implementation of this strategy included a transition to alternative delivery methods such as distance and remote options in addition to a higher reliance on existing eLearning programs via the Disaster Management Learning Management System.

A total of 10,588 units of QDMTF training were delivered to disaster management stakeholders. Whilst training numbers were down slightly from 11,906 in 2018-19, this demonstrates QFES has maintained a level of continuity in training delivery despite COVID-19 restrictions.

COVID-19 restrictions on training delivery resulted in a higher reliance on eLearning modules and this is evident with 31 per cent of all training completions undertaken through eLearning, representing an increase in eLearning from 25 per cent in 2018-19.

Reflective of their key role in disaster management, 49 per cent of the total training in 2019-20 was delivered to local government stakeholders. Importantly, local governments have continued to engage in face-to-face delivery with only 14 per cent of local government completions undertaken through eLearning.

The QDMTF, Disaster Management Training Handbook and the COVID-19 Disaster Management Training Strategy are available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au

Priority area

5. Strategic investment

2019-2023 Strategic initiative

- » Invest in sustainable, interoperable systems, equipment and infrastructure that are integral to the delivery of our capability.

Capital 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.

Significant capital works initiatives were delivered or progressed during 2019-20 including:

- » **completion of the:**
 - replacement permanent fire and rescue station at Bracken Ridge. The new site accommodates 10 firefighters and includes a multi-purpose building designed to be the Brisbane Region's Technical Rescue Hub. The building features a 40-seat training/function room, a training tower, office spaces and warehouse-style storage
 - replacement QFES facility at Rathdowney. The new facility is shared between FRS and RFS
 - upgrade of the permanent fire and rescue station at West Logan. Upgrade works included the supply and installation of two relocatable buildings on the existing site to enhance capability from the site.
- » **commencing or continuing the:**
 - new permanent fire and rescue stations at Pimpama and Yarrabilba
 - new Weipa QFES emergency and disaster centre
 - replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at El Arish, Esk, Gracemere, Longreach, Rainbow Beach, Rosewood, Wooroolin and Yarraman
 - replacement regional QFES headquarters and new permanent fire and rescue station at Charlton
 - replacement permanent fire and rescue station at Loganlea
 - replacement QFES complexes at Kilkivan and Maleny
 - replacement QFES mechanical workshop at Pinkenba
 - replacement composite fire and rescue station at Charters Towers

- relocation and upgrade of the auxiliary fire and rescue station at Mossman
- upgrade of the Cairns QFES communications centre collocated with the QAS
- upgrade of the QFES complex at Mount Isa.

In addition, QFES took delivery of:

- » fit-for-purpose replacement appliances including 61 FRS appliances and 16 RFS appliances and handed over seven state-of-the-art new Combined Aerial Pump Appliances (CAPAs) with cutting-edge technology to bolster operational capability around the state. The CAPAs have a 4,500 litre per-minute pumping capability, with a 32 metre ladder and rescue basket. In addition to firefighting and aerial rescue, these vehicles will support technical rescues, chemical and hazardous incidents and road crash rescue.
- » nine new motorised swiftwater rescue craft (MSRC) bringing the total number of MSRC to 26. These craft were used for training prior to the severe weather season resulting in QFES building its cohort of trained MSRC operators to 114 including 12 fully qualified instructors. Each region has MSRC capability of three craft whilst South West Region has two and the State Deployment Centre has surge capacity of six.

Funding of \$15.3 million has been allocated over a five-year period commencing 2020-21, to secure a contracted Large Air Tanker, following the devastating 2019-20 bushfire season. An incumbent Large Air Tanker provider has been engaged through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) for the 2020-21 bushfire season and an invitation to tender process through NAFC will establish the successful provider for the 2021-2024 contracting period. The Large Air Tanker represents a suppressant delivery capability enhancement, with national use of aircraft this size (10,000 litre capacity) being for fire break building and remote area protection with retardant and gel products considered the most effective use.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (drones)

Following a successful trial of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), QFES commenced implementation of the aircraft into QFES operations in 2019-20. The department achieved the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) requirements for remotely piloted aircraft in February 2020 with the appointment of a Chief Remote Pilot.

Twenty new RPAS devices were procured to progress the development of the RPAS Capability in QFES. At 30 June 2020, these aircraft are with the State Office for registering and field testing before being commissioned into QFES service.

The RPAS Working Group was Highly Commended in the Innovation category of the Commissioner's Awards for Excellence (2019) for the development of innovative and contemporary strategies enabling successful establishment of the QFES RPAS capabilities; and the SES Far Northern Region RPAS Team also received a Highly Commended award for taking an innovative approach to trialling the QFES RPAS to provide a new dimension of reporting, enabling more informed and safer decision-making during emergency events.

Other key achievements include:

- » Commenced the development of Policy Positions which will guide the department towards a sustainable future by providing role clarity for QFES, establishing clear and agreed departmental policy positions, informing opportunities for improvement and evaluating the department's ongoing performance. The Policy Positions will also establish the department's baseline funding position, confirm understanding of national and international learnings and inform the department's position in partnerships and interoperability.
- » Commenced the development of a Decision-Making Model which will implement unified decision-making processes within QFES to ensure the right capability is in the right place at the right time to deliver core services. Some key activities and business processes will be linked so leadership decisions can be made more robustly based on evidence, data, risk and capability, and can be funded and implemented effectively.

- » Improved the QFES capital works management framework through the incorporation of data analytics modelling. This improvement will ensure QFES future-proofs its decision-making for capital investment by delivering investment prioritisation to meet community needs and expectations.

Capability Framework

QFES BoM endorsed the QFES Capability Framework in December 2019. The framework identifies QFES' capabilities, elements and associated activities within and across QFES. The framework aligns to the organisational structure identifying who is accountable and responsible for each capability. The capabilities were determined following a series of workshops and research across similar emergency service organisations.

QFES' capabilities are the foundation of the services we provide, keeping the community as the focal point. Queensland communities are expanding providing new and different risks, combined with changing climatic conditions.

The next step is to understand the future state of QFES' capabilities ensuring analytics, strategy, lessons, governance, projects, finance and decision-making are incorporated into the Capability Framework. This will ensure that QFES can remain an integrated, contemporary and sustainable organisation that can safely and effectively plan, prepare for, respond to and recovery from an event or a disaster.

QFES capabilities and elements

1

Incident Management

- 1.1 Command and Control
- 1.2 Coordination
- 1.3 Communications
- 1.4 Information and Intelligence
- 1.5 Notifications and Warnings
- 1.6 Incident Planning

2

Fire Suppression

- 2.1 Structure Fire Response
- 2.2 Transportation Fire Response
- 2.3 Bushfire Response
- 2.4 Special Risk Fire Response
- 2.5 Bushfire Prediction Simulation

3

Search and Rescue

- 3.1 Land Search and Rescue
- 3.2 Technical Rescue
- 3.3 Water Search and Rescue
- 3.4 Transportation Rescue
- 3.5 Urban Search and Rescue

4

Hazardous Materials Management

- 4.1 Research, Planning and Specialist Advice
- 4.2 Hazardous Materials Detection
- 4.3 Hazardous Materials Response
- 4.4 Hazardous Materials Decontamination

5

Disaster Management

- 5.1 Disaster Management
- 5.2 Disaster Operations
- 5.3 Recovery

6

Building Safer Communities

- 6.1 Community Engagement
- 6.2 Building Fire Safety
- 6.3 Fire Engineering
- 6.4 Regulatory Compliance
- 6.5 Alarms Management
- 6.6 Planned Events
- 6.7 Risk Reduction
- 6.8 Post Incident Investigation

7

Resource Management

- 7.1 People Management and Workforce Planning
- 7.2 Training
- 7.3 Air Operations
- 7.4 Equipment and Asset Management
- 7.5 Logistics and Supply Chain
- 7.6 Service and Contract Management
- 7.7 Surge Capacity Management
- 7.8 Financial Management

8

Strategy and Governance

- 8.1 Strategic Planning
- 8.2 Strategic Communications
- 8.3 Governance
- 8.4 Business Capability Design
- 8.5 Stakeholder Partnerships
- 8.6 Legal Services
- 8.7 ICT Strategy and Management
- 8.8 Enterprise Knowledge
- 8.9 Enterprise-wide Risk Management

Priority area

6. Knowledge

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Support informed decision-making by sharing relevant and reliable information assets.
- » Apply lessons management and assurance activities for learning and growth.

Lessons Management Framework

The lessons management process continued to mature and provided QFES with an understanding of the outcomes of the 2019-20 bushfire season, Operation Redux (refer pages 36-37).

An extensive debrief process was undertaken which collected almost 3,000 observations from volunteers and staff across the state. The observations were representative of the many different roles that are performed during operations, and together identify the collective effort of the season.

The learnings from the season are used to inform activities for improvement opportunities and provide valuable input into the assessment of QFES' capabilities.

The QFES Lessons Management Framework Project Team was awarded the Commissioner's Award for Excellence (2019) in the Innovation category for exceptional work in the development and implementation of the QFES Lessons Management Framework utilising innovative techniques to strengthen and enhance the capabilities of QFES.

Other key achievements include:

- » Continued review of portfolio legislation and progression of legislative amendments to support government outcomes.
- » Delivered a research and innovation framework that will ensure the department is positioned to align research findings, partnerships and opportunities across QFES.

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements

In the spring and summer of 2019-20 Australia experienced one of its worst bushfire seasons in recent history. Fires started in Queensland in September 2019 on an unprecedented scale both in size and intensity. As 2019 drew to a close and the new year began, further bushfires ignited in other states, all of which were on a scale never experienced before.

The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements was established in February 2020 in response to the extreme bushfire season of 2019-20 which resulted in loss of life, property and wildlife and environmental destruction.

Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC (Retired) (Commission Chair), the Honourable Dr Annabelle Bennett AC SC and Professor Andrew Macintosh were appointed as Royal Commissioners.

The commission is examining coordination, preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters as well as improving resilience and adapting to changing climatic conditions and mitigating the impact of natural disasters. The commission is also considering the legal framework for Commonwealth involvement in responding to national emergencies.

QFES established a taskforce to manage the organisation's response to commission requests for information. The department is required by law to provide information as requested by the commission and must adhere to the strict format and timings outlined.

The QFES Taskforce Commander is leading a team of staff with key roles in data management, inquiry, policy, performance and engagement. The taskforce is operating under the guidance of a taskforce steering group that reports directly to the Commissioner.

The commission commenced public hearings in May 2020 which are expected to continue to September 2020 drawing information from a variety of witnesses.

The commission is expected to deliver a final report by 28 October 2020 which will be considered by the Queensland Government to initiate actions and address recommendations.

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 PPE
- » operational preparedness.

Exercises conducted by QFES or that QFES participated in include:

- » In June 2020, QFES South Western Region participated in a cross-border multi-agency bushfire mitigation exercise on land near Bald Mountain Road, Wallangarra. The land where the exercise was undertaken borders Queensland and New South Wales and is located within the Southern Downs Regional Council area. This exercise was undertaken in consultation with the council as part of Operation Cool Burn 2020. Other participants included Queensland Rail, multiple FRS and RFS personnel from Wallangarra and Stanthorpe in Queensland, as well as crews from New South Wales FRS and RFS.
- » In February 2020, SES volunteers participated in Exercise Airship Down, a multi-agency land search and mass casualty exercise held at Lenthalls Dam, Fraser Coast Region. The exercise provided SES volunteers from the Fraser Coast Unit an opportunity to carry out SES casualty handling skills to identify the level of operational capability. This was a mass casualty scenario involving 44 patient transfers to and from SES floodboats with members challenged by the enormity of the tasks, knee level water, fit for task issues and the birth of a new baby. The exercise involved QPS, QAS and Emergency Services Cadets.
- » In May 2020, a multi-agency operational exercise was conducted at the new Brisbane airport runway. FRS and SES partnered with QPS, QAS, Air Services Australia, Australian Federal Police, Brisbane City Council and Brisbane Airport Corporation testing the response and preparedness concerning communications, coordination and control in what could be a potentially arduous event that has the potential for high loss of life. Communication systems and command effectiveness were analysed and tested during this exercise. An excellent outcome ensued with a Government Wireless Network (GWN) interoperable channel initiated that allowed Air Services Australia, QPS, QAS and FRS to communicate on a common communication channel. This learning resulted in a dispatch procedure amendment to initiate a common interoperable channel for any incident involving multi-agency response on Brisbane Airport property.
- » In October 2019, FRS senior officers attended a joint agency training exercise and demonstration at the Gold Coast Airport. The training allowed cross border agencies the opportunity to better understand New South Wales counter terrorism legislation, emergency response capabilities to HazMat incidents and associated decontamination processes. The training was conducted at the Australian Federal Police building at the Gold Coast Airport. Participating agencies included QFES, QPS, QAS, FRNSW, New South Wales Police Force, Aviation Rescue and Firefighting and Australian Federal Police. The practical component allowed QFES the opportunity to demonstrate its HazMat capability by having a BA/HazMat vehicle from Southport Fire and Rescue Station and the decontamination trailer attend. The exercise was supported by operational crews from Bilinga Fire and Rescue Station.

» In August 2019, the South Eastern Region RFS conducted Operation Shazam. The exercise included 58 appliances, air operations and 350 volunteers who conducted five hazard reduction burns. The exercise tested operational capabilities in the lead up to the bushfire season and was run as a Level 2 Incident with an Incident Control Centre established at Fernvale Rural Fire Brigade.

In addition, QFES participated in multiple COVID-19 exercises facilitated by the State Disaster Coordination Group (SDCG). These discussion exercises explored the whole-of-government response to potential pandemic scenarios within Queensland and built on the lessons learned from outbreaks in other states. They also examined the scenario of concurrent disaster events, for example, how would disaster management arrangements respond to a cyclone while the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing. These exercises identified the challenges QFES will face both as an operational lead agency in a fire or HazMat event, and as a support agency during a pandemic. As a result, a working group has been established under the SDCG, chaired by QFES, to work through the challenges identified and develop an action plan to address these matters.

Priority area

7. Climate change

2019-2023 Strategic initiatives

- » Influence land-use planning and building standards for Queensland.
- » Support Queenslanders' understanding of, and ability to respond to, climate-related disaster risks.

Planning for climate change

QFES continued to support the implementation of the *Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change* (EM-SAP) with the establishment of the QFES Climate Change Working Group under the SDCG. The working group supported the strengthening of partnerships in the areas of climate adaptation. This was achieved by working with state and local governments to deliver on key projects such as Climate Hazard Adaptation Plans and state level risk assessments which incorporate climate-related research and science, and the dissemination of key climate change information and coordination action across Queensland's disaster management arrangements

In addition, through the working group, QFES commenced the development of the QFES climate change action plan 2020-21. The working group has been an enabler for climate adaptation opportunities through partnerships with other state government departments and local government resulting in QFES partnering on key projects with the DES and local governments.

QFES also worked in partnership with a number of government and non-government organisations to integrate climate change planning initiatives.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » played an important role as a core partner of the Queensland Climate Ready (QCR) Program facilitated by Griffith University. The QFES *Strategy 2030* was showcased by QCR to whole-of-government as an example of good climate risk governance.
- » was ranked as one of the top performing departments which considered climate change in its risk governance in the *Queensland Climate Change Adaptation Governance Assessment* finalised in May 2020.
- » presented at key forums including the Queensland Government Climate Risk Symposium sharing the work that has been undertaken to analyse the complexities of climate change related risks and in developing an action plan.
- » continued to incorporate climate projections into the QERMF to support disaster and emergency risk management across Queensland's disaster management arrangements.
- » worked with state government departments including the Department of Housing and Public Works, and the Planning Division of Queensland Treasury to look at changes to land use planning frameworks and building policy as a mechanism for reducing future climate and disaster risk.
- » continued to deliver up-to-date climate and disaster risk information in partnership with the DES under the Joint Climate Change Program. This program is supporting the development of authoritative future risk information and projections through the Queensland Future Climate Dashboard.
- » collaborated with the Planning Division of Queensland Treasury in developing and publishing the *State Planning Policy - state interest guidance material—Natural hazards, risk and resilience—Bushfire* (December 2019) and the *Bushfire Resilient Communities Technical Reference Guide for the State Planning Policy State Interest 'Natural Hazards, Risk and Resilience—Bushfire' October 2019*. These documents are critical in ensuring that increasing bushfire risk is avoided or mitigated when it comes to new or revised local planning schemes.

