

Queensland Fire and
Emergency Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2020–2021



Acknowledgement of Country

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Queensland and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our 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 2020–21. 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 (2020–21 reporting period)*.

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 2020–2024* and the 2020–21 Queensland State Budget - Service Delivery Statements.

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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

27 September 2021

The Honorable Mark Ryan MP
Minister for Police and Corrective Services and
Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services 2020–21 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 be "Greg Leach", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Greg Leach
Commissioner

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Commissioner's message

I am pleased to present the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) 2020–21 annual report.

With some exceptions, the 2020–21 bushfire season was relatively quiet due to wet weather. Alongside our key partners and communities, QFES faced the season well prepared, thanks to the record number of bushfire mitigation activities we completed during Operation Cool Burn 2020.

Several large fires threatened communities, particularly on the World Heritage listed K'gari (Fraser Island), where around 85,000 hectares were burnt. QFES worked with communities on the island to build their resilience and collaborated with partners such as the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation.

QFES contracted a Large Air Tanker (LAT) to boost our aerial firefighting capability during the bushfire season. From its base in Bundaberg, the LAT can reach Proserpine in the north, the Queensland-New South Wales border in the south or Tambo in the west within one hour. Its 10,000 litre capacity is a great boost when supporting ground crews.

To help manage bushfires into the future, QFES learnt important lessons about Indigenous cultural fire management from traditional owners. We supported cultural burns, trained with Indigenous fire practitioners and reached out to rural and remote communities. QFES also established eight new First Nations Bushfire Safety Officer positions to embed traditional learnings into our operations.

While September 2020 marked the start of La Niña conditions, signalling more flooding and cyclones over the summer, heightened bushfire conditions persisted, with fires burning in some parts of the state as storms hit others.

A large hailstorm at Springfield Lakes in October 2020 caused an estimated \$260 million worth of damage. SES crews led the response and recovery for this disaster that the Insurance Council of Australia termed a 'catastrophic event'.

Throughout the severe weather season, members from services within QFES were busy sandbagging, removing fallen trees, tarping damaged roofs and rescuing stranded drivers.

These operations were conducted while at the same time responding to COVID-19.

The State Disaster Coordination Centre was stood up to support COVID-19 operations in February 2020 and continued throughout 2020–21, breaking previous records for continuous operations.

Working with our whole-of-government partners, QFES managed quarantine accommodation, catering and transport for more than 91,000 people.

QFES staff and volunteers also worked at land and air borders, vaccination hubs and testing clinics, contributing around 12,500 shifts for border operations alone.

I'm proud of how everyone at QFES adapted our communication methods and ways of working to continue delivering vital emergency services during this challenging period.

To bolster our firefighting capacity, 48 of the 357 additional Fire and Rescue Service firefighters, announced in 2020, have been recruited. The new positions will help enable more contemporary crewing practices, as well as better balancing leave and staff planning.

Another exciting addition to our capability was the 20 new drones we distributed around the state, almost doubling the size of our drone program.

In September 2020 the intent to disestablish the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) was announced and in the first half of 2021 we welcomed more than 100 PSBA staff who transitioned into QFES. To support them, QFES provided induction forums, impact assessments, transition plans and working groups. We reviewed and realigned the Strategy and Corporate Services Division in line with this transition.

QFES also started work to establish an integrated marine rescue service for Queensland. Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland volunteers are engaged in the process to shape the reform and help create a future service model. This work will provide an enhanced service to the boating public and better support volunteers.

A new bushfire warning system introduced in the first half of 2021 has improved the way we deliver bushfire information to the community. The system automates much of the warnings process, allowing us to create and send warnings more efficiently and get information to Queenslanders as quickly as possible.

COVID-19 continued to disrupt our community engagement but we surmounted the challenges to reach out and connect with Queenslanders when they needed it most.

QFES joined forces with the AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism to make our fire education program more inclusive. A new version of the program uses modified language and fire drill activities to help children with autism be prepared for a fire.

We collaborated with The University of Sydney and Queenslanders with Disability Network to promote the new Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Workbook. People with disability can use the workbook to account for their strengths and support needs in their emergency preparedness planning.

We also developed a visual guide on home fire safety for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to help them avoid fire risks.

QFES expanded the Roads, Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program into more diverse areas and education settings, including Indigenous communities, youth detention centres and youth justice programs. This will help more young drivers across the state make smarter decisions before they get behind the wheel.

In the spirit of supporting our neighbours, QFES shipped five fire trucks to the Papua New Guinea Fire Service in February 2021. We delivered the ex-service Type 2 fire appliances to Port Moresby in collaboration with the Australian Defence Force.

I would like to thank every QFES member who helped keep Queenslanders safe through an unrelenting year with operations on a scale we've never seen before.

I look forward to continuing our work with communities and partners to keep building resilience for the disasters of the future.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Greg Leach
Commissioner
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

27 September 2021

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—as individuals and members of a community—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. We will respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision-making and actions.

Overview

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 responsible for ensuring the capacity of operational staff and volunteers to respond in emergent situations as legislated in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*.

QFES is the primary provider of fire and rescue, emergency services and disaster management capability services throughout Queensland. The department encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), disaster management services, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES). The department works with community and partners to minimise the impacts and consequences of disasters and emergencies on persons, property and the environment. 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.

QFES also has a strong focus on prevention and preparedness to avert emergency incidents as well as response and recovery. These activities include community education; fire safety; hazard identification and risk assessment; and working with communities to plan for and mitigate disasters.



Traditionally, the primary response for the FRS 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 road crash rescue, bushfire, hazardous material, technical rescue including vertical and remote rescues and swiftwater rescue.

The RFS is the lead service for bushfire in Queensland and primarily composed of a volunteer workforce. 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. The SES is a community-based, volunteer emergency service enabled by state and local governments. SES is the primary responder for cyclone, storm and flood events and provides road crash rescue, remote rescue and vertical rescue capabilities in specified areas of Queensland. It also provides support to other agencies such as the Queensland Police Service (QPS) by providing search and rescue.

The disaster management capability is responsible to ensure all aspects of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR) arrangements between state and the commonwealth are effective and consistent with state policy, guidelines and the Queensland Disaster Management Plan. It works before, during and after disasters to ensure the department prevents and mitigates the impact on

communities with interventions such as better risk informed land use planning, local and state disaster risk assessments, and disaster management planning. QFES works to ensure communities are informed to understand and take actions to mitigate disaster risk and in the event of an emergency that the disaster system and disaster management partners are adequately trained and prepared to best support the community. QFES' disaster management capability works to educate the community on being better prepared for disasters and to take appropriate action when a threat is imminent through information and warnings and emergency alerts used across multiple platforms.

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)
- » PCYC Queensland Emergency Services Cadets
- » Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc. (RLSSQ)
- » Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ)
- » Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ).

During 2020–21, the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) provided professional information and communications technology (ICT), financial, procurement, asset management and human resource services to the public safety agencies including QFES, QPS and the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (Office of the IGEM). PSBA also provided 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 allowed frontline agencies to focus their efforts on delivering critical operational services to the community. In addition to providing corporate services, PSBA was responsible for the provision of Queensland Government air services.

PSBA was governed by a Board of Management comprising the QPS Commissioner (Chair), QFES Commissioner and an appointed external member. The role of Chair rotated annually in September between the QFES Commissioner and QPS Commissioner.

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

On 7 September 2020, the Queensland Government announced the intended disestablishment of the PSBA with functions and people transitioning into QFES and QPS as part of a wider strategy to structurally reform government statutory bodies and agencies and increase further efficiencies in the delivery of quality outcomes to the community of Queensland. The disestablishment of PSBA, as per the *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2021* was completed by 30 June 2021.

The functions of Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Assets, Fleet, Property and Facilities Management and staff from the Office of the Chief Operating Officer transitioned to the QFES operating model throughout the first half of 2021 and will officially transition to QFES from 1 July 2021.

The Internal Audit function, including the Head of Internal Audit for QFES, moved in its entirety from PSBA to the administrative stewardship of the QPS on 30 November 2020, however will continue to provide a service to QFES.

PSBA Frontline and Digital Services will move in its entirety from PSBA to the administrative stewardship of QPS on 1 July 2021, however the transition of discrete Frontline and Digital Services functions to QFES will be ongoing.

To embed the former PSBA functions, QFES reviewed and realigned the Strategy and Corporate Services Division to ensure enhanced alignment of the department's support functions. This alignment will enable QFES to be agile to any recommendations from the independent review of QFES announced in December 2020. The independent review will examine the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the department, including structure and funding in relation to its core services and associated volunteer entities.

Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 2) 2020*, the QFES Commissioner administers the following Acts, and subordinate legislation, on behalf of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services:

- » *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*
 - *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*
 - *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*
- » *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 objectives

The Queensland Government's objectives for the community are built around Unite and Recover – *Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan* (August 2020).

QFES contributes to the government's objectives for the community as follows:

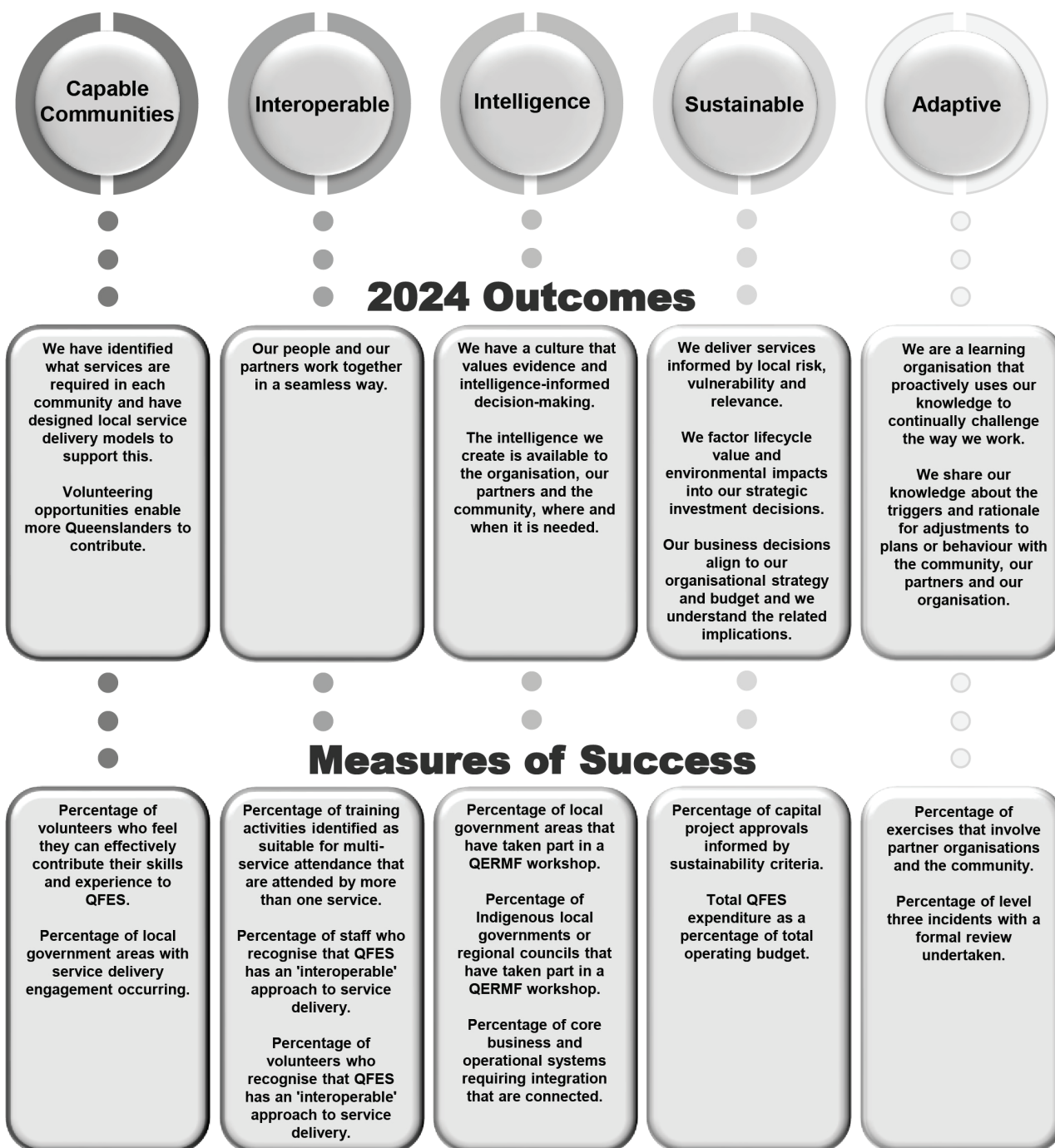
- » Safeguarding our health
 - Safeguard people's health and jobs by keeping Queensland pandemic-ready.
- » Backing our frontline services
 - Deliver world-class frontline services in key areas such as health, education and community safety.

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

QFES Strategy 2030 Guiding Principles

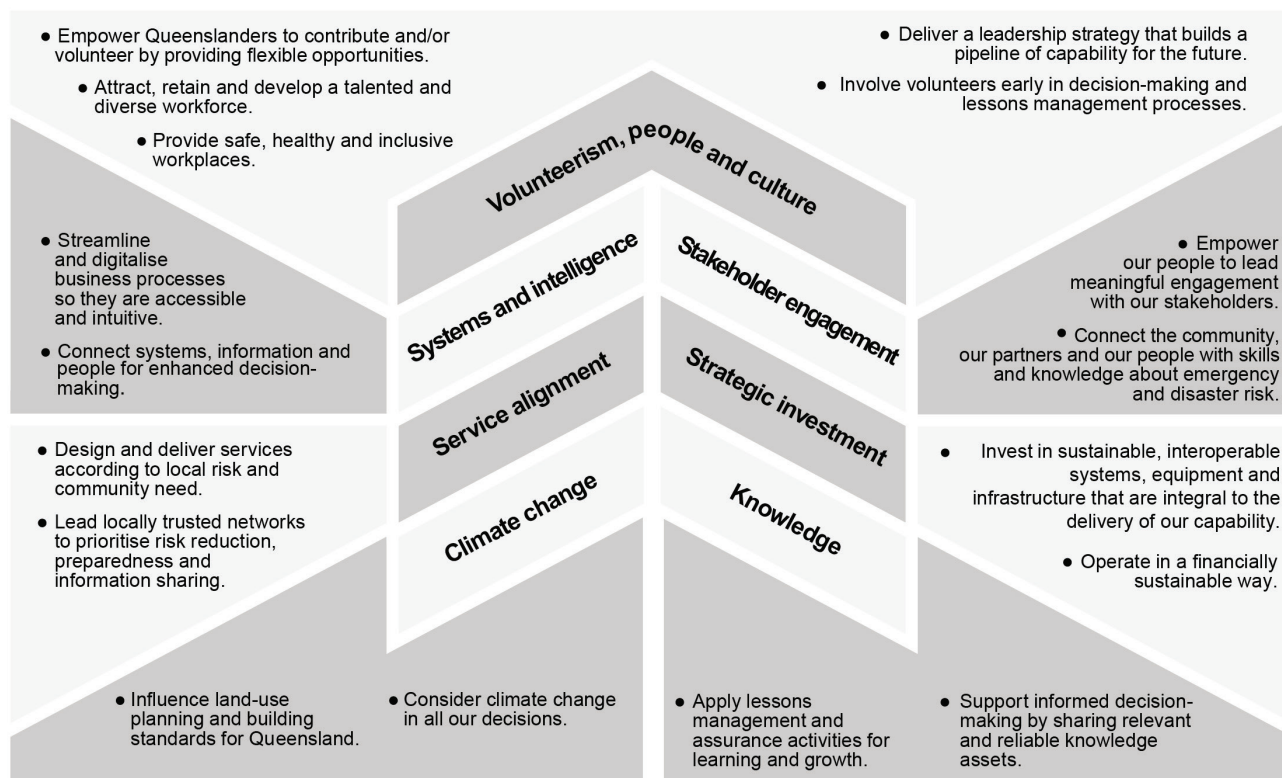


QERMF - Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework

Refer to Key performance measures on pages 23–26.

2020–2024 strategic initiatives

The department's strategic initiatives for achieving the 2024 outcomes as outlined in the 2020–2024 strategic plan are:



Our shared values

Our behaviour and the way we do business are guided by our shared 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 effects of coronavirus (COVID-19) on Queensland's population, which will be felt over the medium term (through to 2031), with reduced international migration leading to an increased ageing population and an increase in interstate migration in the short-term (2023–2024) with greater numbers moving to coastal locations within Queensland
- » a predicted increase in the severity, frequency and duration of natural disasters
- » an increased likelihood of multiple large-scale events occurring simultaneously
- » changing community expectations around government services
- » changes in the volunteer landscape
- » the impacts of COVID-19 on demand, service delivery and engagement.

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 emergency services.

Further information about how QFES is responding to these environmental factors can be found in Our performance (refer pages 27–63).

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 and reduced 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.

Information about how QFES is responding to these challenges can be found in Our performance (refer pages 27–63).

Our opportunities

- » **Our people:** If our paid and volunteer workforce continues to develop capability, adaptivity and interoperability due to enhanced skills, knowledge and information, communities may be more capable and connected in the face of emergencies and disasters.
- » **Technological advances:** If technological solutions to existing and new problems emerge due to technological advances, they could result in more effective and timely decision-making and responsive service delivery.
- » **Capable communities:** If communities develop greater capability through preparation, participation and knowledge sharing, the impacts of emergencies and disasters could be reduced.

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 2021–22 include:

- » continuing to support the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19 including coordination of hotel quarantine accommodation, supporting border control measures and other operational and logistical supports
- » continuing to deliver contemporary and effective fire, emergency and disaster management services that meet Queensland communities' needs
- » continuing to minimise the impact on and protect the lives and properties of Queensland communities in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters
- » leading Queensland's response to key priority actions to address relevant recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (refer page 63), with a focus on hazard reduction, intelligence gathering, mapping and planning, warnings and preparedness
- » continuing to support rural fire brigade and SES volunteers, providing grants, equipment and vehicles
- » continuing to partner with SLSQ via a three-year Service Level Agreement
- » continuing to work with marine rescue volunteers to ensure a sustainable capability to respond to the emergency needs of Queenslanders on the water (refer page 49)

- » continuing to be fiscally responsible and support delivery of *Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan*.

During 2021–22, key strategic challenges for the department include:

- » continuing to meet community, stakeholder and government expectations
- » continuing to ensure information technology infrastructure and information management enable us to continue to adapt to new and emergent technology while reducing impacts on future efficiency and effectiveness
- » continuing to ensure QFES' service delivery model meets the shifts in demographic and workplace trends, and the global threat of climate change.

In addition, fiscal sustainability remains an ongoing challenge for the department.

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). This includes:

- » 244 FRS stations
- » 46 Area Offices
- » 1,396 volunteer-based rural fire brigades including 495 which have a station or shed
- » 75 SES units consisting of 298 SES groups
- » seven fire communication centres (one located in each QFES region)
- » 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) located at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy at Whyte Island (Port of Brisbane) and the Northern Region Training and Operations Support Complex in Townsville.

In addition, 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 Communication Centre.

A list of key locations including contacts details for QFES is available at www.qfes.qld.gov.au

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 36,000 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Auxiliary Support Officers, Chaplains and Peer Support Officers.

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, preparation and response and recovery 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. Volunteer Community Educators also play a key role in their local community, promoting and delivering safety and bushfire preparedness education packages.

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 2021, there are 1,396 rural fire brigades and 2,312 Fire Warden Areas across the state which are supported by approximately 30,000 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 the 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. The 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 2021, there are approximately 6,000 SES volunteers.

Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network

The Research and Scientific Branch consists of a core of permanent staff and a network of volunteers who respond to fire and hazardous materials incidents across Queensland. The volunteer network is a critical component of the branch's expert operational response and advice service. The network includes chemists and chemical engineers who provide prompt, at-the-scene responses to emergency incidents involving chemical hazards. These specialists are drawn from private industry, local governments and tertiary educational institutions across Queensland.

During 2020–21, a range of incidents were attended including chemical reactions, gas releases, spillages, discoveries of suspicious substances and fires causing hazardous materials releases.

As at 30 June 2021, there are 55 research and scientific volunteers including 49 regional based Volunteer Scientific Officers and six 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, HazMat (hazardous materials) specialists, volunteer canine handlers, mechanics and communications operators, who respond to natural and human-induced disasters across Queensland, Australia and internationally. 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 2021, the AUS-1 DART has 26 volunteers including five doctors, five engineers and four canine handlers, with a further 12 canine handlers undergoing training.

Auxiliary Support Officers

Auxiliary Support Officers are volunteers who provide non-operational support and assistance at/or in relation to their designated station such as Chinchilla, Kilcoy, Mission Beach, Rosewood, Springsure, Tara and Woodford stations.

As at 30 June 2021, there are 33 Auxiliary Support Officers.

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 2021, there are 19 Chaplains.

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 146 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 2020–21, a total of 3,688 hours was invested in peer support activities and peer support was provided to a total of 1,507 people.

Structure

As at 30 June 2021

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 Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to support 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 30,000 RFS volunteers and approximately 6,000 SES volunteers.

The Emergency Management and Community Capability (EMCC) Directorate provides strategic oversight for all aspects of disaster management, incident management and community engagement 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 multi-hazard approach to its work that is based on supporting communities to mitigate, prevent and deal with the consequences of disaster. The EMCC Directorate maintains whole-of-government operational readiness and operational response of the SDCC and the QFES SOC. In addition, the EMCC Assistant Commissioner represents QFES' whole-of-government disaster management responsibilities as co-Chair of the State Disaster Coordination Group.

The RFS Directorate incorporates the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, Operations Branch, Office of Bushfire Mitigation, and Volunteer and Frontline Support Services Branch. The Office of the Assistant Commissioner sets the strategy and policy position for the RFS at state level in support of regional operations. The Operations Branch manages a range of operational and organisational functions on a statewide basis that are principally directed at supporting volunteers in the provision of fire mitigation and response activities to the Queensland community including operational policy, brigade equipment and appliances, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), communications, reporting and liaison with other agencies. The Office of Bushfire Mitigation is responsible for the statewide strategic management, promotion and expansion of preventative bushfire mitigation strategies and education programs. The Volunteer and Frontline Support Services Branch aims to support volunteers, staff and management through the provision of business functionality for the RFS including volunteer recruitment and marketing, finance and grants, information management, governance and compliance and volunteer support services.

The SES Directorate provides strategic oversight and supports SES regions. The SES State Coordination Branch delivers on the department's organisational priorities and objectives, providing management of SES governance, business improvements, capability functions and implementation of new projects and initiatives. This is achieved through the provision of business support to SES regions and volunteers, delivering on the Commissioner's responsibilities as described in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*.

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 staff and volunteers 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.

Each region is led by a Regional Assistant Commissioner who focusses on coordination across services, connecting with stakeholders and ensuring the needs of the community are met through local decision-making and place-based service delivery.

An integral area of the division is the FRS Directorate which includes the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, FRS, the FRS Branch and the specialist services of Community Infrastructure, Research and Scientific, Specialist and Technical Response.