Building disaster resilience

QFES continued to partner with the QRA to implement the *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience* (2017). The strategy aims to make Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia and is delivered under *Resilient Queensland 2018-2021*, predominantly through the development of resilience action plans for each local government area. The process for developing these action plans was successfully piloted in the Central West (Longreach Disaster District) and Fitzroy River and Mary River catchments. These resilience action plans were endorsed by the local governments in these areas.

Following the pilot programs, QFES collaborated with the QRA to review the pilot programs and has since refined the process of developing resilience action plans. This enhanced process is being utilised in the development of the resilience action plan for the Burdekin/Haughton River catchments.

At the national level, QFES was a member of the working group which developed the Flood Emergency Planning for Disaster Resilience Handbook. The handbook is part of the National Handbook Collection maintained by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience. The handbook, expected to be published in 2020, provides guidance on national principles and practices in flood planning for disaster resilience in Australia.

Governance

Executive management

As at 30 June 2020

Board of Management profiles

Greg Leach

MBA MEmergMgt MIFireE GAICD

Commissioner

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

Greg Leach was appointed Commissioner on 2 December 2019.

With 33 years' experience in the emergency services, Greg is a highly-regarded emergency services executive with both country and metropolitan fire and ambulance services.

Greg began his career with the Country Fire Authority, Victoria where he held a number of senior operational roles. Greg then spent eight years with Rural Ambulance Victoria and then Ambulance Victoria, following the merger of the state's three ambulance services into a single service in 2008.

In 2014, Greg joined the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board as a Deputy Chief Officer and Executive Director, Organisational Learning and Development. During this time, Greg led the implementation of significant reform to the fire services in Victoria.

As an experienced and accredited Level 3 Incident Controller, Greg managed responses to some of the nation's worst fires, including responses to large wildfires, major structure fires and other emergencies including the Longford Gas Plant explosion in 1998.

As Commissioner, Greg is the Chair of the QFES BoM. He is also the Chair of the PSBA Board of Management, the service agency for the public safety portfolio (the position of Chair is rotated with the QPS Commissioner annually with the QFES Commissioner in the role until September 2020).

The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums including as a member of the ANZEMC and represents Queensland at the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee.

Greg has a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Emergency Management, is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a member of The Institution of Fire Engineers.

Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience was appointed Acting Commissioner for the period 6 June 2019 to 1 December 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 regional operations for FRS, RFS and SES across QFES' seven regions and the FRS Directorate.

Mark Roche was appointed as Deputy Commissioner on 24 August 2015.

Commencing his career in Ipswich as an auxiliary firefighter in 1979, Mark joined the permanent firefighter ranks in 1980.

In 2006, Mark was appointed Assistant Commissioner, Far Northern Region, before returning to Brisbane in 2008 to take up the role of Assistant Commissioner, Community Safety and Training where he was responsible for Professional Development, State Community Safety Operations, and Training and Emergency Management.

Mark has seen the fire service roles change from an internal focus responding to grass fires, structural fires and limited road crash rescues, to what is now a multi-agency integrated approach to incident and disaster management encompassing the FRS, RFS and SES.

Mark is 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.

In 2014, Mark was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM). He also has a Graduate Certificate in Applied Management, is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has a Diploma in Frontline Management Initiative.

Adam Stevenson

BEC

Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting) Chief Strategy Officer (Acting)

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 providing the tools and systems for frontline service delivery integrated capability across QFES. The division includes the Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services; Human Capital Management; and Strategic Services Directorates, and works closely with the public safety agencies.

Adam Stevenson was appointed as Acting Deputy Commissioner on 8 July 2019.

Adam began his career in the private finance sector prior to joining the Queensland Government in 1993. Throughout his public sector career, Adam has held a series of executive leadership positions in areas including employment services, ICT strategy, Indigenous economic participation, corporate services, industry development, international trade and investment, strategic policy and planning, industrial relations, training, and workplace health and safety (WHS).

As Acting Deputy Commissioner, Adam chairs the QFES Strategy and Budget Committee and the Communication and Information Committee.

Adam has a Bachelor of Economics and is completing an Executive Masters of Public Administration.

Mike Wassing

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

Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience
Chief Officer, RFS
Chief Officer, SES

The Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience, Chief Officer, RFS and Chief Officer, SES is responsible for the SES, RFS and Emergency Management and Community Capability within the department, including supporting approximately 37,000 volunteers.

The Deputy Commissioner has oversight of disaster and emergency management including the QERMF, emergency management planning before and after disasters, volunteerism, and strengthening community partnerships to build safe, healthy, confident and connected communities across Queensland.

Mike Wassing was appointed as Deputy Commissioner on 21 September 2015.

Serving in emergency services in both Queensland and Victoria for more than 30 years, Mike has extensive experience leading the management and coordination of disaster management for all hazards as well as strategic control and coordination for major disasters including the Black Saturday Fires (Victoria—7 February 2009), Tropical Cyclone Debbie (Queensland—March 2017), North Queensland Floods (January—February 2019) and most recently, as the Acting Commissioner, Queensland's Bushfires (2019).

Mike is committed to enhancing volunteerism, strengthening QFES' capabilities and promoting an inclusive and supportive culture that enriches the department's ability to support local communities.

Mike is a member of the NAFC Board of Directors and also represents QFES on a number of state and national bodies.

Mike holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Management and Land Use Policy, a Diploma in Firefighting Operations and Fire Management, and a Graduate Diploma of Business (Strategic Management).

Mike was awarded the AFSM in 2019 for consistently demonstrating exceptional leadership to enhance volunteerism in emergency services and driving positive and inclusive organisational change. He was also awarded the National Emergency Medal—Vic Fires 09 (Victorian Bushfires 2009).

Mike Wassing was appointed Acting Commissioner for the period 6 June 2019 to 1 December 2019.

John Bolger, Assistant Commissioner, RFS, was appointed Acting Deputy Commissioner for the period 6 August 2019 to 1 January 2020.

Kurt Marsden

BBus (Man)

Chief Operating Officer, PSBA (Acting)

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.

Kurt Marsden was appointed as Acting Chief Operating Officer on 14 February 2020 from his substantive position as the General Manager, Human Resources within the PSBA.

Kurt has an extensive public sector career spanning more than 35 years holding positions in a number of service delivery and central agencies including Executive Director, Workforce Strategy in the Public Service Commission, Director, Human Resources and Communications in Queensland Treasury and the Director, Human Resources in the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

As Chief Operating Officer, Kurt 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 Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee.

Kurt has a Bachelor of Business Management from the Queensland Institute of Technology.

Doug Smith, the then QFES Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services, was appointed as the interim Chief Operating Officer on 8 July 2019 until his appointment as Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services, QPS on 14 February 2020.

Jennifer Robertson

LLB GradCertBus FAICD FGIA

Independent member

Ms Jennifer Robertson was appointed to the BoM in December 2018, attending her first meeting in February 2019. Jennifer is QFES' first independent member on its BoM.

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

Jennifer is a practising lawyer and over the last 15 years has sat on or chaired a number of Boards throughout Australia. These include statutory bodies, public authorities, an Australian Prudential Regulation Authority regulated superannuation fund, an Australian Securities and Investments Commission regulated financial planning entity and many not-for-profit organisations. Many of Jennifer's Board roles combine the complexity of large and diverse businesses whilst overseeing many millions of dollars in a highly accountable, transparent and regulated reporting environment.

Jennifer is the first non-pilot director on the Board of Brisbane Marine Pilots in its 30-year history and she also sits on the Board of and chairs the Audit and Compliance Committee for Queensland Independent Schools Block Grant Authority. Her previous roles have included Chair of the Defence Reserves Support Council Queensland and Deputy Chair of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

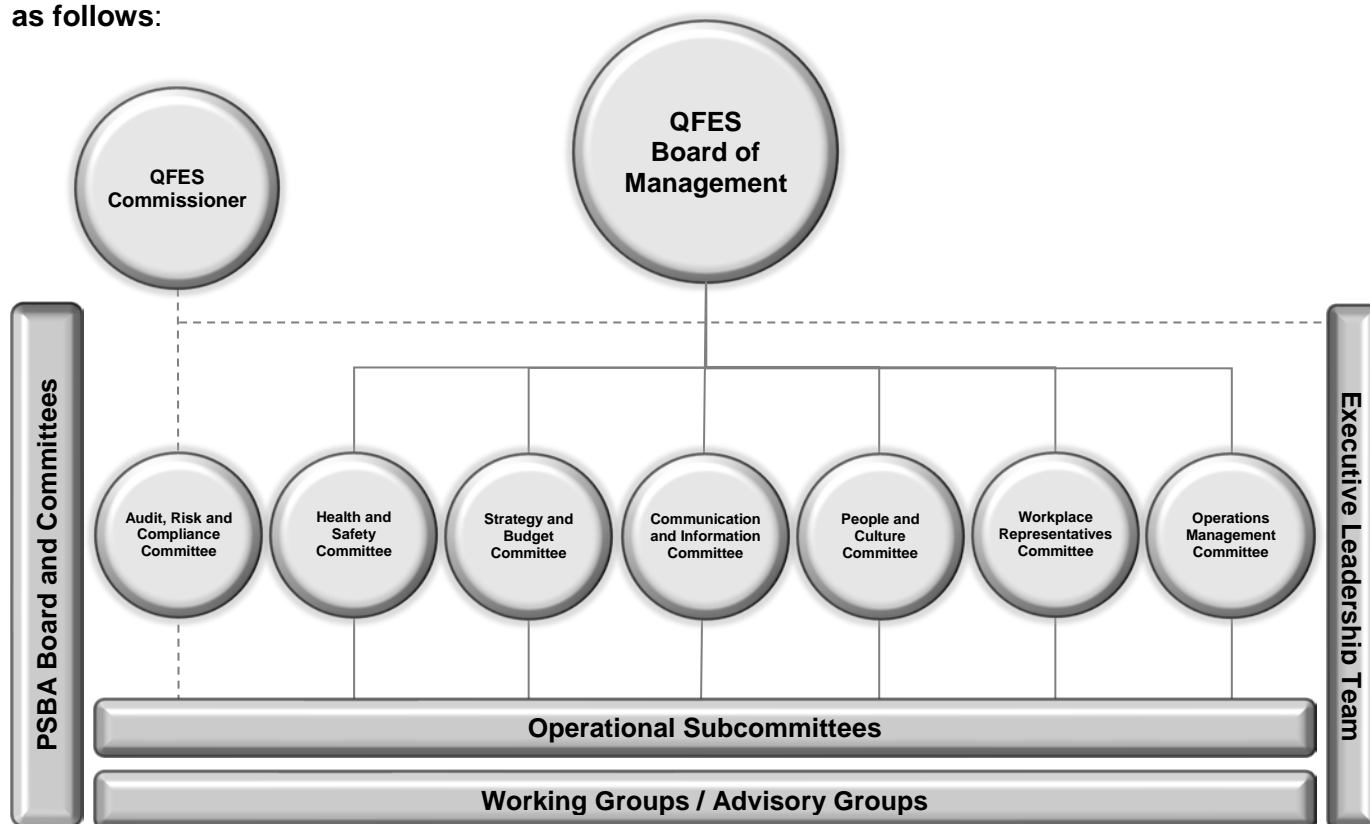
Jennifer has a Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Certificate in Business from the Queensland University of Technology. She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Governance Institute of Australia. Jennifer also holds a Certificate in Foundations of Neuroscience from the NeuroLeadership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

Board and committees

The QFES governance structure comprises the:

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

The QFES governance structure and the line of reporting with other bodies at 30 June 2020 is as follows:



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

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

In June 2020, BoM approved a modification of the corporate governance committee structure to better suit the purpose of QFES and enable flexibility to

meet future year commitments. The refreshed structure is based on a reflection of organisational requirements to support QFES' continued governance maturity. The new corporate governance committee structure includes an increased level of independence within the committee governance arrangements with an additional independent member on the BoM and independent expert members on each committee. The BoM Charter will undergo a review however, the overall role of the Board will not change.

The governance structure is underpinned by the executive leadership influence, the decision-making model, support mechanisms and enablers, explicit authority aligned accountability and the right culture.

The improvements are focussed on assisting BoM through the committees to achieve the strategic outcomes and commitments outlined in the strategic plan. During the reporting period, QFES merged the Strategic Committee and Finance and Budget Committee into the Strategy and Budget Committee. The Strategy and Budget Committee provides oversight of QFES' financial performance and provides advice on strategy development, and coordination and prioritisation of QFES' whole-of-organisation expenditure, while seeking to foster a culture of fiscal responsibility.

The new committee structure, to be implemented in 2020-21, includes four intersecting committees, being:

- » Audit, Risk and Compliance
- » Strategy and Budget
- » People, Culture, Safety and Wellbeing
- » Capability and Service Delivery.

There is no significant change to the functioning of the ARCC and Strategy and Budget Committee. The People, Culture, Safety and Wellbeing Committee will focus on QFES having the right workforce, paid and volunteer, with the right skills, operating in a safe environment, within an effective and appropriate workplace culture. The Capability and Service Delivery Committee will focus on the inputs to capability and capacity, including assets, ICT and equipment. It will also lead the core service delivery for performance, service strategy, strategic policy leadership, funding mechanisms, stakeholder engagement and include research and innovation.

The improvements involve a significant depth of work to be implemented including providing the right level of support, training, clear communication of the changes and embedding the processes for the committees.

Board of Management

Role	The BoM provides stewardship of QFES by providing advice and information to the Commissioner as the accountable officer for the department. The BoM assists the Commissioner with strategic leadership to meet QFES' 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.
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Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Greg Leach, Commissioner (Chair) » Mark Roche, Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services » Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience » Adam Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting) » Kurt Marsden, Chief Operating Officer, PSBA (Acting) » Jennifer Robertson, Independent Member <p><i>Mike Wassing served as Chair of the BoM from 6 June 2019 to 1 December 2019 whilst fulfilling the role of Acting Commissioner.</i></p> <p><i>John Bolger, Assistant Commissioner, RFS was a member of BoM for the period 6 August 2019 to 1 January 2020 whilst fulfilling the role of Acting Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience.</i></p> <p><i>Doug Smith served as a member of BoM whilst Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services and then as the interim Chief Operating Officer, PSBA from 8 July 2019 to 13 February 2020.</i></p> <p><i>Kurt Marsden was appointed Acting Chief Operating Officer, PSBA on 14 February 2020.</i></p>
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Board of Management (cont'd)

Remuneration The Independent Member earned \$14,080 (including GST) in remuneration for BoM member services provided in 2019-20.

Remuneration paid in 2019-20 includes \$1,650 (including GST) for one meeting attended in 2018-19.

Remuneration of \$3,000 (including GST) for two meetings attended in 2019-20 will be paid in 2020-21 due to late processing.

Meetings From July 2019 to April 2020 the BoM met bi-monthly, post April 2020 the BoM met every six weeks with emergency or special meetings convened as required.

During 2019-20, the BoM met on seven occasions, excluding out-of-session meetings and workshops.

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

Role The ARCC provides independent assurance and advice to the Commissioner in discharging responsibilities under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, *Disaster Management Act 2003* and subordinate legislation, in relation to the department's risk, audit, internal controls, and compliance frameworks and systems.

In addition, ARCC assists in the discharge of annual financial management responsibilities as required under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The committee operates in accordance with its Terms of Reference, having due regard for Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines: Improving Accountability and Performance*.

Membership

- » Sue Ryan (Independent Chair)
- » Glenn Poole (Independent Member)
- » Adam Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting)
- » John Bolger, Assistant Commissioner, RFS
- » Stephen Smith, Assistant Commissioner, Human Capital Management (ELT member on a 12 monthly rotational basis)
- » Vacant

Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience will commence as a member of ARCC from 1 July 2020.

Remuneration The Independent Chair earned \$7,725 (including GST) in remuneration for services provided in 2019-20 and the Independent Member earned \$3,500 (including GST).

Two payments for 2019-20 totalling \$1,750 (including GST) will be paid to the Independent Member in 2020-21 due to late processing.

Meetings The committee meets quarterly with emergency or special meetings convened as required. In 2019-20, the committee met on five occasions including a combined meeting of the public safety agencies Audit, Risk and Compliance/Audit and Risk Committees.

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (cont'd)

Key Achievements

In 2019-20, the committee's key achievements include:

- » overseeing key areas of compliance such as WHS and the business continuity framework
- » providing advice on enhancements to the risk management framework and commencing a program of deep dives into Enterprise Risks
- » overseeing delivery of the internal audit program and external audit plan
- » overseeing the implementation of agreed recommendations from internal and external audit activities with an increased focus on the implementation of overdue and ageing recommendations
- » overseeing the implementation of recommendations made by regulatory authorities such as the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) and Ombudsman
- » monitoring the delivery of projects identified as at-risk such as Blue Cards and P3 Masks
- » monitoring the effective control of QFES' financial performance and financial position
- » reviewing and endorsing the 2018-19 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer's Statement of Assurance
- » noting and monitoring the 2019-20 financial statements project plan and financial statements preparation and providing recommendations to improve clarity and transparency
- » noting current and future accounting standard changes, impacts and disclosure enhancements relating to Queensland Treasury's *Financial Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*
- » monitoring and reviewing accounting matters related to assets control.

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 by connecting regional health and safety committees, QFES executive management, BoM and the Commissioner.

Strategy and Budget Committee

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

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

Communication and Information Committee

The Communication and Information Committee provides stewardship of ICT pathway related matters within QFES including the development of corporate level ICT strategies and plans that ensure the cost-effective application and management of ICT systems and resources throughout the department.

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 oversees the organisational posture and capability direction, provides policy advice and seeks to foster a culture that promotes strategies and activities for service delivery improvement, operational efficiency and interoperability.

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.

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:

- » 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 of Conduct.

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
- » Social media.

To maintain currency, all staff and volunteers are required to complete *Think. Say. Do.* every three years.

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, personal achievement and development plans (PADPs), policy instruments and procedures.

The QFES Gateway 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.

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 2019-20, the following state bodies examined the operations of QFES or other agencies with findings or issues requiring consideration by, or impacting on, QFES: Coroner, CCC, QAO and Office of the IGEM.

Coroner

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. Six monthly progress updates must also be provided to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General until the accepted recommendations are implemented.

Inquest findings and implementation progress updates are accessible at www.courts.qld.gov.au

Inquest into the deaths of Thomas Hunt and Youngeun Kim

On 18 October 2019, the Northern Coroner delivered the inquest findings into the deaths of Mr Thomas Hunt and Ms Youngeun Kim. The Coroner determined that Mr Hunt died on 23 February 2016 as a result of accidental drowning and Ms Kim died on 23 January 2018 due to drowning/immersion with head injury nominated as an underlying condition. Mr Hunt and Ms Kim died at Josephine Falls located within the Wooroonooran National Park.

The Coroner made a number of recommendations including that the working group established to improve visitor safety comprising QFES, QAS, QPS and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service within DES, continue to be supported financially and administratively by their respective agencies, and that the group be enlarged to include local Ngadjon-ji Elders. The working group would enable the continuation of education programs, training exercises and recommendations for the enhancement of visitor safety at Josephine Falls. The Coroner also suggested the working group consider measures such as additional signage to encourage visitors to respect the Traditional Owners and Elders Past and Present.

The lead agency for the implementation of the recommendation relating to the working group is DES through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, with support from QFES, Queensland Health (QAS) and the QPS.

QFES is represented on the working group and continues to be committed in its support of the working group.

An invitation has been extended to local Ngadjon-ji Elders to participate as members of the working group.

Installation of additional signage requesting respect for the Traditional Owners and Elders Past and Present will be considered by the working group. Existing messages on signs located at Josephine Falls will be reviewed in consultation with local Ngadjon-ji representatives.

Inquest into the death of Lee Edward Parker

On 20 February 2020, the Deputy State Coroner delivered the inquest findings into the death of Mr Lee Edward Parker. The Coroner determined that Mr Parker died from smoke inhalation and the effects of fire on 19 August 2016.

The coroner recommended that QFES give consideration to the mandatory installation of smoke alarms in new and existing moveable dwellings including on-site and park vans.

QFES is considering the recommendation and developing options for consideration.

Crime and Corruption Commission

Each financial year the 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.

Operation Impala Report on misuse of confidential information in the Queensland public sector

In February 2020, the CCC tabled in Parliament *Operation Impala Report on misuse of confidential information in the Queensland public sector*. The report examined the impacts of unauthorised access to and disclosure of confidential personal information on agencies and the people whose information is accessed or disclosed to third parties without their knowledge or consent.

QFES was not subject to examination by the CCC, however, the report directs nine recommendations at all public sector agencies. The recommendations are designed to ensure that Queenslanders' confidential information is less vulnerable to inappropriate access by staff of public sector agencies.

In accordance with the Queensland Government's *Information security policy* (IS18:2018), QFES is embedding an *Information Security Management System* (ISMS) aligned to ISO/IEC 27001 *Information Security Management*. The function of an ISMS is to protect the confidentiality, availability and integrity of information through risk management.

In addition, QFES has an embedded strategy where any reports of misuse of confidential information are dealt with in accordance with the QFES Management of Complaints Policy and Procedure, including assessment by the Workplace Conduct Branch's Complaints Assessment Team and referral to QPS for investigation or advice to the Workplace Conduct Branch's Ethical Standards Unit if required. All records of the complaints management processes and decisions are recorded centrally in the QFES complaints management system.

Where appropriate, the QFES decision-maker may consider post-separation discipline for matters involving the mis-use of confidential information.

Queensland Audit Office

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

Managing cyber security risks: Report 3: 2019-20

The QAO examined whether entities effectively manage their cyber security risks. Three unidentified entities were selected for this audit. QAO assessed whether the entities understand and assess the extent to which their information assets and organisational processes are exposed to cyber security risks and whether entities design and implement effective

information controls to mitigate identified cyber security risks.

The QAO directed 17 recommendations drawn from the audit learnings to all entities. The QAO acknowledged that implementing effective controls for cyber security should be performed on a cost-benefit analysis and that all entities firstly assess themselves to help them ensure they have a framework for managing cyber security risks, know what information assets they have and know to what extent those information assets are exposed to cyber security risks. Then, based on the results of these activities, entities should consider how relevant the recommendations are for their risk appetite and exposure.

QFES ICT and related cyber security services are provided by PSBA under a shared services arrangement.

PSBA, in partnership with QFES, completed a self-assessment exercise against recommendations 1-3, which are considered completed. Following this review exercise, it was determined that PSBA on behalf of QFES provides a sufficient level of cyber security that fulfills the intent of recommendations 4-17.

QFES is continuing to work on a range of additional initiatives to enhance cyber security risk management that complement the intent of the recommendations. These developments are being progressed and are expected to be finalised in 2021.

Queensland state government entities: 2018-19 results of financial audits Report 8: 2019-20

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

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

QFES received an unmodified audit opinion, with no significant issues or findings identified.

The report also provides the results of an assessment of internal controls across the sector and identifies eight actions for all entities to consider to decrease the risk of fraud or improve other internal controls. QFES has reviewed these actions and is progressively implementing enhanced controls where internal control improvement opportunities have been identified.

Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management

The Office of the IGEM provides independent assurance and advice about Queensland's emergency management arrangements, with a focus on a risk-based approach. It also provides authoritative reporting to enhance accountability and improve outcomes for the community.

The Office undertakes targeted reviews and system analysis to identify risks to emergency management planning, preparedness, response and recovery arrangements and recommends evidence-based improvements. IGEM reports are accessible at www.igem.qld.gov.au

Review — Efficacy of recovery governance Report 1: 2018-19

This review focused on identifying those aspects of recovery arrangements that could be enhanced leading to better local community recovery and outcomes. QFES is the lead agency or joint-lead agency in the implementation of three of the nine recommendations relating to:

- » greater clarity about responsibilities for recovery at the community, local and district levels in any future review of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*
- » participatory leadership models forming the basis of recovery leadership training and education to support and enhance community-led recovery including the development of mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of recovery leadership and capture relevant learnings
- » maximising the effect of all offers of assistance to recovering communities including the updating and exercising of the Queensland Offers of Assistance Policy.

Delays in addressing the recommendations were experienced in 2020 due to planning and response to COVID-19, however, action is expected to commence by 31 December 2020.

The 2018 Queensland Bushfires Review Report 2: 2018-2019 and Queensland Bushfires Review Report 2: 2019-20

The 2018 Queensland bushfires review assessed the effectiveness of preparedness activities and response to the major bushfires and heatwave that occurred across the state toward the end of 2018. The review noted there is scope for improvements and specifically identified:

- » the need for Queensland Government agencies, local government, non-government agencies and the Australian Government to work together to manage the risk of intense fires
- » the need to convey the risk, and the best information about it, to the community
- » the need for the disaster management system to adapt when the hazard needs the technical capability of a large hazard-specific agency to respond to the disaster.

The review report made 23 recommendations to guide future actions. QFES was nominated in the Queensland Government Action Plan as a lead agency in 22 recommendations—of these 14 recommendations were accepted and eight were accepted in principle by the Queensland Government. QFES established a program of work to develop and manage action plans for the implementation of the recommendations.

As at 30 June 2020, QFES has completed planned activities for 14 recommendations and made significant progress towards the remaining eight recommendations. Whilst there have been some minor delays in completing some activities due to COVID-19, it is expected that the majority of the remaining planned activities will be completed by 1 December 2020.

In September 2019, the Office of the IGEM conducted a further review following a challenging start to the 2019-20 bushfire season—*Queensland Bushfires Review Report 2: 2019-20*. The report did not include any recommendations but instead highlighted a range of findings and observations which provided additional context to work being undertaken in relation to the 2018 review report.

There are also a number of common themes and topics that have arisen in the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements which was established on 20 February 2020 in response to the extreme bushfire season of 2019-20. QFES has actively contributed to the Royal Commission by way of notices and appearances at hearings which have included topics directly or indirectly linked to the 2018 review report. The Royal Commission is due to hand down its final report on 28 October 2020.

2019 Monsoon Trough Rainfall and Flood Review Report 3: 2018-19

This review assessed the effectiveness of preparedness and response activity surrounding the monsoon trough rainfall and flood event that occurred in northern Queensland in January and February 2019.

The report made 14 recommendations and QFES was identified as a lead agency in six of these with five accepted and one accepted in principle by the Queensland Government. Topics covered in the six recommendations include:

- » climate change and the integration of the eight EM-SAP priorities into the disaster management planning cycle
- » Disaster Management Group activation levels
- » development and promotion of local disaster dashboards for community information and messaging
- » managing requests for assistance including system wide tools, education, guidance and testing.

At 30 June 2020, QFES has completed planned activities for three of the recommendations and is actively progressing remaining activities.

Risk management

The *Financial Accountability Act 2009* requires government departments to provide the necessary foundations and organisational arrangements for managing risk at a strategic and operational level. In response to this requirement, QFES developed a risk management framework which outlines the minimum requirements for the department's management of risk to position QFES to achieve better outcomes for our people, partners and the community and to ensure the sustainability of the department. The RMF was approved in August 2019 by BoM and quarterly risk reports are provided to the QFES ARCC.

QFES manages enterprise, operational and project risks utilising risk registers and the RMF outlines the escalation of risk to the enterprise risk register and to the BoM and Commissioner based on a standardised risk assessment process. Quarterly enterprise risk reports and a deep dive into a single enterprise risk are provided to ARCC to ensure effective and independent risk oversight.

In 2019-20 QFES further developed its risk maturity by:

- » finalising an internal audit into QFES Risk Maturity. The report provides 18 recommendations to improve QFES' risk management. As at 30 June 2020 six recommendations have been closed and implementation of the remaining recommendations is ongoing.
- » implementing the RMF, QFES Risk Appetite Statement and QFES Business Continuity Management Frameworks.
- » commencing collaboration with other public safety agencies to integrate risk management practices to streamline the risk management approach to shared assets and risks.

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 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 *Public Safety Business Agency Annual Internal Audit Plan 2019-20 and Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2020-23* was endorsed by the QFES ARCC and approved by the then Chair of the PSBA BoM on 4 June 2019.

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 2019-20 include:

- » progressed delivery of the approved annual internal audit plan 2019-20 with specific QFES audit coverage including:
 - an assessment of community engagement processes (final report)
 - an assessment of the controls for issuing, recording and monitoring fire permits (draft report)
 - a review of the processes for managing the return to work of sick or injured workers (draft report)

- an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of controls to ensure compliance of critical equipment with QFES Doctrine and regulatory requirements (fieldwork).
- » indirect audit coverage provided to QFES through the review of the:
 - design and operating effectiveness of ICT project governance, processes and controls managed by PSBA Frontline and Digital Services (PSBA - final report)
 - current state of risk management processes at PSBA and the interaction with the risk management practices of the public safety agencies (public safety agencies - final report)
 - design and operating effectiveness of system access controls for critical systems (public safety agencies - draft report)
 - design and operating effectiveness of controls over selected third-party service providers (public safety agencies - draft report)
 - design effectiveness of fraud and corruption frameworks (public safety agencies - draft report)
 - effectiveness of physical security controls and security awareness (public safety agencies - draft report)
 - design and operating effectiveness of key controls of processes that inform the Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement (public safety agencies - draft report).
- » no carry forward of 2019-20 audit activities into the internal audit plan for 2020-21.

Delivery of the 2019-20 annual internal audit plan was impacted by QFES' and the other public safety agencies' planning and response to COVID-19. During this time, Internal Audit redirected its focus to be a trusted advisor and assisted public safety agency management with checks of internal controls such as risk management, procurement and cyber security.

It is expected that the final reports for all audit reviews will be issued by 31 October 2020.

Information systems and recordkeeping

PSBA, as the provider of corporate services to Queensland's public safety agencies including QFES, is responsible for recordkeeping and information systems across the public safety agencies. PSBA has a dedicated records management team, the Information Management Unit, which provides advice and assistance to QFES on matters related to effective and compliant recordkeeping processes, resulting in improved operational efficiencies.

PSBA provided advice on all aspects of recordkeeping and provided training in the RecFind System (the department's recordkeeping database). In addition, to inform an upgrade of this recordkeeping database, an analysis was undertaken of how QFES utilises and accesses RecFind and other information management systems. Obtaining an accurate 'snapshot' of system use, enabled the identification of options and opportunities for use of emerging electronic content technologies, such as SharePoint Online, to contribute to efficient support and maintenance of departmental records.