The services and capabilities provided include standards and policies, operational response, technical support and coordination of training and support to all regions to deliver their services to the community. These services and capabilities are also provided in many instances directly to other agencies and stakeholders at a state, national and international level.

The capabilities are wide-ranging from statewide fire communications, building fire safety, building compliance, fire investigation, chemical emergency management, HazMat, state air operations, technical rescue, USAR and the internationally deployable AUS-1 DART. The directorate also manages the State Deployment Centre and the Special Operations Centre.

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 QFES People Directorates.

The Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services Directorate leads the planning and delivery of executive, ministerial and corporate services across QFES as well as supporting the Office of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. The directorate maintains strategic partnerships with service delivery providers and contributes to the department's strategic direction.

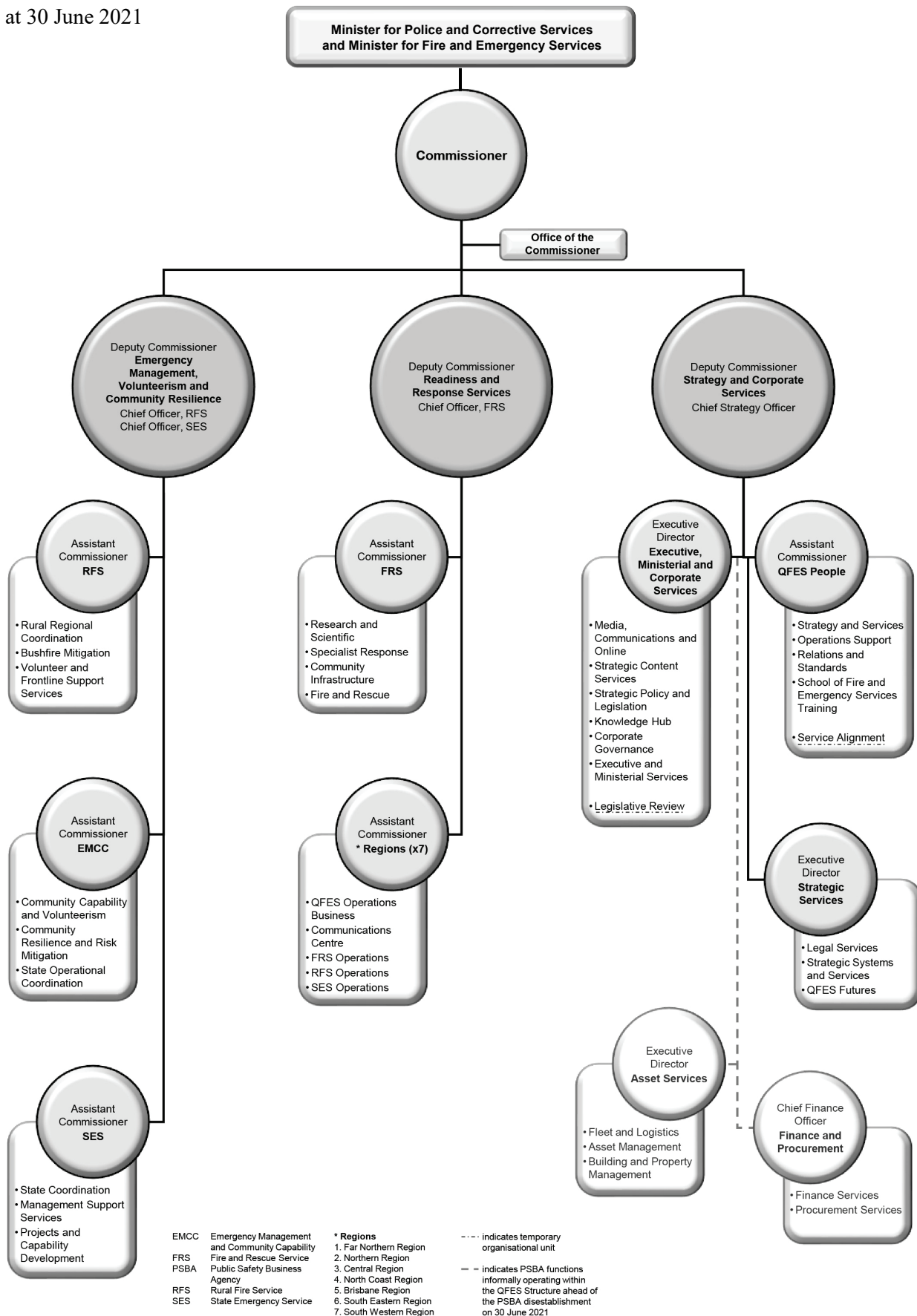
QFES People is responsible for engaging and supporting the QFES workforce throughout their careers with QFES. The directorate spans attraction, recruitment, conduct, training and development and is focussed on being connected and responsible to the QFES business and enhancing workforce experiences where possible.

The Strategic Services Directorate leads and drives performance and accountability through strategy, systems, standards, performance and legal services. The directorate, by improving QFES' strategy and performance, is responsible for maximising best outcomes for the department and its partners.

With the disestablishment of PSBA, to embed the PSBA functions, QFES reviewed and realigned the Strategy and Corporate Services Division to ensure enhanced alignment of the department's support functions – refer the organisational structure as at 1 July 2021 on page 16.

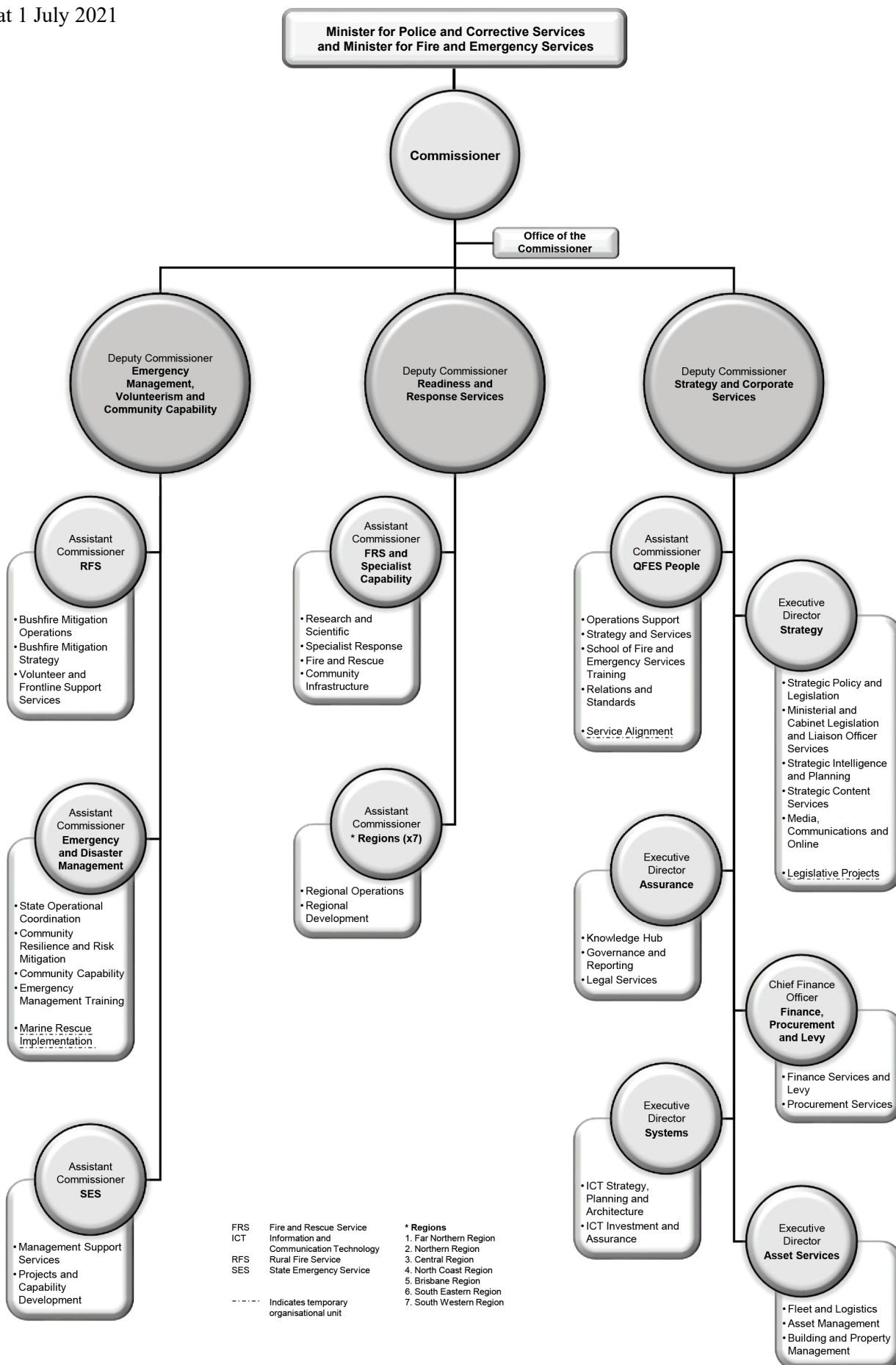
Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2021



Organisational structure (cont'd)

As at 1 July 2021



Regions

As at 30 June 2021



	State Total	Far Northern	Northern	Central	North Coast	Brisbane	South Eastern	South Western
Fire and rescue stations	244	25	20	38	46	38	37	40
SES units	75	19	16	14	7	3	5	11
SES groups	298	53	40	68	47	22	26	42
Rural fire brigades	1,396	178	180	391	203	29	79	336
Regional offices	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Communication centres	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Queensland population * 5,194,879

* Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue no. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics (December 2020 quarter)

Financial summary

Summary of financial performance

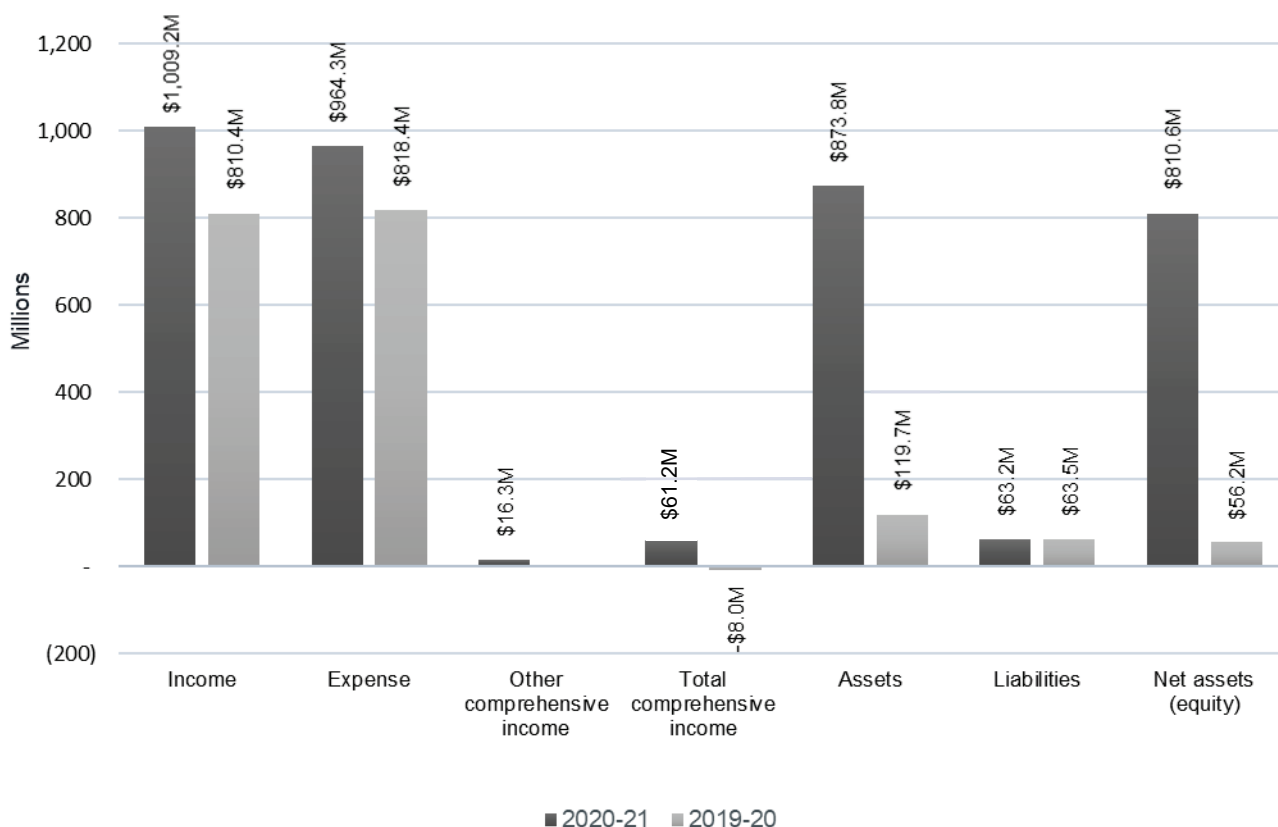
The following table summarises the operating result and financial position for QFES 2020–21 and 2019–20.

Statement of comprehensive income	2020–21 \$'000	2019–20 \$'000
Total income from continuing operations ¹	1,009,248	810,357
Total expenses from continuing operations ²	964,266	818,353
Other comprehensive income	16,255	Nil
Total comprehensive income	61,237	(7,996)
Statement of financial position	2020–21 \$'000	2019–20 \$'000
Total assets	873,759	119,682
Total liabilities	63,189	63,500
Net assets (equity)	810,570	56,182

Notes:

- 1 2020–21 total income includes \$190.3 million for recovery of COVID-19 quarantine accommodation costs incurred in 2019–20 and 2020–21.
- 2 2020–21 total expenses includes \$179.6 million for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation expenses.

The operating result and financial position are represented below:



- 2020–21 total income includes \$190.3 million for recovery of COVID-19 quarantine accommodation costs incurred in 2019–20 and 2020–21.
- 2020–21 total expenses includes \$179.6 million for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation expenses.

Income and expenses from continuing operations

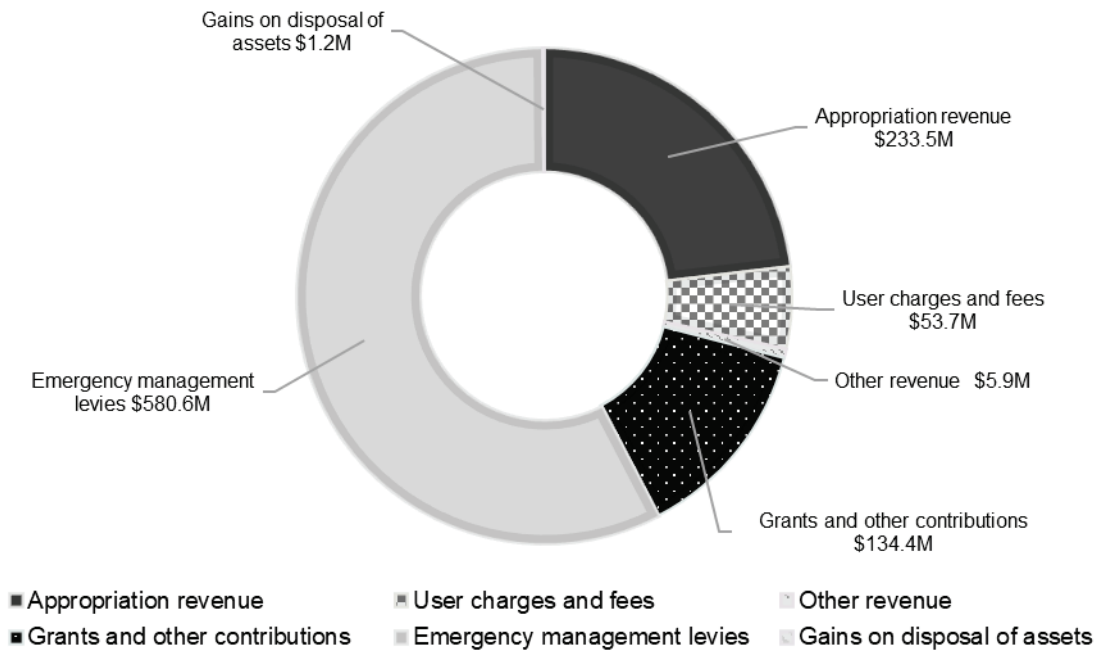
QFES is funded to deliver a wide range of fire and emergency management and recovery services through the Emergency Management Levy (EML) paid by prescribed property owners across the state.

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 and 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, and incident response and recovery for a safer Queensland. The expenses incurred in the delivery of these services are summarised further on page 20.

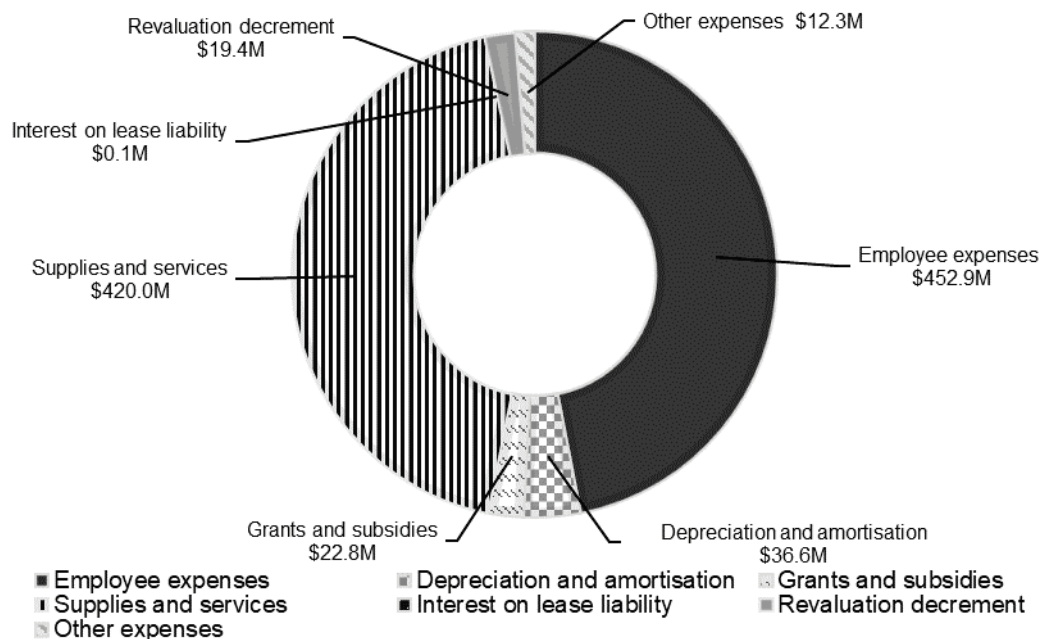
For 2020–21, QFES received income from continuing operations totalling \$1,009.2 million and incurred total expenditure from continuing operations of \$964.3 million. This comprises:

Income



- Income includes \$190.3 million for recovery of COVID-19 quarantine accommodation costs recognised as Appropriation revenue (\$108.4 million) and Grants and other contributions (\$81.9 million).

Expenses

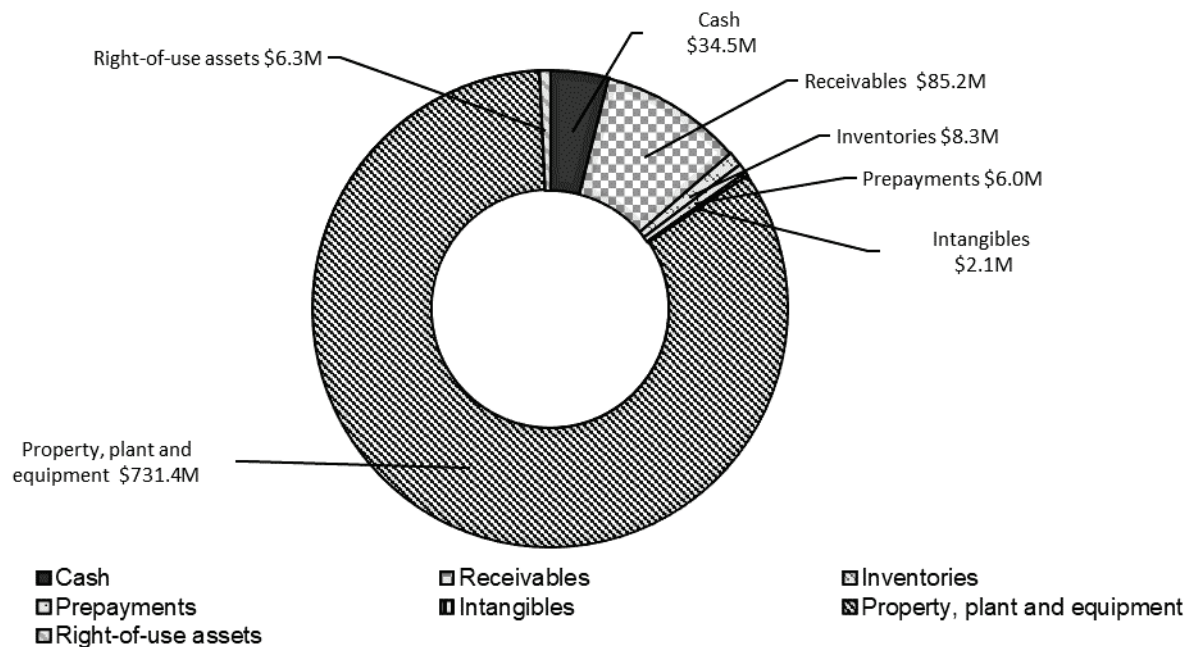


- Supplies and services includes \$179.6 million for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation expenses.