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

- » promotion of effective digital recordkeeping governance including the provision of advice on technologies and concepts, enabling use of electronic approval processes and development of suitable approaches to facilitate continued progression to more efficient electronic information management practices.
- » provision of advice relating to recordkeeping functions and processes required to be supported remotely due to COVID-19 operating environment restrictions. This included completion of a Source Records Policy for Central Region that provides for the digitisation of Community Safety records such as building plans, enabling hard copy versions of the records to be destroyed. Flexible procedures within the policy enabled project activities and operations to be undertaken across multiple sites, including remote workplace environments. Key outcomes include reduction in on-site storage requirements and/or costs associated with use of a commercial secondary storage provider to manage and store physical records.

- » completion of a procedure enabling physical receipts and invoices associated with corporate card transactions to be disposed of once digitised in line with whole-of-government policy. This will reduce off-site physical storage costs and overall time spent supporting the corporate card process.
- » commencement of a review of the *Fire and Emergency Services Retention and Disposal Schedule*. The schedule is expected to be submitted to Queensland State Archives in 2020-21 for approval.
- » completion of a procedure for digitising microfiche Building Fire Safety records managed by Community Safety (Brisbane Region).

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 nominee.

No QFES records were transferred to Queensland State Archives during 2019-20.

Human resources

Strategic workforce planning and performance

Workforce profile

The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in QFES, including auxiliary firefighters, was 3,357.94 at 30 June 2020. Due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters, they are represented as 0.1 of an FTE. The FTE figure is calculated using the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) aligned information.

The increase of 20.09 FTE staff from 30 June 2019 (3,337.85) to 30 June 2020 is due in part to joiners offset by separations and other changes in individual FTE arrangements (for example leave without pay, half pay adjustments, changes to hours worked as well as changes to the MOHRI counting methodology). The impact of the induction of firefighter and fire communications officer recruits over the period, as well as fluctuations in the usage of the casual workforce, is also particularly influential to the regular adjustments in total headcount and actual FTE.

Between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020, the QFES permanent separation rate (excluding auxiliary, temporary and casual employees) was 3.7 per cent, with 55 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 2019-20.

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

The 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.

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 entice a larger number of candidates.

ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. can be accessed at www.qfes.qld.gov.au

Employee performance management framework

QFES initiated the roll-out of electronic PADPs to all applicable staff utilising the Performance and Goals module in the Nexus platform. Roll-out is expected to be completed in 2021. PADPs are designed to ensure clear goals and objectives are created and agreed between manager and employee and professional development goals are identified. Constructive feedback on employee performance is provided through regular formal and informal conversation and outstanding performance is recognised.

QFES is committed to flexible working arrangements and work-life balance. A series of podcasts titled *Make Work Life for You* were developed to encourage employees and managers to start conversations to consider the way we work, when we work and how we work. The podcast series is available on the QFES Gateway.

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

QFES conducted a workforce survey in June 2020 to enable a better understanding of individual and

shared work experiences during COVID-19. The survey results indicate that the QFES workforce showed great resilience and collaboration to overcome the challenges faced during the peak period of the pandemic. The insights from the survey provided an understanding of areas of strength and identified opportunities for improvement. These learnings are important as QFES continues to become more resilient, sustainable and adaptable in times of adversity. The insights have also helped the department to plan, inform and shape its strategic future direction, operating environment, positive workplace experiences and safe work environments.

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

On 30 March 2020, the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet announced that the Tropical Cyclone Debbie 2017 and the North Queensland Floods 2019 have been declared nationally-significant emergencies for the purpose of the National Emergency Medal. Specific criteria must be met to be eligible for this clasp. QFES is working to recognise its members who responded to these National Emergency Medal events.

QFES Resourcing

In order for QFES to be agile to changing environments, the department adopted an enhanced strategic focus to resource allocations. This has been achieved through:

- » the implementation of a current State Human Capital Optimisation Matrix (HCOM) to identify a single point of truth for all QFES paid staff across all services. This supersedes the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) which reflected FRS resources only.
- » the establishment and implementation of the QFES Establishment, Resource and Vacancy Management (ERVM) Strategy approved by the BoM in February 2020, which provides informed, fair, evidence-based decisions on

establishment matters and ensures resources are directed to priority areas.

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* (IR Act) which includes the Queensland Employment Standards, Modern Awards and a range of directives also apply. Negotiation of employment conditions for QFES employees is subject to the collective good faith bargaining provisions within the state's IR 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 2019* or in the *State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2019*). 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, who are registered industrial organisations under the IR Act, 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 in the manner set out in the Awards or Agreements within the scope of Industrial Matters as described in the IR 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

To support delivery of the strategic plan, the QFES Leadership Framework was approved for implementation by the BoM on 22 May 2020. Aligned to the human capital lifecycle, the framework will provide a continuum of leadership development from emerging leader through to executive. A series of foundation programs will be developed in 2020-21 to provide a pipeline of learning for full-time staff and volunteer leaders.

The framework supports the themes of the Queensland Government's 10-year human capital outlook and three-year human capital strategic roadmap.

Recognising the disparate locations and often time poor nature of the QFES workforce, the development of modularised programs will provide the ability for place-based delivery to meet the specific needs and requirements of the workforce. These will be delivered through a blended approach utilising existing internal resources as well as partnering with external providers on a needs basis. The Framework utilises the QFES values as its foundation through a leadership philosophy. These are the critical and underpinning attributes and expectations of all QFES leaders. The framework is linked to the QFES Performance Framework through the *Leadership competencies for Queensland* and the annual PADP process providing the opportunity for QFES leaders and their team members to develop bespoke development plans to support individual development needs.

The framework will leverage existing programs and resources such as those provided by the Public Service Commission through the Leadership and Learning Hub and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

Workplace health and safety

QFES treats the health, safety and wellbeing of its personnel as a high priority with this commitment articulated in *Strategy 2030* and the implementation of a QFES Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

QFES has a dedicated team to support the health, safety and wellbeing of its members via delivery of the following services:

- » safety alerts and bulletins
- » facilitation of work health and safety risk assessments and task analyses
- » subject matter input into WHS investigation findings and reports
- » workplace safety inspections and audits
- » analysis of WHS related data
- » involvement in multi-disciplinary working groups or advisory groups related to WHS issues
- » training related to WHS
- » safety leadership and culture interventions
- » health and wellbeing advice and programs
- » injury and illness management advice, case management and support
- » research related to work health, safety and wellbeing issues or concerns.

It is vital that the QFES Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) is contemporary and reflects the business of QFES and emerging risks. During 2019-20, QFES developed a new WHSMS that provides a single source of reference for members to easily identify the necessary requirements to execute work and be confident they are performing in a compliant and safe manner. Other achievements include:

- » delivery of comprehensive Safety and Wellbeing Plans for bushfire and severe weather events and pandemic response
- » management of the flu vaccination program
- » perfluorooctance sulfonate (PFOS)/per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing
- » delivery of due diligence training
- » extensive contributions to various internal and external committees and working groups.

Not Now, Not Ever to domestic and family violence

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. QFES is dedicated to raising awareness of this important issue across its workforce and the wider community.

During the reporting period:

- » QFES participated in Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month during May 2020 to raise awareness amongst the QFES workforce. Due to COVIDSafe measures, an online campaign was run featuring rotating messaging and communications from the Commissioner. In addition, QFES participated virtually in the Candle Light Vigil hosted by Domestic Violence Connect (DVConnect) on 6 May 2020 to remember those who have passed as a result of domestic and family violence.
- » a red bench was installed at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron (December 2019), as part of the Red Rose Foundation's Red Bench Project. The project aims to raise awareness and encourages conversations about domestic and family violence and the need to keep addressing this important issue.
- » QFES again partnered with Zephyr Education to provide new lunchboxes for children living in domestic and family violence shelters with collection points around the state. Approximately 800 lunchboxes were collected.

The White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Project Team was awarded a Commissioner's Award for Excellence (2019) in Leadership for empowering QFES to lead the way in achieving White Ribbon Workplace accreditation, creating a safer, more respectful workplace and community by demonstrating a culture of zero tolerance towards domestic and family violence.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing

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

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 Peer Support Officers 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.

Highlights during the reporting period include:

- » completion of a 12-month project delivering highly valuable education and skills relating to mental health to all QFES leaders equivalent or above AO7, Station Officer or Regional Manager.
- » participation in the final phase of the Beyond Blue *Answering the call* national research project investigating mental health across first responder agencies
- » participation in the launch of *Are they Triple OK?* An initiative by R U OK? which specifically recognises the mental health challenges faced by first responder agency members
- » holding more than twenty R U OK? Day events across the state
- » recording the fifth highest amount of money raised by a first responder organisation in support of Movember (raising funds and awareness for men's health).

In addition, FESSN was awarded the Commissioner's Award for Excellence (2019) in the Leadership category for outstanding coordination of the QFES Peer Support Program and guidance to Peer Support Officers to continually evolve and support the dynamic needs of QFES (refer page 11).

Appendices

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Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of comprehensive income
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 Actual \$'000	2020 Original Budget \$'000	2020 Budget Variance* \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000
Income from continuing operations					
Appropriation revenue	3	136,493	106,546	29,947	106,395
User charges and fees	4	55,463	54,576	887	56,724
Emergency management levies	5	562,483	559,286	3,197	540,855
Grants and other contributions	6	52,688	27,342	25,346	20,538
Other revenue		3,229	2,673	556	3,224
Total revenue		810,356	750,423	59,933	727,736
Gains on disposal/remeasurement of assets		1	-	1	16
Total income from continuing operations		810,357	750,423	59,934	727,752
Expenses from continuing operations					
Employee expenses	7	459,942	421,884	38,058	414,918
Supplies and services	9	320,440	279,490	40,950	264,379
Grants and subsidies	10	18,551	20,400	(1,849)	26,588
Depreciation and amortisation	13-15	7,009	6,059	950	5,243
Impairment losses / (gains)		(77)	-	(77)	(315)
Interest on lease liability		116	58	58	-
Other expenses	11	12,372	11,841	531	13,745
Total expenses from continuing operations		818,353	739,732	78,621	724,558
Operating result for the year		(7,996)	10,691	(18,687)	3,194
Other comprehensive income not reclassified subsequently to operating result					
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus		-	-	-	19
Total other comprehensive income		-	-	-	19
Total comprehensive income		(7,996)	10,691	(18,687)	3,213

* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 27.

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of financial position
As at 30 June 2020

	Notes	2020 Actual \$'000	2020 Original Budget \$'000	2020 Budget Variance* \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000
Assets					
Current assets					
Cash		28,414	40,404	(11,990)	45,496
Receivables	12	54,479	50,541	3,938	50,704
Inventories		6,345	5,226	1,119	5,569
Prepayments		2,598	975	1,623	2,407
Total current assets		91,836	97,146	(5,309)	104,176
Non-current assets					
Intangible assets	13	3,008	5,358	(2,350)	5,066
Property, plant and equipment	14	18,328	23,973	(5,645)	16,836
Right-of-use assets	15	6,510		6,510	-
Total non-current assets		27,846	29,331	(1,486)	21,902
Total assets		119,682	126,477	(6,795)	126,078
Liabilities					
Current liabilities					
Payables	16	34,965	43,810	(8,845)	28,022
Lease liabilities	15	1,586	743	843	-
Accrued employee benefits	17	20,423	14,791	5,632	20,855
Other current liabilities	18	1,631	965	666	2,581
Total current liabilities		58,606	60,309	(1,703)	51,458
Non-current liabilities					
Lease liabilities	15	4,894	2,970	1,924	-
Total non-current liabilities		4,894	2,970	1,924	-
Total liabilities		63,499	63,279	221	51,458
Net assets		56,182	63,198	(7,016)	74,620
Equity					
Contributed equity		26,081			36,522
Accumulated surplus		29,813			37,810
Asset revaluation surplus		288			288
Total equity		56,183			74,620

* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 27.

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of changes in equity
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$'000	\$'000
Contributed equity		
Opening balance	36,522	36,272
Transactions with owners as owners:		
Net transfers from/(to) other departments - non current assets	(10,441)	250
Closing balance	26,081	36,522
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)		
Opening balance	37,810	34,616
Operating result	(7,996)	3,194
Closing balance	29,814	37,810
Asset revaluation surplus		
Opening balance	288	269
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	-	19
Closing balance	288	288
Total equity	56,183	74,620

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 Actual \$'000	2020 Original Budget \$'000	2020 Budget Variance* \$'000	2019 Actual \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Service appropriation receipts	134,718	106,546	28,172	104,089
User charges and fees	57,281	57,372	(91)	57,987
Emergency management levies	554,525	559,286	(4,761)	540,277
Grants and other contributions	42,236	17,439	24,797	10,363
GST input tax credits from ATO	24,262	-	24,262	16,486
GST collected from customers	6,545	-	6,545	3,803
Other	2,747	16,781	(14,034)	3,224
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Employee expenses	(457,417)	(421,884)	(35,533)	(409,270)
Supplies and services	(311,955)	(293,598)	(18,357)	(283,857)
Grants and subsidies	(18,551)	(20,400)	1,849	(26,588)
Finance/borrowing costs	-	(58)	58	-
GST paid to suppliers	(24,571)	-	(24,571)	(16,294)
GST remitted to ATO	(6,545)	-	(6,545)	(3,803)
Other	(3,882)	(4,734)	852	(2,202)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(607)	16,750	(17,357)	(5,785)
Cash flows from investing activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Sales of property, plant and equipment	-	-	-	1,524
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(4,078)	(5,450)	1,372	(4,004)
Payments for intangibles	(534)	-	(534)	(10)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(4,612)	(5,450)	838	(2,490)
Cash flows from financing activities				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Equity injections	250	(10,441)	10,691	250
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Equity withdrawals	(10,691)	(8,460)	(2,231)	-
Lease payments	(1,422)	(743)	(679)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(11,863)	(19,644)	7,781	250
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(17,082)	(8,344)	(8,738)	(8,025)
Cash at beginning of financial year	45,496	48,748	(3,252)	53,521
Cash at end of financial year	28,414	40,404	(11,990)	45,496

* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 27.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities		
Operating result	(7,996)	3,194
<i>Non-cash items included in operating result:</i>		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	7,009	5,243
Donated assets received	(506)	
Assets written on	(481)	-
Net (gains)/losses on disposal of property, plant and equipment	432	146
Lease interest expense	116	
<i>Change in assets and liabilities:</i>		
(Increase)/decrease in emergency management levies	(7,959)	(576)
(Increase)/decrease in trade debtors	(353)	1,128
(Increase)/decrease in net GST receivable	(309)	192
(Increase)/decrease in annual leave receivables	3,598	(246)
(Increase)/decrease in long service leave receivables	87	(180)
(Increase)/decrease in accrued debtors	1,021	(68)
(Increase)/decrease in other receivables	140	(408)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(776)	(344)
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(191)	(1,432)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	6,943	(16,144)
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	(432)	6,063
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	(950)	(2,353)
Net cash from operating activities	(607)	(5,785)

Accounting Policy - Cash

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

On 16 March 2015, an overdraft facility with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) was approved with a limit of \$110m. This facility is utilised periodically and is available for use in the next reporting period.

Reconciliation of liabilities arising from financing activities

Opening balance as at 1 July*	7,706	-
New leases acquired	80	-
<i>Non-cash changes:</i>		
Interest	116	-
<i>Cash flows:</i>		
Lease liability repayments	(1,422)	-
Closing balance as at 30 June	6,480	-

* The opening balance on 1 July 2019 represents the initial recognition of the lease liability in accordance with AASB 16, where no restatement of prior year balances is required.