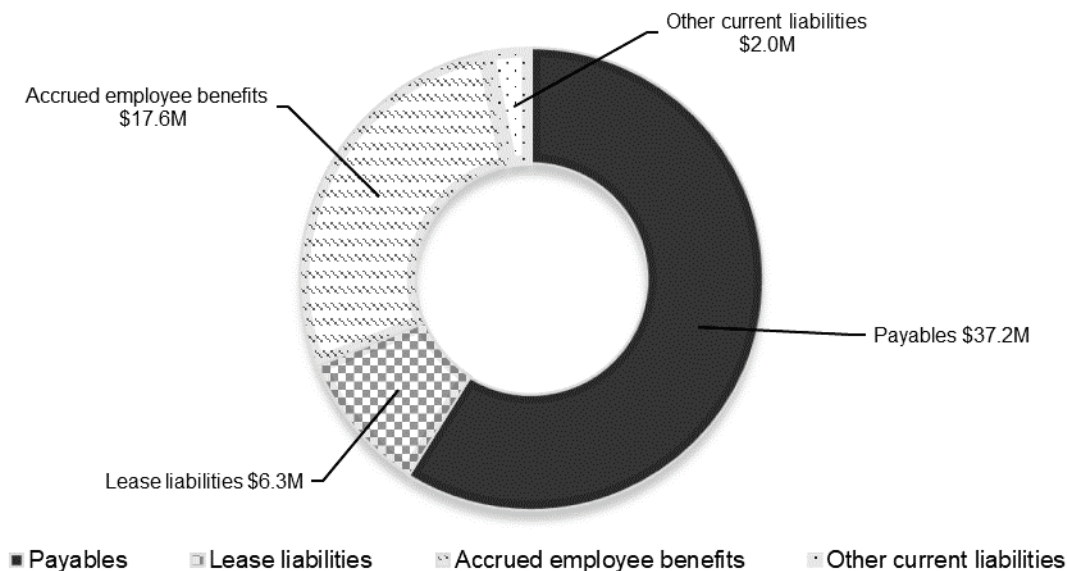
Summary of financial position

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 2020–21 was \$810.6 million. This is a substantial increase from the prior year due to net asset transfers of \$699.7 million as at 1 July 2020 from PSBA to QFES as a result of a shift in asset accounting management of property, plant and equipment. The financial position predominately comprises:

Assets



Liabilities



Event occurring after balance date - PSBA disestablishment

As a result of *Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 2) 2021*, effective 1 July 2021, the PSBA was disestablished and as a consequence a share of the Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Assets, Fleet, Property and Facilities Management functions were transferred to QFES and the QPS. Internal Audit and ICT functions were transferred solely to QPS, with QPS to provide internal audit and ICT services to QFES.

There were no other significant events after balance date that could be expected to impact the reported operating result for QFES for the year ended 30 June 2021.

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 2020–21.

Service area: Fire and Emergency Services							
Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2020–21 SDS	RoGS	2019–20 Actual	2020–21 Target/ Estimate	2020–21 Actual
Rate of accidental residential structure fires reported (per 100,000 households)	1, 2, 3		✓		57.7	<60	56.8
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				12.5 minutes	<14.0 minutes	12.8 minutes
Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin	3, 4, 8		✓	✓	82.1%	≥80%	82.5%
Estimated percentage of households with smoke alarm/detector installed	9		✓	✓	97.8%	95%	-
Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	10		✓		59.2%	50%	56.6%
Rate of unwanted alarm activations per alarm signalling equipment	11		✓		2.2	<4	2.1
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the Rural Fire Service	12		✓		-	75%	73%
Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the State Emergency Service	12		✓		-	75%	76%
Percentage of statewide State Emergency Service volunteers that meet minimal operational training requirements	13		✓		66%	65%	71%
Percentage of disaster management training participants with enhanced capability	14		✓		94%	75%	91%

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

Performance measures	Notes	Strategic plan	2020-21 SDS	RoGS	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Target/ Estimate	2020-21 Actual
Fire and Emergency Services expenditure per person	15		✓		\$157.99	\$162.00	\$159.03
Percentage of volunteers who feel they can effectively contribute their skills and experience to QFES	16	✓			-	-	52%
Percentage of local government areas with service delivery engagement occurring	17	✓			100%	-	100%
Percentage of training activities identified as suitable for multi-service attendance that are attended by more than one service	18	✓			77%	-	81%
Percentage of staff who recognise that QFES has an 'interoperable' approach to service delivery	19	✓			66%	-	70%
Percentage of volunteers who recognise that QFES has an 'interoperable' approach to service delivery	19	✓			-	-	44%
Percentage of local government areas that have taken part in a Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework workshop	20	✓			83%	-	82%
Percentage of Indigenous local governments or regional councils that have taken part in a Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework workshop	20	✓			31%	-	38%
Percentage of core business and operational systems requiring integration that are connected	21	✓			35%	-	35%
Percentage of capital project approvals informed by sustainability criteria	22	✓			-	-	-
Total QFES expenditure as a percentage of total operating budget	23	✓			111%	100%	103%
Percentage of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community	24	✓			94%	-	91%
Percentage of level three incidents with a formal review undertaken	25	✓			-	-	0%

Key

- Not available/not applicable

RoGS: 2021 Report on Government Services

SDS: Service Delivery Statement

Strategic plan: *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2020-2024*

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 and published on the QFES and Queensland Government Open Data websites. The 2020–21 result is expected to be available by 31 December 2021.
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. 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 (VfQ) survey. In 2020–21, the VfQ survey measures the percentage of volunteers who indicated they were either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ based on the question ‘all things considered, how satisfied are you with your volunteering?’. The VfQ question was amended in 2020–21 to align with a similar question in the Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey. The VfQ survey has historically been conducted biennially, however commencing 2020–21 the workforce experience surveys (WfQ and VfQ) 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 and have a current Storm Damage Operator appointment. The 2020–21 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. All active SES volunteers have been trained in various functions such as land search, road crash rescue, vertical rescue, flood boats, traffic management, agency support, incident management and/or specialist rescue.
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.

Notes (cont'd)

- The 2020–21 and 2019–20 Actuals were above the Target/Estimate of 75 per cent. This higher than anticipated result 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 2020–21 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 2020–21 Actual was below the Target/Estimate of \$162.00 due to the timing of COVID-19 related hotel quarantine expenditure, whereas the 2020–21 Actual has been adjusted to exclude all reimbursable hotel quarantine costs. The 2019–20 Actual was above the Target/Estimate of \$143.00 due to significant bushfire events in 2019–20, costs associated with COVID-19 public quarantine accommodation and additional investment for public safety regional radio communications (\$13.8 million in 2019–20).
 16. Data is sourced from the QFES VfQ survey. 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'. The VfQ survey has historically been conducted biennially, however commencing 2020–21 the workforce experience surveys (WfQ and VfQ) will be conducted annually.
 17. The 2020–21 and 2019–20 Actuals are measured against the seven QFES regions. A new system to track engagement activities more accurately at a local level is being developed.
 18. The QDMTF underpins responsibilities and requirements for QFES and its partner agencies. Training in 2020–21 was impacted by COVID-19. In 2019–20, training was impacted by the extreme bushfire season and COVID-19.
 19. This measure has been amended from 'Percentage of our people who recognise a *whole of QFES* approach to service delivery' and has been split to report the views of paid staff and volunteers separately. Data is sourced from the annual WfQ/VfQ survey. Data was derived from a specific question to determine the views of paid staff/volunteers as to whether QFES has an 'interoperable' approach to service delivery. The VfQ survey has historically been conducted biennially, however commencing 2020–21 the workforce experience surveys (WfQ and VfQ) will be conducted annually.
 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 local governments or regional councils separately as the QERMF risk management process is delivered via a different mechanism of engagement and support to non-Indigenous councils. Engagement in 2020–21 and 2019–20 was impacted by 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. QFES capital works builds support and encourage sustainable practices wherever possible. QFES is developing more concise sustainability measures for capital works builds in the future.
 23. The 2020–21 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 was received in 2020–21.
 24. QFES' ability to run exercises in 2020–21 was impacted by COVID-19 with a number of exercises cancelled. QFES' ability to run exercises in 2019–20 was impacted by the extreme bushfire season and COVID-19.
 25. This measure has been amended in 2020–21 from 'Percentage of major disaster events that have a formal debrief'. The revised measure enables QFES 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. No level three incidents occurred in 2020–21.

Our performance

This section reports on the priority areas and strategic initiatives of the QFES Strategic Plan 2020–2024 and is a sample of the department’s performance highlights from 2020–21. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.

Priority area

1. Volunteerism, people and culture

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

- » Empower Queenslanders to contribute and/or volunteer by providing flexible opportunities.
- » Attract, retain and develop a talented and diverse workforce.
- » Provide safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces.
- » Deliver a leadership strategy that builds a pipeline of capability for the future.
- » Involve volunteers early in decision-making and lessons management processes.

Volunteerism Strategy

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of fire and emergency services in Queensland and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience.

QFES has approximately 36,000 dedicated volunteers across the state in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers, Peer Support Officers and Chaplains.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy, launched in October 2018, aims to support a robust and flexible contemporary volunteer model which reflects best practice, innovation and social trends across volunteerism and embed these models in the QFES culture and ethos.

The Volunteerism Strategy’s Implementation Program contains nine projects with 27 deliverable activities that align with the strategy’s strategic priorities and guiding principles. The key themes are:

- » Recruitment and Onboarding
- » Leadership Development
- » Honours and Awards
- » Training
- » Engagement
- » Sustainability
- » Identity and Communication
- » 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 December 2022.

During the reporting period, the department:

- » established a Volunteerism Strategy Implementation Program Working Group which convened on six occasions. The group comprises representatives from FRS, RFS, SES, QFES People and EMCC. The purpose of the working group is to provide stewardship, advocacy and governance of Volunteerism Strategy related matters within QFES.
- » launched the QFES Leadership Framework Foundation Programs and delivered two pilots of the Leading Self program.
- » continued to support delivery of the Emergency Service Volunteer Pin with 32,435 pins distributed since the launch in 2019.
- » increased promotions of award and recognition opportunities for volunteers.
- » improved nomination processes for the Diligent and Ethical Services Medal and QFES Medal to allow for self-nomination. Online forms are being created.
- » enhanced promotions of volunteer contributions and achievements through multiple mediums.

- » increased online engagement with volunteers through the Volunteers@QFES closed Facebook group which has approximately 1,600 members.
- » established Regional Volunteer Advisory Committees (or similar function) in a number of QFES regions.
- » commenced exploration of a digital mindfulness program for optional access by all volunteers.
- » amended governance documentation to ensure consultation with volunteers.

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

Safety for children (Blue cards)

QFES continued blue card screening for the identified staff and volunteer roles that have been assessed as regulated employment pursuant to 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' policy which came into effect on 31 August 2020.

Since June 2019, QFES has delivered a persistent awareness campaign to implement the blue card requirement. This included as much individualised and personal contact as possible for staff and volunteers identified as requiring a blue card under the WWC Act.

This campaign escalated from awareness—encouraging individuals to apply—to directing staff and volunteers to apply. The approach was predicated on the legal obligation that the Commissioner, as the employer, has under the WWC Act to not allow a person to start or continue in regulated employment (including volunteering) if the person does not hold a current blue card.

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.

Supporting the implementation of the blue cards is the QFES Safety for Children Risk Management Strategy (June 2020).

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » continued the management of QFES blue card holders alongside individuals who required a blue card and were yet to apply.
- » designed and implemented an improved system and associated processes to manage the blue card program of work.

Integration of staff from PSBA

Following the announcement of the intended disestablishment of PSBA in September 2020, a total of 154 staff were identified to transition from PSBA to QFES. The functions of Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Assets, Fleet, Property and Facilities Management and staff from the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, transitioned to the QFES operating model throughout the first half of 2021 and will officially transition to QFES from 1 July 2021.

Activities undertaken to onboard PSBA staff to QFES included tailored induction forums, impact assessments, the development of transition plans and the establishment of working groups to support staff and identify and mitigate issues. Leading change forums regarding supporting employees through change were also held for senior leaders from QFES and incoming leaders from PSBA.

The transition of discrete functions to QFES from PSBA Frontline and Digital Services is ongoing.

The Internal Audit function, including the Head of Internal Audit for QFES, moved in its entirety from PSBA to the administrative stewardship of the QPS on 30 November 2020, however, will continue to provide a service to QFES.

Strategy and Corporate Services Division realignment

A review and realignment of the Strategy and Corporate Services Division was undertaken in line with the integration of PSBA functions and staff to QFES to ensure enhanced alignment of the department's support functions. The independent review of QFES will further examine the effectiveness, efficiencies and sustainability of the services delivered by the department.