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 38 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations. In addition, the financial statements comply with Queensland Treasury's Minimum Reporting Requirements for the year beginning on 1 July 2019 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, 14 and Note 15
- 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 less than \$500, to zero, unless disclosure of the full amount is specifically required. Amounts shown in these financial statements may not add to the correct sub-totals or totals due to rounding.

Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current 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 2019-20. 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 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities, effective 2021-22 for 'peppercorn leases'

The transition date for AASB 1058 is 1 July 2019. The standard contains detailed requirements for the accounting for certain types of revenue from customers.

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). This applies to all leases with significantly below-market terms and conditions principally to enable the lessee entity to further its objectives. However this has been amended by AASB 2018-8 which provides a temporary option for Not-for-profit lessees to not initially fair value a right-of-use asset arising from leases that have significantly below market terms when AASB 1058 and AASB 16 become effective from 1 January 2019. The option relief is expected to remain in place until further guidance has been developed to assist Not-for-profit entities in fair valuing such right-of-use assets and the financial reporting requirements for private sector and Not-for-profit entities have been finalised. The department has elected to apply this temporary option, resulting in 'peppercorn leases' being measured at cost with no change to the current financial reporting identified.

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.

(h) Accounting standards applied for the first time

AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-profit Entities and AASB 15 Revenue for Contracts with Customers

The department applied AASB 1058 and AASB 15 for the first time in 2019-20. The standards contain detailed requirements for the accounting for certain types of income of not-for-profit entities and revenue from customers.

Grants that are not enforceable and/or not sufficiently specific will not qualify for deferral, and will continue to be recognised as revenue as soon as the monies are received by the department. Grants received whereby specific performance obligations exist under a contract will be initially recognised as a liability, and subsequently recognised progressively as revenue as the department satisfies its performance obligations under the grant.

The department has reviewed the impact and grants have continued to be recognised as revenue when received (refer to Note 6).

AASB 16 Leases

The department applied AASB 16 Leases for the first time in 2019-20. Under this standard, lessees are required to recognise a right-of-use asset representing the rights to use the underlying leased asset and a liability representing the obligation to make lease payments for all non-cancellable leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying asset is of low value. The department applied the modified retrospective transition method and comparative information for 2018-19 has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 117.

Where a contract contains both a lease and non-lease components such as asset maintenance services, the department allocates the contractual payments to each component on the basis of their stand-alone prices. However, for leases of plant and equipment, the department has elected not to separate lease and non-lease components and instead accounts for them as a single lease component.

When measuring the lease liability, the department uses its incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate where the interest rate implicit in the lease cannot be readily determined, which is the case for all of the department's leases. To determine the incremental borrowing rate, the department uses loan rates provided by Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) that correspond to the commencement date and term of the lease.

Operating leases held with the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) for commercial office accommodation and motor vehicles provided under DHPW's QFleet program are exempt from lease accounting under AASB 16. This is due to DHPW holding substantive substitution rights over the assets used within these arrangements. Costs for these services have continued to be expensed as supplies and services when incurred.

1 Basis of financial statement preparation (continued)

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

AASB 16 Leases (continued)

Reconciliation of operating lease commitments at 30 June 2019 to lease liabilities at 1 July 2019

	\$'000
Total undiscounted operating lease commitments at 30 June 2019 (Note 15)	21,777
- less internal-to-government arrangements that are no longer leases	(14,538)
Total undiscounted operating lease commitments at 30 June 2019 for AASB 16 leases	7,239
- discounted AASB 16 leases using the incremental borrowing rate at 1 July 2019 (1.64%)	(444)
- add adjustments due to reassessments of lease terms	482
- add other adjustments	429
Lease liabilities at 1 July 2019	7,706

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 2023' outcomes, as outlined in the 2019-2023 strategic plan are:

- local service delivery models designed to support the services required in each community
- working together with QFES partners in a seamless way
- embed a culture that values evidence and intelligence-informed decision-making
- intelligence created is available to the organisation, QFES partners and the community where and when it is needed
- services delivered informed by local risk, vulnerability and relevance, factoring in lifecycle value and environmental impacts into strategic investment decisions aligning business decisions to organisational strategy and budget and understanding the related implications
- a learning organisation that proactively uses knowledge to continually challenge the way the organisation works, sharing knowledge about the triggers and rationale for adjustments to plans or behaviour with the community, QFES partners and the organisation.

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

QFES contributes to the Protect the Great Barrier Reef Advancing Queensland Priority.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2020

3 Appropriation revenue

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

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Budgeted appropriation revenue	106,546	97,709
Unforeseen expenditure	28,172	4,366
Total appropriation receipts (cash)	134,718	102,075
Less: opening balance of appropriation revenue receivable	-	-
Plus: opening balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	2,014	4,320
Less: closing balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	(239)	(2,014)
Net appropriation revenue	136,493	104,381
Plus: deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund (expense)	-	2,014
Appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income	136,493	106,395
Variance between original budgeted and actual appropriation revenue	29,947	8,686

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

Budgeted equity adjustment appropriation	(10,441)	250
Equity adjustment receipts	(10,441)	250
Equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity	(10,441)	250

Accounting Policy - Appropriation revenue

Appropriations provided under the *Appropriations Act 2019* 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	21,705	21,667
Attendance charges	11,553	12,335
Building and infrastructure fire safety	16,742	16,561
Sale of goods and services	5,463	6,161
Total	55,463	56,724

Accounting Policy - User charges and fees

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

5 Emergency management levies

Gross emergency management levies	572,666	550,755
Less: pensioner discount	(10,183)	(9,900)
Total	562,483	540,855

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	3,242	1,568
Grants from Queensland Government departments *	35,447	5,609
Motor Accident Insurance Commission	2,758	2,631
Services received below fair value **	10,589	10,267
Other	652	463
Total	52,688	20,538

* Grants from Queensland government departments includes Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Assistance of \$34.090m (2018-19: \$4.671m), Volunteer Compensation payments of \$0.326m (2018-19: nil) and sponsorships and contributions for State Emergency Services and Rural Fire Brigades of \$1.639m (2018-19: nil)

** 2019-20 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.

6 Grants and other contributions (continued)

Accounting Policy - Grants and other contributions

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

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

Otherwise, the grant is accounted for under AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-profit Entities*, whereby revenue is recognised upon receipt of the grant funding, except for special purpose capital grants received to construct non-financial assets to be controlled by the department. Special purpose capital grants are recognised as unearned revenue when received, and subsequently recognised progressively as revenue as the department satisfies its obligations under the grant through construction of the asset.

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

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Wages and salaries - General *	305,168	276,604
Wages and salaries - Overtime	35,728	33,550
Employer superannuation contributions	39,780	37,175
Long service leave levy	8,535	7,276
Annual leave levy	36,607	38,095

Employee related expenses

Workers' compensation premiums	18,217	12,681
Fringe benefits tax expense	494	522
Training expenses	3,648	4,809
Other employee related expenses **	11,765	4,206
Total	459,942	414,918

* Wages and salaries include \$3.698m of \$1,250 one-off, pro-rata payments for 2,958 full-time equivalent employees (announced by the state government in September 2019).

** Other employee related expenses have increased due to additional requirements for personal protective equipment in 2019-20.

The number of employees as at 30 June, including both full-time employees and part-time employees, measured on a full-time equivalent basis, reflecting Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI), is:

Full-Time equivalent employees (number)	3,358	3,338
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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.

7 Employee expenses (continued)

Accounting Policy - Employee expenses (continued)

Defined benefit plan - The liability for defined benefits is held on a whole-of-government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting. The amount of contributions for defined benefit plan obligations is based upon the rates determined on the advice of the State Actuary. Contributions are paid by the department at the specified rate following completion of the employee's service each pay period. The department's obligations are limited to those contributions paid.

Workers compensation premiums

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee 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.

For 2019-20 the independent external member received \$12,430 in remuneration (2018-19: \$3,300) . 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.

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 2019 – 30 June 2020

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 (Appointed 02/12/2019)	240	-	6	28	-	274
A/Commissioner (06/06/2019 - 01/12/2019)	136	-	3	17	-	156
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	234	-	6	30	-	270
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience (01/02/2020 - current)	119	-	3	17	-	139
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience (Acting 06/08/2019 - 01/02/2020)	102	21	2	14	-	139
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy & Corporate Services (Acting 08/07/2019 - current)	250	-	6	23	-	279
Chief Operating Officer (PSBA)	Remuneration is reported by the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA).					

8 Key Management Personnel disclosures (continued)

(c) Remuneration Expenses (continued)

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).					

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

There were no material related party transactions associated with the department's KMP during 2019-20 (2018-19:nil).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2020

9 Supplies and services

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Aircraft related costs	32,076	14,410
Cleaning and laundering	2,598	1,653
Communications	33,933	27,770
Computer expenses	7,463	6,769
Contractors	14,840	15,136
Emergency management levy administration fees	6,921	6,846
Marketing expenses	2,835	2,207
Minor equipment purchases	11,219	9,383
Motor vehicle expenses	20,439	19,917
Lease expenses	4,899	5,738
Employee Housing	114	169
Property expenses	6,590	4,680
Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) - operating expense *	106,162	106,566
Repairs and maintenance	13,562	11,378
Rural fire brigade operating costs	202	3,566
Travel and accommodation **	35,912	11,391
Other	20,676	16,800
Total	320,440	264,379

* Operating expense 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.

** Travel and accommodation expenses include \$25.016M (2019: nil) relating to quarantine expenses incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. These costs are anticipated to be reimbursed to the department in 2020-21.

Lease expenses

Lease expenses include lease rentals for short-term leases, leases of low value assets and variable lease payments. Refer to Note 16 for breakdown of lease expenses and other lease disclosures.

10 Grants and subsidies

Air sea rescue, coast guard and life saving organisations	10,396	9,146
Local authorities	3,295	2,709
Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA)-capital grant *	1,057	9,638
State emergency services	1,351	3,114
Volunteer rural fire brigades	90	591
Other	2,362	1,390
Total	18,551	26,588

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

11 Other expenses

Audit fees *	234	256
Insurance premiums-QGIF	1,013	936
Insurance premiums-other	53	12
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	432	162
Services received below fair value **	9,946	10,175
Special payments ***	399	81
Deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Funds	-	2,014
Other	295	109
Total	12,372	13,745

* Total audit fees quoted by Queensland Audit Office for the 2019-20 financial statements are \$231,000 (2018-19: \$225,000).

** 2019-20 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 in 2019-20 relate ex-gratia payments made to Rural Fire Service volunteers under Category D of the Queensland Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

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 2019-20 financial statements.

12 Receivables

Emergency management levies
Trade debtors
Less: Allowance for impairment loss

GST receivable
GST payable

Accrued debtors
Annual leave reimbursements
Departmental services revenue receivable
Long service leave reimbursements
Other

Total

2020	2019
\$'000	\$'000
34,549	26,591
8,355	8,080
(557)	(635)
42,347	34,036
3,341	1,741
(1,866)	(575)
1,475	1,166
2,248	3,269
6,228	9,826
-	-
1,547	1,634
634	773
10,657	15,502
54,479	50,704

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.

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 2020. 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

	Software internally generated	Software work in progress	Total
	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Gross value	23,989	534	24,523
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(21,515)	-	(21,515)
	<u>2,474</u>	<u>534</u>	<u>3,008</u>
Reconciliation			
Opening balance	4,159	907	5,066
Acquisitions	-	534	534
Transfers between asset classes	907	(907)	-
Amortisation	(2,592)	-	(2,592)
Closing balance	<u>2,474</u>	<u>534</u>	<u>3,008</u>
	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Gross value	23,081	907	23,988
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(18,922)	-	(18,922)
	<u>4,159</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>5,066</u>
Reconciliation			
Opening balance	6,487	917	7,404
Acquisitions	-	(10)	(10)
Amortisation	(2,328)	-	(2,328)
Closing balance	<u>4,159</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>5,066</u>

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. Any training costs are expensed as incurred.

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.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
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14 Property, plant and equipment

	Land	Buildings	Heritage and cultural	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Gross value	521	4,961	21	41,247	195	46,945
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(4,367)	-	(24,250)	-	(28,617)
	521	594	21	16,997	195	18,328
Reconciliation						
Opening balance	521	454	21	15,233	607	16,836
Acquisitions	-	23	-	3,877	533	4,433
Donations received	-	110	-	533	-	643
Transfers between asset classes	-	23	-	922	(945)	-
Disposals	-	-	-	(436)	-	(436)
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	(4)	-	(4)
Depreciation	-	(16)	-	(3,128)	-	(3,144)
Closing balance	521	594	21	16,997	195	18,328
	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Gross value	521	4,805	21	36,997	607	42,951
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(4,351)	-	(21,764)	-	(26,115)
	521	454	21	15,233	607	16,836
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	521	454	21	15,233	607	16,836

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 (disclosed under Note 13) reported by PSBA but utilised by QFES are as follows:

Class	NBV (\$'000)
Land	176,738
Buildings	256,653
Heritage and cultural assets	176
Plant and equipment	198,633
Work in progress	57,757
Software - Internally generated	25
Software - purchased	3

The balances disclosed above will transfer to the department as at 1 July 2020 - Refer to Note 25 for further details.

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.

14 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

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 - Measurement of property, plant and equipment using fair value

Land, buildings and heritage and cultural assets are measured at fair value as required by Queensland Treasury's Non-Current Asset Policies for the Queensland Public Sector. These assets are reported at their revalued amounts, being the fair value at the date of valuation, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and impairment losses where applicable.

The cost of items acquired during the financial year has been judged by management of the department to materially represent their fair value at the end of the reporting period.

Accounting Policy - Measurement of property, plant and equipment using cost

Plant and equipment is measured at cost in accordance with AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*. The carrying amount for such plant and equipment at cost has been assessed as not materially different from their fair value.

Accounting Policy - Revaluations of property, plant and equipment measured and fair value

Property, plant and equipment classes measured at fair value are revalued on an annual basis either by appraisals undertaken by and independent professional valuer, internal experts or by the use of appropriate and relevant indices.

Revaluations for land, buildings and heritage and cultural assets using an independent professional valuer are undertaken on a rolling basis over a four year period. However, if a particular asset class experiences significant or volatile changes in fair value, that class is subject to specific appraisals in the current reporting period, where practicable, regardless of the timing of the last specific appraisal.

The fair values reported are based on appropriate valuation techniques that maximise the use of available and relevant observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs.

Where assets have not been specifically appraised in the reporting period, their previous valuations are materially kept up-to-date via the application of relevant indices. The department ensures that the application of such indices results in a valid estimation of the assets' fair values at reporting date. Australis Asset Advisory Group (AAAG) supply the indices used for the land, buildings and heritage and cultural assets. Such indices are either publicly available, or are derived from market information available. AAAG provides assurance of their robustness, validity and appropriateness for application to the relevant assets. Indices used are also tested for reasonableness by applying the indices to a sample of assets, comparing the results to similar assets that have been valued by an independent professional valuer or internal expert, and analysing the trend of the changes in values over time. Through this process, which is undertaken annually, management assesses and confirms the relevance and suitability of indices provided by AAAG based on the department's own particular circumstances.

Any revaluation increment arising on the revaluation of an asset is credited to the asset revaluation surplus of the appropriate class, except to the extent it reverses a revaluation decrement for the class previously recognised as an expense. A decrease in the carrying amount on revaluation is charged as an expense, to the extent it exceeds the balance, if any, in the revaluation surplus relating to that asset class.

Revaluation methodology

All revaluations were performed by AAAG as at 31 March 2020. The fair value as at 30 June 2020 is materially the same as the valuation completed as at 31 March 2020.

Land

Independent revaluations were performed for land in the QFES Central region as at 30 June 2020, as part of the four year rolling program, by AAAG.