Rural Fire Development Framework

In April 2021, phase 1 of the Rural Fire Development Framework (RFDF), which includes QFES Foundation Skills and Firefighter Minimum Skills, was launched to regional Training and Support Officers. The RFDF is a revised training structure, linking training to the department's volunteers and their roles. By aligning training courses to RFS roles, volunteers can develop and maintain the necessary skills to perform their duties whilst keeping themselves and the community safe. This is achieved through enhancing the capability of volunteers training volunteers and providing flexible delivery options based on local needs.

Ongoing train the trainer initiatives will support further regional engagement and assist to build capability through phase 2 of the program delivery scheduled for launch by 31 December 2021. Phase 2 of the RFDF includes Firefighter Advanced Skills and Crew Leader Skills.

The program is supported by a team of content matter experts from the SFEST (Volunteer Emergency Services Training Command) and an agreed 12-month consolidation program to ensure program longevity.

Volunteers successful in completing the new units within the framework have the ability to be awarded Certificate III in Public Safety (Firefighting Operations). This is the first time this competency has been offered as a clear training pathway for volunteers.

Grants—RFS and SES

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

- » RFS State Office presented 41 RFS grants to rural fire brigades totalling \$524,585. This funding provided for the installation of toilets and washing facilities, station extensions, improvements to training facilities and the installation of solar systems to reduce emissions and alleviate expenses in utilities.
- » QFES sponsored 18 successful external grant applications for SES groups and units with successful applicants receiving more than \$523,000. Grants projects included facility upgrades, computer equipment, vehicle canopies and equipment for training and emergency activations.

PCYC Queensland Emergency Services Cadets

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

At 30 June 2021, the program has 470 young Queenslanders (aged 12-17 years) supported by 171 adult leaders and 100 active emergency services personnel in 22 cadet units.

During the reporting period:

- » new cadet units were established at Gin Gin, Highfields and Somerset (Brisbane Valley), with new units in the process of launching in Emerald, Beaudesert and North Brisbane. In addition, the Hervey Bay unit was relaunched at Torquay Fire and Rescue Station.
- » the Torres Shire Emergency Services Cadet Unit on Thursday Island was awarded the Partnership category in the Closing the Gap Award. The award is an initiative to reduce Indigenous disadvantage in health, education, employment and social justice. The unit, with 30 members, was nominated for its outstanding work in building opportunities for young Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Torres Strait.
- » twenty cadets completed the Certificate II in Public Safety (State Emergency Service) via a combination of online, virtual interactive and face-to-face learning experiences over 12 months.
- » the Cadet Games took place in Brisbane at PCYC Sandgate on 19 June 2021. Participants included cadets from the Emergency Services Cadets Program, RFS and SLSQ and Australian Navy Cadets, Australian Army Cadets, Royal Australian Air Force Cadets and Military Cadets. The games and cadets were supported by volunteer judges from the emergency services and Australian Defence Force.
- » the Adult Leader Conference was held in December 2020 in Brisbane. Three volunteer Adult Leaders from each Emergency Services Cadet Unit were invited to attend the conference. Five-year service badges and Emergency Service Volunteer Pins were awarded to eligible Adult Leaders.

In addition, a new three-year Service Agreement between QFES and PCYC Queensland was announced on 29 June 2021 to continue delivery of the Emergency Services Cadets Program. Funding totalling in excess of \$2 million for the term of the agreement is the largest single investment in the program since its establishment.

Extended Reality Training

The current QFES capability of Extended Reality Training embedded various tools at the SFEST with deployment to the regions during the reporting period. These tools include using head mounted displays with 360-degree video of real world environments such as compartment fires and virtual reality firefighting tools such as the Flaim Extinguisher and Flaim Trainer using haptic based wearable technology with computer generated virtual environments for practising tactical firefighting. In addition, three mobile kits comprising a laptop computer and data projectors with virtual reality command software for training situational awareness and establishing command are available. The head mounted displays, the Flaim Extinguisher and mobile command training are being used in Central Region and will be redeployed to Northern Region by 31 December 2021.

The Digital Learning Deployment Unit, at the SFEST, is coordinating the deployment and maintenance of the extended reality equipment across the QFES regions for staff and volunteers. The coordination involves identifying the content to support learning programs such as recruit training with head mounted displays to experience compartment fire behaviour. Other content involves developing computer generated environments for incidents involving solar panels. This environment will be used to train staff and volunteers in how to manage the risks associated with solar panels.

Other key achievements include:

- » Appointed eight additional firefighters (completing the appointment of an additional 100 firefighters) and 12 fire communications officers in line with the government's 2017 election commitment to provide an additional 100 firefighters and 12 fire communications officers. The delivery of this commitment provides increased capability and ensures communities continue to receive quality services.
- » Appointed 48 additional firefighters at 30 June 2021 in line with the government's 2020 election commitment to provide an additional 357 firefighters over five years (commencing 2020–21) enhancing QFES' capability and capacity to respond effectively to community demand into the future.
- » Developed and implemented a RFS volunteer online Expressions of Interest tool available via the QFES website to enhance RFS recruitment processes, assist in attracting new members to

brigades and make it easier for potential new members to apply.

- » Developed the QFES Uniforms and PPE lookbook and service specific Uniforms, PPE and Equipment catalogues. The lookbook outlines how and when to wear the uniform and PPE, while setting the expected dress standard when representing QFES. Extensive consultation with staff and volunteers informed the development of the lookbook and catalogues. The lookbook and catalogues are available on the QFES Gateway (staff intranet) and are updated as necessary.
- » Introduced a new FRS insignia and shoulder badge to reflect the FRS's individual service identity. The insignia and shoulder badge are progressively being implemented across the FRS suite of uniforms and products commencing with helmets and flags.
- » Developed and implemented an enhanced decontamination process to reduce the risk of firefighters being exposed to toxic substances while fighting fires and handling contaminated equipment. The updated process was developed through the Firefighter Safety Working Group and has a focus on maintaining respiratory protection longer after fire related incidents and removing contaminated clothing quicker to reduce the transition of accumulated contaminants.
- » Completed the analysis of QFES workforce data to enable the department to develop considerations for consultation with the other Safe Crewing Taskforce signatories, which will contribute to development of the Safe Crewing Taskforce final report. Discussions are continuing with the other taskforce members on their considerations for input into the final report. The taskforce was established under *The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Certified Agreement 2019* to undertake research and provide findings, advice, guidance or recommendations regarding the provision of safe crewing for those employment positions covered by the Agreement.
- » Provided funding of \$7.7 million (GST inclusive) to SLSQ to support the operations of 57 surf lifesaving clubs, six branches and the state headquarters. With a volunteer base of approximately 34,000, SLSQ provides lifesaving services, public safety education, surf sports, fundraising and commercial training. A new Service Agreement for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 has been signed, delivering \$23 million (total of \$30 million over four years commencing 2020–21), representing the largest investment in SLSQ by the Queensland Government.

- » Continued support for RLSSQ through funding of \$448,465 to support the operations of the Ithaca-Caloundra, Neptune (Palm Beach) and Airlie Beach clubs and the delivery of swim and survive programs, water safety programs and aquatic risk management.
- » Hosted two RFS Volunteer Summits, one in Cairns in May 2021 and one on the Sunshine Coast in June 2021. More than 250 RFS volunteers attended the two events. The summits provided the opportunity for RFS volunteers to come together, learn and develop their skills with a focus on peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and developing best-practice models. The two-day program for each event included presentations on training pathways for the future, intelligence and data capture, aerial firefighting, mental health awareness, working with Indigenous communities, traditional burning, leadership and the RFS Blue Print (the RFS strategic road map detailing short and long term initiatives). In addition, the 2021 RFS Volunteer Brigades' Charter was signed at the Sunshine Coast Summit. The Charter is an agreement between the State of Queensland, QFES and the RFBAQ which ensures that the State of Queensland and QFES will commit to consultation with volunteers regarding matters which might reasonably be expected to affect volunteers.
- » Celebrated Peer Support Week in March 2021 to show appreciation for the contribution the department's Peer Support Officers make to the wellbeing of all QFES members. Peer Support Week also acknowledged the outstanding efforts of 10 regional Peer Support Officers as well as one statewide award for Peer Supporter of the year.
- » Celebrated SES WOW day on 19 May 2021 (Wear Orange Wednesday) —the national day to celebrate and thank SES volunteers. On this day, the community takes the opportunity to thank SES volunteers in Queensland and around the country for their dedication and tireless devotion to their communities.
- » Celebrated SES Week in October 2020 honouring the hard work, dedication and commitment that represents the spirit of SES volunteers and staff. SES Week events included regional events and award presentations for volunteers and units who have gone above and beyond their duties to support their communities. In addition, a new principal community partnership with Suncorp was celebrated.
- » Commenced preparations for RFS Week to be celebrated in August 2021. RFS Week recognises and acknowledges the dedication of RFS volunteers and their commitment to helping keep Queensland communities safe. RFS Week 2021 will see the introduction of the State Young Volunteer of the Year Award and Regional Young Volunteer Awards. The Young Volunteer of the Year Awards form part of the suite of Regional and State Volunteer of the Year Awards presented during RFS week to acknowledge volunteers aged 16–25 years who have demonstrated a special contribution to the service. During RFS Week, 18 awards will be presented across the state.

For further information addressing the strategic initiatives under this priority area, refer to Human Resources (pages 78–82).

Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys

The results of the Working for Queensland (WfQ) and Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) surveys, conducted in September 2020, revealed the majority of QFES staff and volunteers feel motivated and inspired by their work.

More than 4,600 QFES staff and volunteers participated in the surveys. Among the most positive results were:

- » taking pride in working for QFES
- » understanding how our work contributes to QFES' objectives
- » incorporating the QFES values into our work.

There was a strong agreement across the department about feeling a personal attachment to QFES and its work.

The surveys are a confidential forum enabling QFES to gauge its performance collectively and in each division, regionally and down to the work unit level.

QFES considers the surveys an opportunity to hear the workforce views and understand their lived experiences. The results are taken seriously and are used as a key evidence-base for decision-making at all levels in the department.

The results are considered and progressed to key actions (both strategically and tactically) designed to focus on positive work environments and experiences that are centred around shared values.

The following key areas have been identified for continued development and require further attention:

- » Volunteer On-boarding
- » Red Tape
- » Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- » Reward and Recognition
- » Professional Development and Training
- » Inclusion and Diversity
- » Negative Workplace Behaviours.

The surveys enable the department to continuously strengthen and improve as an organisation. Forums continue to involve staff and volunteers in developing actions to respond to the survey results.