Land not subject to market specific appraisal were revalued using indices supplied by the AAAG based on individual factor changes for each property as derived from a review of market transactions and having regard to the review of land values undertaken for local government locations.

14 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Revaluation methodology (continued)

Buildings and Heritage and cultural assets

Independent revaluations were performed for buildings in the QFES Central region as at 30 June 2020, as part of the four year rolling program, by AAAG.

Buildings and Heritage and cultural assets not subject to market specific appraisal were revalued using the most appropriate method of indexation, determined by the type of asset, as provided by the AAAG. AAAG calculates indices by a weighted matrix based on various sources for both a cost approach and market approach. The indices data for the built asset classes are based on construction movement as well as other factors intrinsic to the construction process. These indices were determined to be the most appropriate when considering the department's asset types and were accepted and applied by management on the basis they resulted in a materially accurate representation of the fair value of buildings as at 30 June 2020.

Accounting Policy - Fair value measurement

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date under current market conditions (i.e. an exit price) regardless of whether that price is directly derived from observable inputs or estimated using another valuation technique.

Observable inputs are publicly available data that are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Observable inputs used by the department include, but are not limited to, published sales data for land and general office buildings.

Unobservable inputs are data, assumptions and judgements that are not available publicly, but are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Significant unobservable inputs used by the department include, but are not limited to, subjective adjustments made to observable data to take account of the characteristics of the department's assets/liabilities, internal records of recent construction costs (and/or estimates of such costs), assets' characteristics/functionality, and assessments of physical condition and remaining useful life. Unobservable inputs are used to the extent that sufficient relevant and reliable observable inputs are not available for similar assets/liabilities.

A fair value measurement of a non-financial asset takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use.

Fair Value Measurement Hierarchy

All assets and liabilities of the department for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within the following fair value hierarchy, based on the data and assumptions used in the most recent specific appraisals:

Level 1 - represents fair value measurements that reflect unadjusted quoted market prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities;

Level 2 - represents fair value measurements that are substantially derived from inputs (other than quoted prices included within level 1) that are observable, either directly or indirectly; and

Level 3 - represents fair value measurements that are substantially derived from unobservable inputs.

None of the department's valuations of assets or liabilities are eligible for categorisation into level 1 of the fair value hierarchy.

Categorisation of fair values recognised as at 30 June:

	Level 2 \$'000		Level 3 \$'000		Total \$'000	
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019
Land	521	521	-	-	521	521
Buildings	76	78	518	376	594	454
Heritage and cultural	-	-	21	21	21	21

Accounting Policy - Depreciation of property, plant and equipment

Land is not depreciated as it has an unlimited useful life.

Property, plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis so as to allocate the net cost or revalued amount of each asset, less its estimated residual value, progressively over its estimated useful life to the department.

Assets under construction (work-in-progress) are not depreciated until construction is complete and the asset is put to use or is ready for its intended use, whichever is earlier. These assets are then reclassified to the relevant class within property, plant and equipment.

Any expenditure that increases the originally assessed capacity or service potential of an asset is capitalised and the new depreciable amount is depreciated over the remaining useful life of the asset to the department.

For each class of depreciable asset the following depreciation rates are used:

Class	Rate (%)
Buildings	1% to 10%
Plant and equipment	1% to 33.3%

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2020

15 Right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

Right-of-use assets - Buildings

Gross Value

Less: Accumulated amortisation

Reconciliation

Opening balance

Acquisitions

Amortisation

Closing balance

Lease liabilities

Current

Lease liabilities

Non-Current

Lease liabilities

Total

	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
	7,786	-
	(1,276)	-
	6,510	-
	7,706	-
	80	-
	(1,276)	-
	6,510	-
	1,586	-
	4,894	-
	6,480	-

A new accounting standard AASB 16 *Leases* came into effect in 2019-20, resulting in changes to the department's accounting for leases for which it is lessee. No restatement of prior year balances is required. The transitional impacts of the new standard are disclosed in Note 1(h).

Accounting Policy - Recognition of Right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets with a lease term greater than 12 months and with a value equal to or in excess of \$10,000 are capitalised. Items for a short term period less than 12 months or for a lesser value are expensed.

The right-of-use asset will initially be recognised at cost, consisting of the initial amount of the associated lease liability, plus any lease payments made to the lessor at or before the effective date, less any lease incentive received, the initial estimate of restoration costs and any initial direct costs incurred by the lessee.

Right-of-use assets are recognised and carried at their cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses, adjusted for any re-measurement of the lease liability in certain circumstances.

Accounting Policy - Amortisation of right-of-use assets

The lessee shall amortise the right-of-use asset from the commencement date to the end of the lease term.

Accounting Policy - Impairment of right-of-use assets

All right-of-use assets are assessed for indicators of impairment. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, the department determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Accounting Policy - Lease liability

Lease liabilities are initially recognised at the present value of lease payments over the lease term that are not yet paid. Lease payments include fixed payments, variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, option payment (if reasonably certain) and expected residual value guarantees. The present value of lease payments are discounted using the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) fixed rate applicable to the term of the lease. Subsequently, the lease liabilities are increased by the interest charged and reduced by the amount of lease payments.

Disclosures - Leases as lessee

(i) Details of leasing arrangements as lessee

Category / class of lease arrangement	Description of arrangement
Buildings	The department routinely enters into leases for buildings and office accommodation. Some of these leases are short-term leases or leases of low value assets. Lease terms for buildings and office space that are recognised on balance sheet can range from 3 to 25 years. A number of leases have renewal or extension options. The options are generally exercisable at market prices and are not included in the right-of-use asset or lease liability unless the department is reasonably certain it will renew the lease.

(ii) Office accommodation, employee housing and motor vehicles

The department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) provides the agency with access to office accommodation, employee housing and motor vehicles under government-wide frameworks. These arrangements are categorised as procurement of services rather than as leases because DHPW has substantive substitution rights over the assets. The related services expenses are included in Note 9.

15 Right-of-use assets and lease liabilities (continued)

(iii) Amounts recognised in profit or loss

Interest expense on lease liabilities	116	-
Breakdown of 'Lease expenses' included in Note 9		
- Expenses relating to short-term leases	2,040	-
- Expenses relating to leases of low value assets	31	-
- Expenses relating to office accommodation and employee housing provided by DHPW	2,827	-
(iv) Total cash outflow for leases	4,899	-

2018-19 disclosures under AASB 117

Operating lease commitments at 30 June 2019

- Within 1 year	5,844
- Later than 1 year but not later than 5 years	14,907
- Later than 5 years	1,026
Lease liabilities at 1 July 2019	21,777

16 Payables

Trade creditors	34,699	24,453
Accrued creditors	-	1,500
Tax liabilities	138	160
Other	129	1,909
Total	34,966	28,022

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. From 25 March 2020, all payment terms for trade creditors were set to immediate.

17 Accrued employee benefits

Annual leave levy payable	9,495	10,784
Long service leave levy payable	2,087	1,794
Salaries and wages outstanding	6,589	7,579
Other	2,252	698
Total	20,423	20,855

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*.

18 Other current liabilities

Unearned revenue	1,309	456
Deferred appropriation payable to Treasury	239	2,014
Other	83	111
Total	1,631	2,581

19 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.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2020

20 Commitments

(a) Capital expenditure commitments

Capital expenditure commitments inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits at the reporting date are payable as follows:

	Note	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Class of asset			
Plant and equipment		550	270
Total		550	270
Not later than one year		550	270
Total		550	270

(b) 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	27,591	18,302
Later than one year and not later than five years	117	-
Total	27,708	18,302

21 Financial instruments

Financial instruments categories

The department has the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities:

Financial assets

Cash		28,414	45,496
Financial assets measured at amortised cost:			
Receivables	12	54,479	50,704
Total financial assets		82,893	96,200

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost:

Payables	16	34,965	28,022
Lease Liabilities		6,480	-
Total financial liabilities at amortised cost		41,445	28,022

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.

(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:

Risk exposure	Definition	Exposure
Credit risk	Credit risk exposure refers to the situation where the department may incur financial loss as a result of another party to a financial instrument failing to discharge their obligation.	The department is exposed to credit risk in respect of its receivables (Note 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 liquidity risk in respect of its payables (Note 16).
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.

21 Financial instruments (continued)

(b) Risk Measurement and Management Strategies

Risk exposure	Measurement Method	Risk Management Strategies
Credit risk	Ageing analysis, earnings at risk	The department manages credit risk through the use of a credit management strategy. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to credit default by ensuring that the department invests in secure assets and monitors all funds owed on a timely basis. Exposure to credit risk is monitored on an ongoing basis.
Liquidity risk	Sensitivity analysis	The department manages liquidity risk through the use of a liquidity management strategy. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to liquidity risk by ensuring the department has sufficient funds available to meet employee and supplier obligations as they fall due. This is achieved by ensuring that 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.

Financial liabilities	Note	2020 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	16	34,965	-	-	34,965
Lease liability	15	1,586	4,894	-	6,480
Total		36,551	4,894	-	41,445

Financial liabilities	Note	2019 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	16	28,022	-	-	28,022

22 Contingencies

In 2019-20, QFES commenced a review of the calculations for dual role superannuation contributions for prior periods due to the complex nature of these arrangements. QFES is assessing for any impacts for payments and for reporting under the Superannuation Guarantee amnesty enacted by the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Recovering Unpaid Superannuation) Act 2019 (Cwth)*. QFES also commenced a review of payroll codes and workers compensation payments.

23 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 \$0.069m (2019: \$0.051m).

24 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.

Mazars (QLD) Pty Ltd are the auditors for the Queensland Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades Donations Fund.

Donations received for payment to brigades totalled \$3.566m (2019: \$0.100m).

Total cash at bank at reporting date was \$2.882m (2019: \$0.001m) with total donations payable to brigades \$2.882m (2019: \$0.001m).

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.

25 Events occurring after balance date

PSBA will transfer \$690m in land and buildings, plant and equipment and intangible assets to QFES on 1 July 2020 as a result of a shift in assets accounting management and policy which will impact the reporting of operational assets under AASB 116 – Property, Plant & Equipment from this date. This transfer was endorsed by the Queensland Treasurer on 13 June 2020. Capital commitments totalling \$27.5m will also be transferred over from PSBA to QFES as at 1 July 2020.

There were no other events occurring after balance date that management considers would have a material impact on the information disclosed in these financial statements.

26 Significant financial impacts from COVID-19 pandemic

During the 2019-20 financial year \$25.016m has been recognised by the department in response to COVID-19 relating to quarantine expenses (refer to Note 9).

27 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) (\$19.593m), additional supplementation received for enterprise bargaining arrangements (\$9.066m), and deferral of 2018-19 funding to 2019-20 for the State Emergency Services communications on-boarding to the government wireless network (\$1.874m).

Grants and Contributions: Exceeded budgeted revenue due to the receipt of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) revenues associated with current and prior year severe bushfire and weather events (\$21.275m), additional contributions from the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) (\$1.897m), commonwealth grants in support of international urban search and rescue capability (\$0.401m), sponsorships and contributions for State Emergency Services and Rural Fire Brigades (\$1.639m), and receipt of Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) funds (\$0.154m).

Employee expenses: Variance is due to additional overtime expenditure (\$15.034m) mainly associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and COVID-19, increased costs associated with enterprise bargaining arrangements (\$9.066m), additional presumptive legislation Workcover premiums (\$5.536m), additional staff uniforms and personal protective equipment (\$2.905m), additional auxiliary wages associated with severe bushfires events (\$2.211m), and other increased wages and allowances impacted by bushfire, severe weather events and COVID-19.

Supplies and services: Additional expenditure was incurred for QFES' public safety regional radio networks digital readiness and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the ACMA (\$13.786m), expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments (\$36.566m), partly offset by various program underspends impacted by COVID-19.

Explanation of major variances - Statement of financial position

Cash: Lower than budget due to the timing of payables and significant expenditure due to bushfire and severe weather events, impacted by the additional COVID-19 expenses.

Intangible assets: Balance is below budget due to lower than anticipated expenditure on operational information systems in 2019-20, with funding to be deferred to 2020-21.

Property, plant and equipment: Balance is below budget due to delays with operational equipment acquisitions in 2019-20 and capital acquisitions that are scheduled for completion in 2020-21.

Right-of-use assets: Variance is due to the implementation of AASB 16 in 2019-20 for leases being classified as right-of-use assets.

Payables: Balance is lower than budget with the timing of payables impacted by COVID-19, with payments prioritised in support of Government policy to expedite vendor payments during COVID-19.

Explanation of major variances - Statement of cash flows

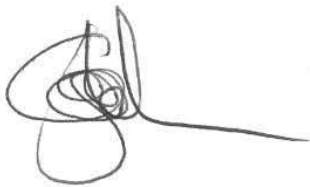
Cash: Lower than budget due to the timing of payables and significant expenditure due to bushfire, severe weather events and additional expenditure incurred as a result of COVID-19 requirements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Management Certificate for the year ended 30 June 2020

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), section 38 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with section 62(1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

- (a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects;
- (b) the statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for the year ending 30 June 2020 and of the financial position of the department at the end of that year; and

The Commissioner, as the accountable officer of Queensland Fire and Emergency, acknowledges responsibility under s.7 and s.11 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* for the establishment and maintenance, in all material respect, of an appropriate and effective system of internal controls and risk management process with respect to financial reporting throughout the reporting period.



G. Leach
MBA, MEmergMgt, MIFireE,
GAICD

Accountable Officer
Commissioner

27th August 2020



W. Brummer
B.Bus (Acctg), Grad Cert Prof Acctg
MIPA, GAICD

Chief Finance Officer

27 August 2020

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 2020, 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 2019* and Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, 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 2019* and Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Accountable Officer is also responsible for assessing the department's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the department or to otherwise cease operations.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

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. This is not done for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the department's internal controls, but allows me to express an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements.
- 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.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Statement

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year 30 June 2020:

- 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.

Prescribed requirements scope

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the Financial Accountability Act 2009, any other Act and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly **record and explain the department's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.**



28 August 2020

John Welsh
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Regulator Performance Framework Annual Performance Report 2019-20

About this report

The Better Regulation Strategy, which includes the Regulator Performance Framework, recognises the actions and performance of regulators in implementing, administering and enforcing regulations. The strategy plays a significant role in achieving the policy objective of regulation, while reducing the regulatory burden experienced by stakeholders, regulated parties and regulators.

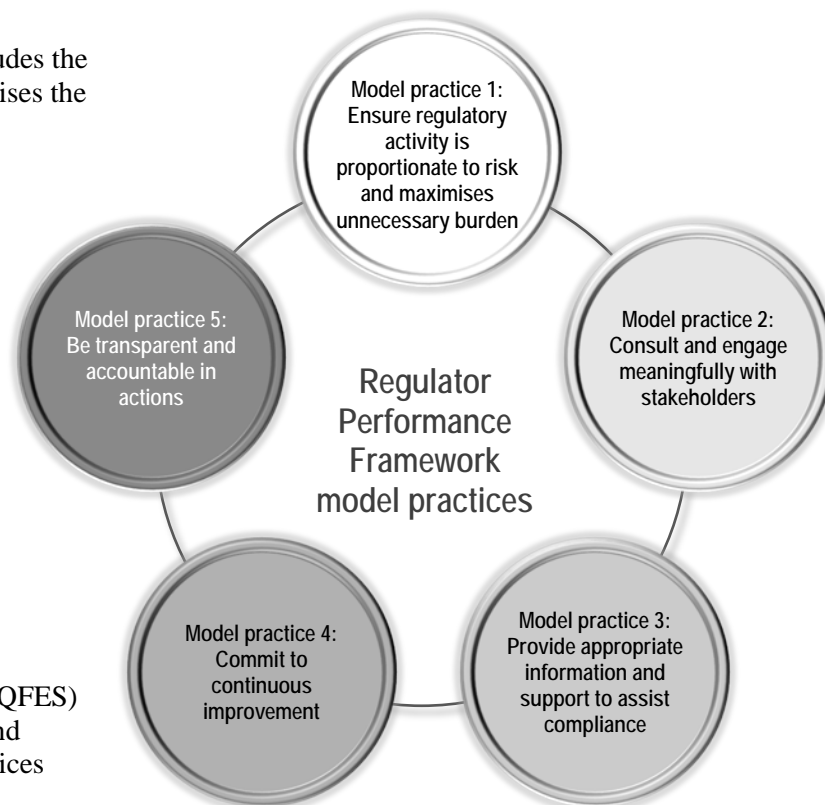
To maximise the effectiveness of the framework, regulators are required to report annually (from 2018-19) to demonstrate the extent to which they are implementing the model practices in the framework and to outline plans for future improvements of their business practices.