Our most favourable responses

Working for Queensland

- I understand what is expected of me to do well in my job.
92%
- I understand how my work contributes to my organisation's objectives.
92%
- People in my workgroup are committed to workplace safety.
88%
- People in my workgroup treat customers with respect.
87%
- People in my workgroup are committed to delivering excellent service to customers.
85%

Volunteering for Queensland

- I understand what is expected of me to effectively do my volunteer role.
94%
- I am proud to tell others I volunteer for my organisation
87%
- People in my team are committed to workplace safety.
68%
- My volunteering gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.
68%
- I understand how I contribute to QFES objectives.
58%

Response scale

FAVOURABLE	NEUTRAL	UNFAVOURABLE
POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE
Agree Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree Strongly disagree

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 the department through their diverse skills, knowledge and experience.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » adapted the long-standing Fire Ed Program, in consultation with AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism, to ensure an inclusive learning environment for children with autism. The program was updated to include modified language, adjustments to fire drill activities and a focus on physical props to ensure children with autism are prepared should a fire start in their home. Following a successful trial of this adapted Fire Ed program in April 2021, it will be rolled out through the AEIOU Foundation centres across Queensland.
- » continued to assist members of the deaf community and people who have a hearing impairment to install specialised smoke alarms through the Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme managed by Deaf Services Queensland, with 154 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms provided.
- » provided Auslan interpreters when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information.
- » hosted the Public Safety Agencies International Women's Day on 8 March 2021 to celebrate the inspiring women within the public safety agencies and encourage conversations about gender equality. More than 300 people from across the state tuned in virtually to hear a panel discussion exploring the United Nations theme of *Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world*. Staff and volunteers were also recognised for their outstanding contributions to embracing gender equality and promoting the rights and wellbeing of women in QFES.
- » collaborated with The University of Sydney and Queenslanders with Disability Network to promote the new Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Workbook. The workbook is a conversation guide that people with disability can use to tailor emergency preparedness planning to their strengths and support needs. The workbook covers the areas of social connectedness, transportation, assistive technology, management of health, personal support, communication, assistance animals and living situation.
- » conducted a pilot workshop, in collaboration with Guide Dogs Queensland, to support vision-impaired clients to better understand their disaster risks and be prepared for emergencies using the P-CEP toolkit.
- » developed a home fire safety visual guide for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to ensure they have the tools to avoid fire risks in the home. The guide was developed in consultation with Multicultural Australia and Community Action for a Multicultural Society Nambour (www.qfes.qld.gov.au).
- » expanded the Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program throughout Queensland and into more diverse areas and education settings, with delivery of the program into a number of Indigenous communities and youth detention centres, and in conjunction with youth justice programs. This expansion was undertaken in collaboration with the National Indigenous Australians Agency, QPS Indigenous Liaison Officers, local Elders and local Indigenous media groups. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers, facilitated by operational firefighters.
- » was recognised in every category of the 2020 Women and Firefighting Australasia Awards including receiving the Diversity, Fairness and Inclusion Award. This award recognises QFES' dedication to diversity and inclusion, particularly the partnership between QFES and not-for-profit organisation CareerTrackers. QFES participates in the Indigenous Internship Summer and Winter Programs each year, enhancing the participation of Indigenous peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland.
- » continued delivery of the *Starting the Journey* learning program providing insight into interpreting people's own culture as well as the lived experiences of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- » continued delivery of QFES Allies of Inclusion program which builds an internal network of staff and volunteers committed to their workplaces being safe, healthy and inclusive of everyone.

- » was represented by a QFES Indigenous senior leader at the Australia and New Zealand School of Government 2021 Proud Partnerships in Place First Peoples Conference. The conference explored how public services need to rethink the way they relate with Indigenous communities and examined how successful partnerships have evolved and the positive results they have delivered for communities particularly during COVID-19.
- » participated in several cultural burns with QFES officers learning from traditional owners about Indigenous cultural fire management practices. QFES' engagement with Indigenous communities included training with Indigenous fire practitioners.
- » established eight new Bushfire Safety Officer positions to be filled by First Nations peoples with the aim of ensuring traditional learnings are embedded into QFES into the future.
- » commenced development of an Indigenous Land and Fire Management training program.

Priority area

2. Systems and intelligence

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

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

Catalyst and SABRE

Catalyst continues to be used for Operation Cool Burn (OCB) (refer page 42) data capture and reporting, sustainable development and predictive services activities. Catalyst has continued to build on the single platform capabilities of data gathering, reporting and fire simulation to deliver a multi-tenure, integrated fire management system. Catalyst provides access to users from more than 80 organisations across Queensland, integrates planning and risk components through shared Geospatial Information Systems and provides levels of reporting dependent upon a user's role, function and authorisations.

SABRE (Simulation Analysis-Based Risk Evaluation) continues to be developed as a high-resolution operational decision support tool providing forward looking fire information for planners and responders alike. SABRE aggregates environmental information such as weather, atmospherics, fuel, regrowth and spatial location to deliver nuanced fire behaviour advice. Work is progressing to upgrade both the architecture and technology upon which the system is built, as well as to proof, document and refactor the data processing components. This refactoring will make SABRE products available in a more timely and reliable fashion with a view to cross system availability.

SES Onboarding Project

At 30 June 2021, SES groups within South East Queensland are equipped with over 1,700 GWN compatible vehicle and portable hand-held radios enabling them to communicate with QPS, QAS and other emergency services using the same radio communications platform.

Additionally, the project equipped other SES groups across Queensland with 4,500 new enhanced portable radios to operate outside areas covered by the GWN. It also delivered an upgraded TAMS (Task and Management System) with improvements designed to support and enhance SES operations into the future. TAMS provides for the tasking of SES to incidents and updating after response and includes reporting functions.

ICT Investment Plan

The QFES ICT Investment Plan identifies the major ICT activities proposed to be undertaken during 2021–22 that directly contribute to the *Strategy 2030* Guiding Principles, the department's strategic plan, QFES Digital Principles and the Queensland Government's digital strategy for 2017–2021 *DIGITALIST*.

Since November 2019, QFES has made a concerted effort to improve governance arrangements associated with ICT program delivery including establishing an ICT Governance and Portfolio Management Team.

The investment plan process underwent a maturity uplift during the reporting period including planning and prioritisation utilising risk and capability frameworks. Preparation of the plan was undertaken within a landscape which included a number of extenuating circumstances such as the PSBA disestablishment including the transition of Frontline and Digital Services to QPS and the Queensland Government's savings and debt plan.

The program of work developed in the investment plan was prioritised based on a QFES assessment of risk and capability growth and in alignment with the Office of Assurance and Investment criteria.

As at 30 June 2021, some of the ICT program of work 2021–22 projects are underway with the majority expected to be delivered in 2021–22, whilst others will extend into the ICT Five Year Roadmap.

The 2020–21 program of work was severely impacted by fiscal restraints imposed by the response to COVID-19. Items that were completed include:

- » NBN Readiness Telephony System replacement
- » QFES SMS Telstra Access Manager Paging system replacement
- » QFES ArcGIS Mapping Systems Update
- » SES Onboarding Project.

Information Management Framework

The objective of the QFES Information Management Framework is to underpin information management practices across the department and ensure that information and data resources are managed as a strategic asset, are trusted and accurate, support service delivery, are managed securely, meet compliance requirements, support decision-making, provide predictive insights and help measure the department's performance.

During 2020–21, QFES continued to mature the Information Management Framework with the finalisation of the Data Management Policy, Data Quality Standard, Data Quality Assessment Tool and Information Management Roles and Responsibilities Standard along with developing supporting guides and procedures.

The Queensland Disaster Management Data Coordination Initiative (QDMDCI) was also finalised. The QDMDCI is a QFES-led initiative to improve disaster management data coordination activities across all disaster management groups, including all levels of government, non-government organisations and private entities, with the aim of improving Queenslanders' ability to better plan, manage and respond to disaster events. To operationalise the data sharing initiative, QFES developed a framework to facilitate information sharing.

The framework is aligned to the Queensland Government Information Sharing Authorising Framework and the Queensland Government Information Security Classification Framework and includes:

- » Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- » Data Exchange Schedule
- » Data Catalogue
- » Data Dictionary.

To support disaster information sharing, QFES also developed a Disaster Management Data Coordination Portal as the platform to deliver on the data coordination and sharing activities across disaster management stakeholders.

QFES is committed to embedding strategic, consistent and structured enterprise-wide information security practices that align with the Queensland Government Information Security Policy (IS18:2018). The policy requires that all agencies must implement an Information Security Management System (ISMS) based on ISO 27001 Information Security Management. The function of an ISMS is to protect the confidentiality, integrity

and availability of information. In line with policy requirements, during the mandatory annual information security reporting process, the Commissioner attested to the appropriateness of the information security risk management within QFES to the Queensland Government Chief Information Security Officer, noting that appropriate assurance activities have been undertaken to inform this opinion and the department's information security risk position.

Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements Data Sharing Group

QFES continued to support whole-of-government disaster management data sharing through the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) Data Sharing Group on ArcGIS Online. The group allows data across PPRR phases of disaster management to be shared amongst members.

At 30 June 2021, there are more than 220 members from local, state and Australian Government bodies as well as non-government organisations, with 370 shared datasets.

This data helps inform the SDCC Situational Awareness Platform, which is made up of eight operational situational awareness web maps and dashboards.

Computer Aided Dispatch

The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Upgrade Project is delivering an upgrade of the existing QFES InformCAD (v5.7.28) to CAD Enterprise (V21.1.2.2.). The CAD is a mission and safety critical system that supports call taking (Triple Zero 000), dispatching, mobilisation, operations and coordination by enabling rapid deployment of resources to emergency incidents and situations. The upgrade will deliver enhanced functionality.

Other key achievements include:

- » Introduced Advanced Mobile Location (AML) which allows most mobile phones and wearables (with SIM cards) to automatically send their device's location when they call Triple Zero (000). AML is an international standard being implemented across the globe. Queensland was an early adopter of AML and went live in December 2020. AML is accurate within a five-metre radius outdoors and a 25-metre radius indoors. It is activated when Triple Zero (000) is called and the location data is sent while the caller is talking to the Emergency Call Service. After the call, AML is deactivated. Implementing AML required centralised coordination of project activities between QFES, QPS, QAS and other states' police, fire and ambulance services. Work is ongoing on the next stages which include text and video methods of contacting Triple Zero (000).
- » Amended the FRS Damage Assessment data collection tool, following engagement with the QRA, to provide more comprehensive data to QRA and local governments following significant natural weather events. The enhanced data collection tool provides increased quality data and information from the initial damage assessments undertaken by the AUS-1 DART members of the FRS.
- » Supported development of innovative new features for the Emergency Response Decision Support System (ERDSS). The system supports firefighters' and other emergency responders' decision-making at a range of incidents such as hazardous materials, chemical spills, explosions, biological threats, nuclear accidents and illicit drug laboratories. Over the past decade, the department's Research and Scientific Branch has played a key role in the system's development in collaboration with the Australian Government, United States Federal Government and partners. The branch's expertise underpinned the development of the latest version of ERDSS which was released internationally in August 2020. The new version includes information on new hazardous materials as well as new and updated tools such as a radiation shielding tool.
- » Contributed to several working groups at the Emergency Management Spatial Information Network Australia national level including the rollout of a new web platform focused around disaster information sharing.

Priority area

3. Service alignment

2020–2024 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

The Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) was endorsed by the Queensland Disaster Management Committee in 2017 and allows disaster management stakeholders to understand, manage, and if required, communicate their disaster risks to the state and federal levels of government.

QFES continued to provide advice and support the implementation of the QERMF across Queensland's disaster management arrangements including in Woorabinda, Cook, Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale.

In 2020–21, an independent review of the QERMF to identify lessons and opportunities for improvement was undertaken. QFES commenced work to address the 15 key findings and 12 recommendations that resulted from the review to improve the way that the framework enables the prevention of new disaster risk, reduction of existing disaster risk and management of residual risk. The action plan will be implemented by a whole-of-government working group formed under the State Disaster Coordination Group with representation from across Queensland's disaster management arrangements.

Queensland Bushfire Plan

QFES, in partnership with bushfire management stakeholders, developed the Queensland Bushfire Plan (the plan). The plan, released in July 2020, outlines the whole-of-government response arrangements for bushfire management in Queensland. The plan is underpinned by three principles—hazard mitigation, public safety, and collaboration and coordination. As lead agency, QFES has a critical role in implementing the plan across the state, with key responsibilities to ensure the safety of Queensland communities. The plan is a key document within Queensland's disaster management arrangements and is a sub-plan to the Queensland State Disaster Management Plan.

Developed following extensive research, benchmarking with other states and territories and feedback from stakeholders, the plan is a living document and will change to cater for any relevant recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements final report (refer page 63).