Introduction

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (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, disaster management services, Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service. The department 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' regulatory activities include enforcing compliance with legislated fire safety standards and processing applications for advice on building work assessable against the *Building Act 1975*. Regulated business entities 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.

Impact of COVID-19

During 2019-20, the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19 impacted on QFES' ability to undertake some business-as-usual activities and practices, including regulatory activities such as building inspections. This was as a result of the COVIDSafe measures instigated for staff and community safety, and the fact that QFES was directly involved in the response to the pandemic.

As a department directly supporting the Queensland Government and local governments in responding to the pandemic, QFES' operational requirements resulted in redeployment of some officers to bolster

frontline operational roles. This directly impacted the number of regulatory building inspections conducted during the reporting period.

While building approval inspections continued during the COVID-19 response from March to June 2020, QFES took the following actions to continue to meet its regulatory responsibilities:

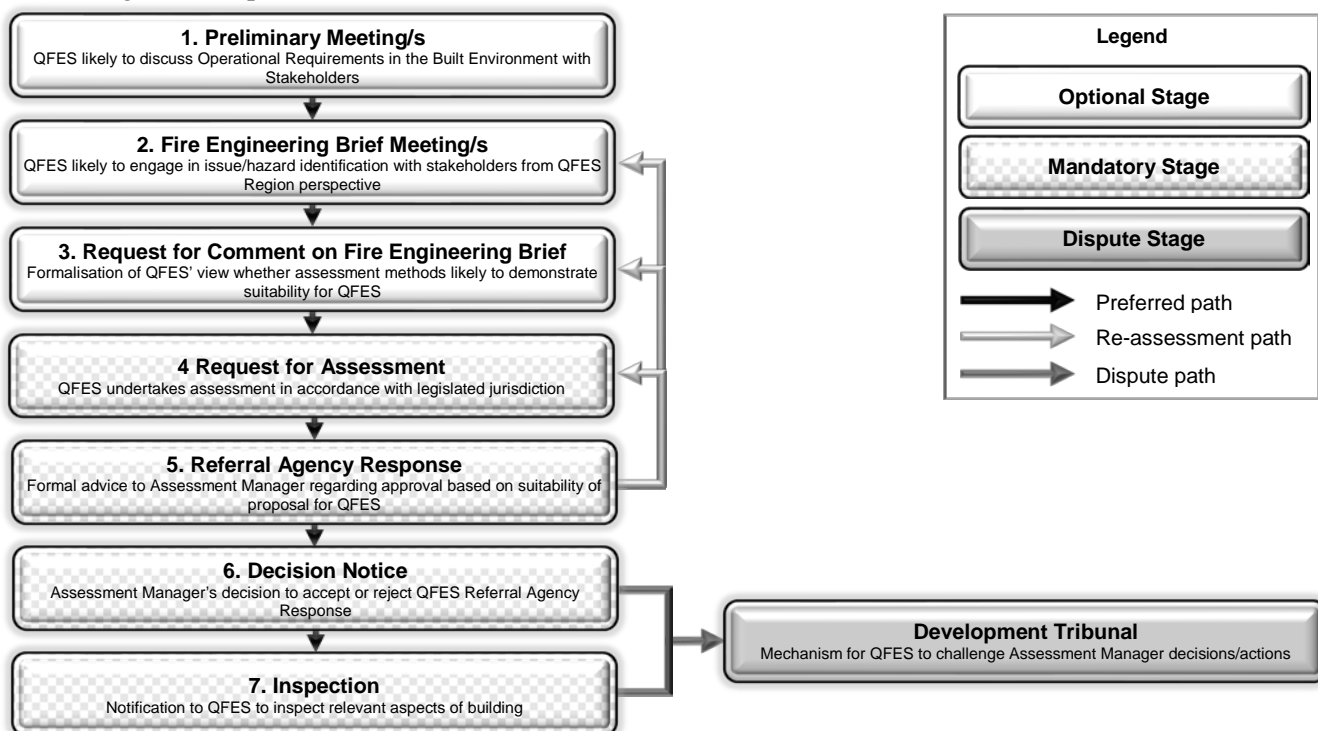
- » officers wore Queensland Health recommended personal protective equipment during interactions with the public.
- » all scheduled routine building inspections were suspended, while any complaints or concerns for building fire safety that were reported to QFES were actioned and fully investigated.
- » scheduled pragmatic testing of unwanted alarms compliance in existing buildings was suspended, while testing relating to building approvals continued.
- » engagement with seasonal workers to provide education on Budget Accommodation Buildings (BABs) was suspended, while prosecutions of illegal BABs continued.
- » meetings of industry and stakeholder committees and working groups were suspended.
- » correspondence was sent to key stakeholders reminding them that compliance with legislation was still required, and that QFES regulatory work continued during the restrictions.

Table 1. Legislation QFES has regulatory responsibilities under:

Act	Subordinate legislation
<i>Building Act 1975</i>	<i>Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008</i>
<i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990</i>	<i>Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008</i> <i>Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011</i>
<i>Planning Act 2016</i>	<i>Planning Regulation 2017</i>

Stages of the QFES building fire safety assessment process

The below diagram outlines the different stages of the QFES building fire safety assessment process, from initial meetings to discuss building fire safety requirements, through to prosecution in the event of a dispute or continuing non-compliance.



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 activities.
- » Regulatory approaches are updated and informed by intelligence gathering so that effort is focussed towards risk.

1.1 Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2019-20

- 1.1.1** 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.
- 1.1.2** 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.
- 1.1.3** A Maintenance Inspection Report (MIR) is a scheduled inspection of the current maintenance of a building's fire safety features conducted by an appropriately qualified officer. This type of inspection is conducted by operational crews at a frequency determined by the risk profile of the building.
- The MIR process enables fire officers to liaise with the community and assist the owners/occupiers of premises to minimise their risk and liability with regards to building fire safety whilst ensuring compliance with building fire safety legislation.

1.2 Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2019-20 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices

- 1.2.1** 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.
- 1.2.2** 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.
- 1.2.3** The QFES Compliance and Prosecution Unit also assists regions with covert surveillance and targeted inspections where illegal and unsafe accommodation practices are suspected.
- 1.2.4** During 2019-20, two successful prosecution cases against two individuals in relation to offences detected at one BAB resulted in \$56,000 in fines imposed by the courts. An additional four BAB prosecutions against two individuals were set down for Magistrates Court trials in March to April 2020 however, were adjourned due to the impacts of COVID-19. These have been rescheduled for 2020-21.

1.3 Actions taken in 2019-20, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices

- 1.3.1** QFES provides guidance to other government agencies as part of their legislative review programs. QFES attended numerous inter-agency licensing review meetings between August 2019 and February 2020.
- 1.3.2** QFES is a member of the Ministerial Construction Council (MCC) Subcommittee—Fire Protection Licensing and Compliance. This committee ensures industry bodies are registered and provide consistent service to the community. QFES officers attended numerous MCC subcommittee meetings between November 2019 and March 2020.

Table 2. QFES Building Fire Safety Inspection Measures

No.	Performance measures	2019-20 Actual
2.1	Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	59.2%
2.2	Number of entities prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for building fire safety offences (not including BABs)	1
2.3	Total dollar value of fines imposed on entities in the Magistrates Court for building fire safety offences (not including BABs)	\$12,500
2.4	Notices by Commissioner issued to rectify fire safety breaches (number)	124
2.5	Requisitions by Commissioner to rectify fire safety breaches (number)	36
2.6	Infringement Notices issued (number)	50
2.7	Total dollar value of Infringement Notices issued	\$203,548
2.8	Fire investigation inspections (number of structures)	601
2.9	Building Approval Officer (BAO) assessments (number)	1,901
2.10	BAO inspections (number)	1,660
2.11	Safety Assessment Officers structure inspections (number)	1,282
2.12	Inspections of premises suspected of operating as illegal and unsafe BABs (number)	231 inspections of 124 premises
2.13	Requisitions by Commissioner issued to BABs to reduce risk (number)	35
2.14	Notices by Commissioner issued to BABs to improve fire safety within the premises (number)	21
2.15	Infringement Notices issued to BABs for breaches of fire safety (number)	14
2.16	Total dollar value of fines imposed by QFES for Infringement Notices to BABs	\$32,544

Note:

- 2.1 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.

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.

2.1 Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2019-20

- 2.1.1** Industry relationships formed at the industry smoke alarm 'Think Tank', facilitated by QFES and held in March 2019, resulted in direct collaborative partnerships to consider and address industry issues and concerns.
- 2.1.2** The Interdepartmental Committee on Smoke Alarms met in May 2020 to confirm that each department was progressing in their area of responsibility, community engagement and marketing.
- 2.1.3** A QFES Smoke Alarm Engagement Officer was appointed from February 2020 to 31 December 2020 resulting in an ongoing proactive QFES/industry stakeholder community education campaign. With the next key smoke alarm implementation date being 1 January 2022 for rental properties and properties being transferred, the priority is to promote the safety benefits to landlords of voluntarily complying before the deadline. By utilising established stakeholder communication platforms, QFES has direct contact with landlords and tenants which results in key messaging reaching the target audience.
- 2.1.4** QFES' website provides detailed information for the public to access all aspects of legislative requirements for the staged implementation of the new smoke alarm requirements which commenced on 1 January 2017. The smoke alarms website underwent a review and update in March 2020 and upon final production in 2020-21, will include three animated videos providing an alternative means of encouraging owners to upgrade their smoke alarms. (www.qfes.qld.gov.au).
- 2.1.5** 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.
- 2.1.6** 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)
 - Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA)
 - National Fire Industry Association (NFIA)
 - Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS)
 - Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE)
 - Society of Fire Safety (SFS)
 - Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW)
 - 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing knowledge and influencing strategic direction • future evolution of regulatory building codes and Australian Standards. <p>2.1.7 QFES has close links with key regulators such as DHPW and the QBCC, including sharing membership of the Interdepartmental Committee on Smoke Alarms with DHPW and sharing membership of the Safer Buildings Taskforce with DHPW and QBCC. This provides QFES with the ability to share information and refer matters to the relevant regulatory body, as appropriate.</p> <p>2.1.8 QFES plays a key role within emergency planning of hazardous industries in collaboration with other government agencies especially regulators including Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. This role includes the management of emergency plans lodged with QFES including their assessment and the provision of guidance through a dedicated webpage (www.qfes.qld.gov.au). These activities also inform interactions with hazardous industries across Queensland and QFES emergency management preparations.</p>
2.2 Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2019-20 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices	2.2.1 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.
2.3 Actions taken in 2019-20, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices	<p>2.3.1 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.</p> <p>Under the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990</i>, QFES charges for attendance at unwanted alarms to encourage building owners or occupiers to be continually proactive in managing fire alarm systems.</p> <p>To reduce instances where building owners are charged for QFES' attendance at unwanted alarms, the department 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>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 2.2 in 2019-20.</p>

2.3.2 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.

Table 3. QFES Unwanted Alarms Measures

No.	Performance Measure	2019-20 Actual
3.1	Pragmatic tests conducted (number)	17 tests on 11 buildings
3.2	Pass rate on first pragmatic test	88%
3.3	Installed alarm connections to monitored alarm systems (number)	7,679
3.4	Unwanted alarm activations from monitored alarm systems responded to	16,522
3.5	Percentage of incidents attended that were unwanted alarms	22.7%
3.6	Rate of Unwanted Alarm Activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment	2.2

Note:

- 3.6 This measure indicates the effectiveness of QFES strategies to help reduce the number of unwanted alarm activations. This measure compares the number of system initiated false alarms responded to by departmental fire personnel with the number of connected Alarm Signalling Equipment devices per annum. 'Unwanted Alarm Activations' are defined as any activation of the fire alarm and detection system that could have been avoided. The *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* (section 104DA) provides a legislated target of no more than four unwanted alarm activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment per annum.

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.

3.1 Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2019-20

3.1.1 The Compliance Notice issued by QFES clearly articulates details of the non-compliances to assist recipients understand why they are in breach and to have a clear understanding of what their remediation obligations are, and what actions are required to achieve compliance.

QFES Safety Assessment Officers aim to deliver notices face-to-face to building owner/occupiers to explain the notice and ensure rectification requirements are clear to recipients. The officers continue to work closely with owner/occupiers throughout the rectification process.

In the event that a building owner/occupier disputes a Compliance Notice, the state office will assess and validate the regional Safety Assessment Officer's disputed notice. If the owner/occupier takes no action to rectify the issues, then enforcement action will commence, including potential prosecution.

	<p>3.1.2 The QFES Cladding Support Unit forms part of the Safer Building Taskforce (previously known as 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).</p> <p>As of 1 October 2018, laws apply in Queensland requiring 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.</p> <p>If an in-scope building is fixed with aluminium composite panel cladding, the owner is required to register the building on the Safer Buildings website (www.saferbuildings.qld.gov.au). From information supplied by the owner, the Cladding Support Unit coordinates the appropriate region to undertake an Operational Risk Audit and works with the building owner and management to develop minimisation strategies including upgraded QFES operational response and building evacuation plans.</p> <p>3.1.3 Industry policy regarding building cladding 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.</p> <p>3.1.4 QFES has an external facing portal to reduce the use of paper and enable clients 24-hour access to the QFES building approval lodgement process.</p> <p>3.1.5 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).</p> <p>3.1.6 In March 2020, QFES released the updated QFES Guide to the Referral of Performance Solutions, which clearly communicates QFES' expectations for referred Performance Solutions, thereby facilitating effective engagement with stakeholders.</p>
<p>3.2 Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2019-20 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices</p>	<p>3.2.1 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).</p>
<p>3.3 Actions taken in 2019-20, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices</p>	<p>3.3.1 QFES has an evolving BAO Technical Reference Working Group comprising of BAOs from each of its seven regions who provide technical input into policy developed by state subject matter experts.</p>

Table 4. Fire safety advice applications

No.	Performance Measure	2019-20 Actual
4.1	Fire safety advice applications received (number)	3,622
4.2	Fire safety advice applications completed within the 15-day timeframe (number and per cent)	3,325 or 90%

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.

4.1 Examples and/or case studies that highlight the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices in 2019-20 aligned with the regulator model practices or indicated where business practices could be enhanced in line with the model practices.

4.1.1 QFES has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Queensland that provides a Graduate Certificate in Fire Safety course for QFES BAOs. This course satisfies academic requirements for progression to BAO2 level.

4.1.2 QFES developed an MoU with the Department of Environment and Science that ensures information sharing by either agency regarding investigations and compliance of waste management facilities. The MoU ensures that actions taken by either agency are communicated and are complementary to other compliance actions.

4.1.3 QFES participated in fire safety research activities with various external stakeholders, aimed at increasing QFES' knowledge and understanding of innovative and emerging building products, technologies and methods of construction, etc. Examples include fire safety research into the use of cross laminated timber and the performance of, and standards pertaining to, smoke alarms.

4.2 Actions taken in 2019-20, or currently being taken by QFES, to improve regulatory activities and business practices to reflect the regulatory model practices.

4.2.1 The Cladding Support Unit 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 retains oversight of the Operational Risk Audit report which is passed to the regional leadership team for action regarding operation response upgrades. A competency maintenance module has been developed and integrated into the operational crews training schedule.

4.2.2 The QFES Community Infrastructure Branch has in place a number of working groups such as the Technical Reference Group and the Technical Alarm Coordination and Response Group to ensure consistency across QFES when providing industry advice.

4.2.3 QFES worked with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) to transition fire investigation training for QFES officers to a nationally accredited Advanced Diploma qualification which will further improve service standards of QFES officers. Transition work was completed with 13 QFES fire investigation students enrolled in the first CIT Advanced Diploma course scheduled to commence in August 2020. Current qualified fire investigation staff will continue to work with their current qualification. However, a transition program is being offered to staff who opt to upgrade their qualification to the new Advanced Diploma level.

- 4.2.4** QFES continued to update, refine and expand externally facing guidelines to inform stakeholders. For example, the QFES Guide to the Referral of Performance Solutions was updated and released in March 2020. This is an ongoing process to reflect changes to legislation, codes, standards, innovation and emerging issues.
- 4.2.5** As part of regulatory review activities, QFES continued its review of the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*. The purpose of the regulation is to ensure safe and timely building evacuations during fires or emergencies, and to ensure prescribed fire safety installations for buildings are maintained. The review includes assessment of several aspects including whether the regulation is appropriately risk based and remains the best approach to achieving outcomes. This review will continue into 2020-21.

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.

5.1 Evidence and relevant information that demonstrates the extent to which QFES' regulatory practices aligned with the regulator model practices throughout 2019-20

- 5.1.1** Detailed information pertaining to building owner and occupier responsibilities is published on the QFES website.
- 5.1.2** The QFES Fire Safety Management Tool for Owner/Occupier to assist owners/occupiers in proactively managing compliance with legislative requirements is available on the QFES website (www.qfes.qld.gov.au).
- 5.1.3** The Cladding Support Unit 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).
- 5.1.4** The QFES Guide to the Referral of Performance Solutions, released in March 2020, clearly communicates QFES' expectations for referred Performance Solutions, thereby facilitating effective engagement and providing increased certainty for stakeholders.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services *Human Rights Act 2019* Annual Performance Report 2019-20

Introduction

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (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, disaster management services, Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service (SES). The department 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.

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

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

Human rights are basic entitlements that belong to everyone regardless of your background, what you look like, what you think, what you believe or any other status or characteristic. Everyone is entitled to have their human rights protected, without discrimination.

The Act protects 23 fundamental human rights such as the right to freedom of movement and the right to liberty and security of person; and acknowledges the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings.

Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) impact on human rights

During 2019-20, the delivery of fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services was impacted by the Queensland Government's response to, and recovery from COVID-19 which was supported by the department. QFES staff and volunteers were required to be flexible and agile in an ever-changing environment, at times assuming roles that were outside the norm and implementing innovative approaches to service delivery and training.

The government's response to COVID-19 has clearly been significant for the human rights of Queenslanders.

During COVID-19, QFES played an essential role in the government's efforts to protect and support Queenslanders. From a human rights perspective, QFES took action and made decisions which protected the following:

- » Right to life
- » Right to protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
- » Right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- » Right to freedom of expression
- » Right to privacy and reputation
- » Right to education
- » Right to health services.

In protecting these rights, other human rights at times were limited such as:

- » Right to freedom of movement
- » Right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association
- » Right to taking part in public life
- » Property rights
- » Cultural rights - generally
- » Right to liberty and security of person.

When impacting these human rights, QFES was mindful of its obligation to act compatibly with human rights, by ensuring that any limitations of human rights were reasonable and justified. Actions or decisions taken by QFES that promoted or limited human rights during COVID-19 include the following:

- » activated the State Disaster Coordination Centre on 2 February 2020 to support Queensland operations in response to COVID-19, led by the State Health Emergency Coordination Centre, including the provision of logistical support for quarantine accommodation.
- » worked with the Queensland Police Service to support the Department of Justice and Attorney-General in developing a whole-of-government Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Team to support frontline management of quarantined members of the community across Queensland.
- » provided significant resources including SES volunteers to support the implementation of the State Border Restrictions Reception plan at nine airports across the state. At the Brisbane Airport domestic terminal, SES volunteers provided advice to interstate travellers and collected mandatory health forms on behalf of Queensland Health.
- » amended the *Disaster Management Act 2003* to change the extension to the disaster declaration period for COVID-19 from 14 days to 90 days to reduce the administrative burden on Governor in Council and the department. This amendment is a temporary measure that will expire on 31 December 2020, with any application beyond that date limited to the COVID-19 emergency.
- » developed the *Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 4) 2020*, subordinate legislation to the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, to extend the disaster declaration, providing powers to support actions aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19 as per the public health emergency declared under the *Public Health Act 2005*.

- » amended legislation to remove the usual right to compensation for damage or loss suffered as a result of the exercise of specified powers under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* where these powers are exercised as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. This amendment serves to mitigate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 emergency on the Queensland Government, and will also support the government's ability to provide economic stimulus packages to uphold fundamental entitlements and services for Queenslanders.
- » maintained social distancing requirements as per Queensland Government advice.
- » restricted access to QFES operational facilities to personnel required to be on shift.
- » provided advice and hygiene stations in QFES facilities.
- » required personnel responding to incidents at residential-based facilities to wear P2 protective face masks and gloves and wash their hands when leaving the facility.
- » implemented travel restrictions and utilised technology to limit face-to-face meetings.
- » suspended non-essential operational activities across all services including training, inspections and community activities.
- » restricted the movement of QFES appliances, vehicles and people to essential and emergency use only.
- » restricted the number of non-operational employees entering the workplace by requesting they work from home.
- » supported employees to work from home during self-quarantine periods and when required to care for children impacted by schooling arrangements and to care for those who were 'at-risk' in their households.
- » re-tasked some staff, who were not in frontline roles, to support the COVID-19 response.

Ongoing access to QFES programs and services for Queenslanders

During COVID-19, QFES continued to provide fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services consistent with the human rights of Queenslanders.

QFES put in place comprehensive policies and procedures for minimising potential contamination during operational activities, whilst maintaining an effective fire and emergency service response. While some non-essential activities were suspended, QFES ensured critical service delivery was maintained during this period. For example:

- » all scheduled routine building inspections were suspended, while any complaints or concerns for building fire safety that were reported to QFES were actioned and fully investigated.
- » scheduled pragmatic testing of unwanted alarms compliance in existing buildings was suspended, while testing relating to building approvals continued.
- » engagement with seasonal workers to educate them on Budget Accommodation Buildings (BABs) was suspended, while prosecutions of illegal BABs continued.
- » bushfire mitigation and fire season preparedness activity continued across the state, including exploring potential impacts of border restrictions on interstate and international deployments for the upcoming fire season, while ensuring appropriate measures were in place, and risk reduction strategies were shared with partners, to reduce the risks posed by COVID-19.

Human Rights Complaints

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

At 30 June 2020, QFES received no human rights complaints since the Act came into effect on 1 January 2020.

Progress towards full compatibility with the Act

QFES undertook significant work during 2019-20 to progress compatibility with the Act, including:

- » QFES administered legislation was reviewed for compatibility with the Act, with one element that may not be considered either compatible or proportionate and justified under review at 30 June 2020.
- » The QFES Gateway (staff intranet) includes information regarding the Act and provides different human rights scenarios for staff in relation to a request for part-time or flexible work; firefighters growing a beard and wearing breathing apparatus; and recruitment and selection.
- » Two members from the QFES School of Fire and Emergency Services attended a Train the Trainer workshop in March 2020 conducted by the Queensland Human Rights Commission which assisted with the development of a Human Rights Awareness e-learning package. The package is approximately 85 per cent complete with delivery expected by 30 September 2020. This package will be rolled out through Nexus to all staff and volunteers.
- » QFES included information in its official Fire and Emergency Services magazine *Response* (February 2020) regarding the Act and making decisions within the human rights framework. *Response* is accessible to QFES staff and volunteers via the QFES website and QFES Gateway.
- » The objects of the Act are incorporated into the QFES Strategic Plan 2020-2024.
- » A training video on the topic of decision-making for human rights in operational scenarios was produced and released on the QFES Gateway in June 2020.

Details of reviews of policies, programs, procedures, practices or services undertaken for compatibility with human rights

The following activity occurred to review policies, programs, procedures, practices or services undertaken for compatibility with human rights:

- » The QFES Human Rights Assessment Team, established in November 2019, finalised the assessment of QFES documentation, such as policies, procedures and templates against the Act. Where human rights were limited through operational activities, justification was provided. As at 29 May 2020, all identified QFES documents were reviewed and an assessment tool developed to align future documents to the Act. Assessing all QFES documents against the human rights legislation is now a business-as-usual activity within QFES.
- » The QFES Human Rights Assessment Team worked with School of Fire and Emergency Services Training to align training material with the Act, including the QFES handbooks, implementation documents and course guides.
- » The QFES Complaints Management procedure was updated to include complaints about human rights; and the Complaints Assessment Team documentation (allegation assessment) was updated to ensure human rights are considered with every complaint.
- » The requirements of the Act have been incorporated into Service Level Agreements, through variations or new agreements with Surf Life Saving Queensland, Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland and Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc. Negotiations continue with the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Police-Citizens Youth Club (Emergency Services Cadets) which are expected to be finalised by 30 September 2020.

Acronyms

ADF	Australian Defence Force	FFF	Fight Fire Fascination
AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	FRNSW	Fire and Rescue New South Wales
AFMG	Area Fire Management Group	FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
AFSM	Australian Fire Service Medal	FTE	Full-time equivalent
ANZEMC	Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee	GIS	Geospatial Information Systems
ARCC	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	GST	Goods and Services Tax
ARRs	<i>Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies</i>	HazMat	Hazardous materials
AVCGA	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association	ICT	Information and communications technology
BAB	Budget Accommodation Building	IGEM	Inspector-General Emergency Management
BAO	Building Approval Officer	INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
BoM	Board of Management	ISMS	Information Security Management System
CCC	Crime and Corruption Commission	LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
CIT	Canberra Institute of Technology	MCC	Ministerial Construction Council
COP	Common Operating Picture	MIR	Maintenance Inspection Report
COVID-19	Coronavirus pandemic	MOHRI	Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
DES	Department of Environment and Science	MSRC	Motorised swiftwater rescue craft
DHPW	Department of Housing and Public Works	NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
ELT	Executive Leadership Team	OMS	Operations Management System
EM-SAP	<i>Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change</i>	PADP	Personal achievement and development plans
FESSN	Fire and Emergency Services Support Network	PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Club
		PPE	Personal protective equipment

Acronyms (cont'd)

PPRR	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	RLSSQ	Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc.
PSBA	Public Safety Business Agency	RoGS	Report on Government Services
QAO	Queensland Audit Office	RPAS	Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service	SDCC	State Disaster Coordination Centre
QBCC	Queensland Building and Construction Commission	SDCG	State Disaster Coordination Group
QDMTF	Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework	SDS	Service Delivery Statement
QERMF	Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework	SES	State Emergency Service
QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	SFEST	School of Fire and Emergency Services Training
QLDSESVA	Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association Inc	SLSQ	Surf Life Saving Queensland
QPS	Queensland Police Service	TCIM	Tropical Cyclone Impact Model
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
RAAP	Road Attitudes and Action Planning	VMRAQ	Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland
RAFT	Remote Area Firefighting Teams	VPN	Virtual Private Network
RFBAQ	Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc.	WfQ	Working for Queensland
RFS	Rural Fire Service	WHS	Workplace health and Safety
		WHSMS	Work Health and Safety Management System

Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Page reference
Letter of compliance	A letter of compliance from the accountable officer to the Minister	ARRs—section 7	iii
Accessibility	Table of contents Acronyms	ARRs—section 9.1	1 117-118
	Public availability	ARRs—section 9.2	ii
	Interpreter service statement	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs—section 9.3	ii
	Copyright notice	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs—section 9.4	ii
	Information licensing	<i>Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture—Information licensing</i> ARRs—section 9.5	ii
General information	Introductory information	ARRs—section 10.1	2-15
	Machinery-of-government changes	ARRs—sections 10.2, 31 and 32	N/A
	Agency role and main functions	ARRs—section 10.2	6-12, 121
	Operating environment	ARRs—section 10.3	6-21
Non-financial performance	Government's objectives for the community	ARRs—section 11.1	5
	Other whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives	ARRs—section 11.2	26-52
	Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs—section 11.3	6-7, 21-25
	Agency service area and service standards	ARRs—section 11.4	21-25
Financial performance	Summary of financial performance	ARRs—section 12.1	16-20
Governance—management and structure	Organisational structure	ARRs—section 13.1	13-14
	Executive management	ARRs—section 13.2	53-61
	Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)	ARRs—section 13.3	N/A
	Public Sector Ethics	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs—section 13.4	62
	Queensland public service values	ARRs—section 13.6	7-8

Compliance checklist (cont'd)

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Page reference
Governance—risk management and accountability	Risk management	ARRs—section 14.1	59-60, 66
	Audit committee	ARRs—section 14.2	59-60
	Internal audit	ARRs—section 14.3	67
	External scrutiny	ARRs—section 14.4	63-66
	Information systems and recordkeeping	ARRs—section 14.5	68
Governance—human resources	Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs—section 15.1	69-72
	Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs—section 15.2	69
Open Data	Statement advising publication of information	ARRs—section 16	ii
	Consultancies	ARRs—section 33.1	www.data.qld.gov.au
	Overseas travel	ARRs—section 33.2	www.data.qld.gov.au
	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i>	ARRs—section 33.3	www.data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	Certification of financial statements	<i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> —section 62 <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i> —sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs—section 17.1	99
	Independent Auditor's Report	<i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> —section 62 <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i> —section 46 ARRs—section 17.2	100-101
Other statutory requirements	Queensland Government Regulator Performance Framework	ARRs—section 6.1	103-112
	Human Rights	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs—section 13.5	113-116

Contacts and key locations

State Office	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	13 QGOV (13 74 68)
Brisbane Region	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 2953 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 1921
Central Region	Level 4 34 East Street Rockhampton Qld 4700	PO Box 1531 Rockhampton Qld 4700	(07) 4932 8103
Far Northern Region	Level 8 William McCormack Place 2 5b Sheridan Street Cairns Qld 4870	PO Box 920 Cairns Qld 4870	(07) 4032 8759
North Coast Region	319-325 Kent Street Maryborough Qld 4650		(07) 4122 0300
Northern Region	Level 1 Citypoint Building 101 Sturt Street Townsville Qld 4810	PO Box 5845 Townsville Qld 4810	(07) 4796 9023
South Eastern Region	32 Tansey Street Beenleigh Qld 4207	PO Box 927 Beenleigh Qld 4207	(07) 3287 8510
South Western Region	19 Steger Road Charlton Qld 4350		(07) 4592 5201
Fire and Rescue Service	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 MC 14:1 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 1957
Rural Fire Service (FRS)	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 3834
State Emergency Service (SES)	Emergency Services Complex 125 Kedron Park Road Kedron Qld 4031	GPO Box 1425 Brisbane Qld 4001	(07) 3635 3441
Flood/Storm Emergency		www.132500.qld.gov.au	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 www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au or www.ses.qld.gov.au