Fire management groups and committees operate at the local, area, regional and state level. In total, there are more than 50 Area Fire Management Groups largely based on local government areas, seven Regional Bushfire Committees (one per QFES region) and a State Bushfire Committee. The plan helps QFES, its partner agencies, major landholders and communities understand how everyone works together to mitigate the risk of bushfire.

Bushfire warning levels

QFES initiated the Shaping Future Information and Warnings Project to enhance the approach to bushfire warnings. Changes made for the 2021–22 bushfire season include adjustments to warnings language, warnings publishing platforms, action statements corresponding with warning levels and new systems to empower trained personnel to create and issue warnings locally. The new system automates a lot of the processes for sending warnings which were previously performed manually. It also enables QFES officers to send bushfire warnings relevant to their region, drawing on their local relationships and intimate knowledge of the area—saving time and making the warnings more accessible and easier to read.

QFES continues to deliver technical bushfire prone area mapping and planning advice regarding land use planning matters, meeting the department's responsibilities for the bushfire state interest under the *State Planning Policy* (July 2017). This is enabled by implementation of the QFES *Bushfire Resilient Communities* technical document (October 2019) used by local governments to inform development of planning instruments and other industry professionals during development activities.

Improvements were also made by QFES in mapping and land use planning in bushfire prone areas to encourage avoidance of vulnerable development in high-risk bushfire prone areas through:

- » a signed service agreement with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to provide advice on the alignment of planning instruments and amendments to the bushfire state interest policy requirements under the *State Planning Policy*.
- » the provision of technical advice to the Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation on bushfire risks associated with development proposals on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island).
- » ongoing early engagement with local governments regarding refinement of bushfire prone area mapping for local government areas and fit-for-purpose risk assessments to inform the next generation of planning schemes.

State disaster risk assessments

Development and finalisation of the 2021 State Disaster Risk Report and Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland due for release by 31 December 2021.

The 2021 State Disaster Risk Report is an update to the *QUEENSLAND State Natural Hazard Risk Assessment 2017*. It builds on the previous report by assessing a broader range of natural and human-induced hazards at the state and regional planning levels and includes more comprehensive information on climate change for the relevant hazards. The report was a collaborative effort led by QFES that involved 54 disaster management entities including 30 local governments and 24 other government and non-government entities.

The Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland provides a comprehensive assessment of tropical cyclone risk for Queensland. The project involved consultation with eight local governments and 35 state, commonwealth and private sector entities.

QFES also commenced work on the Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for South East Queensland in partnership with six local governments in South East Queensland, and a range of Queensland and Australian Government departments and the insurance sector, to better understand and address the risks from severe wind for South East Queensland.

Local governments and the SES

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

The MoUs, developed in collaboration with several local government Disaster Management Officers and the Inspector-General Emergency Management, establish the collaborative approach between QFES and local governments for the management and support of the SES and detail responsibilities for funding and support arrangements. This ensures the delivery of an effective emergency service that contributes to a safer more resilient community.

In addition, during the reporting period:

- » thirteen local government applications were successful under the 2020–21 round of the SES Support Grant Program which contributed \$400,000 towards local government projects in support of SES facility upgrades and vehicles.
- » twenty local governments across Queensland were awarded grants in the 2021–22 round of the annual SES Support Grant Program. This funding provides more than \$586,000 towards local government projects for SES facility upgrades and vehicles. SES projects will commence from 1 July 2021.
- » QFES distributed \$1.65 million 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.

In 2021–22, an additional \$1.4 million funding will provide each QFES region with \$40,000 for operational purposes and incidentals or minor repairs, along with \$30,000 for SES Trainers. With a further \$550,000 statewide for special training requirements, new or replacement defibrillators and funding to equip every SES vehicle with red and blue e-flares.

National and international engagement—AUS-1 DART team

QFES continues to develop and maintain an internationally recognised Disaster Assistance Response capability through the AUS-1 DART team. This team is managed through FRS and includes full-time firefighters, communications officers, mechanics and ambulance paramedics, along with volunteer doctors, canine handlers and engineers, to provide an internationally deployable disaster assistance team that is classified under the United Nations. The responsibility to maintain this capability is a shared initiative by QFES and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

QFES also continues to provide personnel for international working groups, team leaders engagements and mentor activities for the development of global rescue capability that directly increases the capabilities of the Queensland DART for response activities in Australia and abroad.

Other key achievements include:

- » Continued implementation of *Strategy 2030* supported through the delivery of the department's strategic plan.
- » Responded to 69,899 incidents including FRS and RFS response (192 incidents per day on average):
 - 2,503 structure fires including 1,801 residential structure fires
 - 5,930 landscape fires
 - 15,315 mobile property crashes
 - 46,151 other incidents (includes other fires and explosions, rescues, hazardous conditions incidents, false alarms and good intent calls, storm and natural disaster response incidents and other situations).
- » Continued to deliver timely response times to structure fires including call taking time with 8.1 minutes at the 50th percentile and 12.8 minutes at the 90th percentile.
- » Continued to reduce the number of false/unwanted automatic fire alarms per Alarm Signalling Equipment connection from 2.2 in 2019–20 to 2.1 in 2020–21. 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.
- » Received 13,580 SES tasks including 2,344 Agency Support Requests.
- » SES volunteers performed approximately 146,000 operational hours and approximately 350,000 hours in preparation and training.
- » Continued to work 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.
- » Participated in several cultural burns with QFES officers learning from traditional owners about Indigenous cultural fire management practices. QFES' engagement with Indigenous communities included training with Indigenous fire practitioners. QFES established eight new Bushfire Safety Officer positions to be filled by First Nations peoples with the aim of ensuring traditional learnings are embedded into QFES into the future.
- » Commenced development of an Indigenous Land and Fire Management training program which will be supported with the appointment of eight Bushfire Safety Officers to be filled by First Nations peoples in 2021–22 to ensure the program meets the needs of the community. The program will support participants to develop skills and knowledge related to nationally accredited units of competency from Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystem Management (Indigenous land management and fire).
- » Continued to develop and evaluate implementation of a remote area firefighting capability enabling appropriately trained and equipped QFES officers to undertake bushfire firefighting activities in locations where access via firefighting vehicles is restricted. The underpinning training course provides specialist firefighters instruction on how to operate in remote environments and includes remote camping, navigation, survival, communication and dry firefighting techniques. The course provides members with the knowledge and skills to plan, prepare and operate in remote or isolated environments.

- » Developed a 10-day remote rescue course enabling trained QFES officers to respond to lost, stranded or injured hikers and climbers. The course trains QFES officers to scramble across rock faces, establish anchor points in the natural environment and drill removable anchors to rescue people in danger. Each remote rescue operator carries more than 20 kilograms of equipment, food, water and spare clothing so they and the people they are rescuing are totally self-sufficient.
- » Continued to engage with the community to raise awareness about the services provided by QFES and inform the community on action for natural disasters and on improving their home and personal safety. Methods of engagement included attendance at displays, presentations and workshops at local community events across the services and state, such as the Brisbane Home Show, where QFES personnel discussed smoke alarm legislation, home fire safety and preparing homes for bushfire and storm seasons.
- » Established new and amended EML districts to commence on 1 July 2021 following the opening of new fire and rescue stations at Pimpama and Charlton and staff increases at Warwick, Dalby, Coolum, Capricorn Coast (Yeppoon Fire and Rescue Station) and Airlie Beach. EML boundary changes occurred in the Arana Hills, Bribie Island, Burpengary, Caboolture and Eatons Hill EML districts due to residential property development within the existing fire and rescue station service areas. As part of the change process, QFES engaged with local Members of Parliament, local governments for the areas, rural fire brigades and other key stakeholders. Information mail outs advising of the changes to the EML were undertaken for all affected property owners.
- » Awarded the 2020 Premier's Special Commendation Award for the department's response to the 2019–20 bushfires and COVID-19 and finalist for the Keep Communities Safe Award for the support SES members provided at the border in response to COVID-19.
- » Continued to deliver the Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) program supporting parents and guardians with their efforts to educate children and young people (three to 17 years)—who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident—about fire safety. During the reporting period, 87 FFF enquiries were received with 12 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. At 30 June 2021, 59 FFF enquiries were completed and 28 are active. In addition, there are 48 trained FFF practitioners located throughout Queensland.
- » Continued to deliver the RAAP program with the delivery of 306 program presentations to approximately 27,700 young persons across Queensland in mainstream and non-traditional schooling systems, restorative justice programs, and in partnership with the PCYC and community youth organisations. 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 Barcaldine, Charleville, Emerald, Gayndah, Moura, Roma and Winton. At 30 June 2021, there are 152 trained RAAP presenters located throughout Queensland.
- » Continued implementation and enhancement of the Tropical Cyclone Impact Model (TCIM) throughout the 2020–21 severe weather season. TCIM is a capability developed by Geoscience Australia in partnership with QFES and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Australia. TCIM provides operational (forecast) severe wind impact analysis to support prevention, preparedness and response to tropical cyclone events. TCIM contributes to the ongoing development and enhancement of nationally consistent, collaborative hazard and impact forecast and warning services.

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 (OCB), QFES supports its land management agency partners to prepare for the coming bushfire season. This includes the Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS)), the Department of Resources, HQ Plantations Pty Ltd (Queensland's largest plantation forest company) and local governments as well as landholders across the state.

OCB has traditionally been 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.

In 2021, QFES introduced a new methodology to better support Area Fire Management Groups to identify risks in a transparent and evidence-based way. The methodology aligns with the QERMF and is supported by new data sets of buildings and overall fuel hazard ratings. The methodology provides a framework to help Area Fire Management Groups methodically consider the various factors that affect risk and capture that local knowledge systematically.

QFES also developed and implemented several simplified geospatial survey tools using the ERSI Survey123 platform to empower rural fire brigades and bushfire mitigation partners to capture burnt area mapping and community engagement information more easily in the field with real-time reporting capabilities.

In 2021–22, the mitigation program will transition from a five-month operational period (OCB) to year-round enabling greater flexibility for land managers and owners to conduct mitigation activities in a changing climate that is leading to more protracted bushfire seasons and often limiting windows for hazard reduction burning.

The State Bushfire Committee, comprised of key bushfire partners and stakeholders, established a formal mitigation working group to support increased collaboration and information sharing between partners at a state level and support the expanded mitigation program. The Bushfire Mitigation Working Group, a sub-committee of the State Bushfire Committee, was established in the reporting period.

OCB 2020 commenced on 1 April 2020 and continued through to 31 August 2020. During this period, QFES and its key partners and stakeholders completed a total of 567 priority activities.

OCB 2021 commenced on 1 April 2021 and will continue until 31 August 2021 at which time work will commence in transitioning OCB to the year-round program of activities. OCB 2021 has a strong focus on recognising the community as a key partner, sharing messages about local bushfire risks and supporting them to prepare their families and properties.

To mitigate the risk across high-risk locations, activities include targeted community engagement to inform residents in the highest priority areas of actions they can take to better prepare for bushfires, fire break or trail works, and hazard reduction burning to reduce fuel loads.

At 30 June 2021, 98 priority activities have been completed. OCB 2021 mitigation activities are continuing in preparation for the 2021–22 bushfire season.

Bushfire season 2020–21—Operation Quell

The 2020–21 bushfire season, known as Operation Quell (meaning to suppress or extinguish), officially commenced on 1 August 2020 and finished on 5 January 2021 with a mission to protect Queensland communities from bushfires and minimise the impacts of the bushfire season in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The bushfire season was shorter than usual due to an early wet season and for the most part this was a relatively quiet operational season.

An exception to this was the K’gari (Fraser Island) fire (refer pages 47–48), which was sparked by an illegal campfire on 14 October 2020. This fire lasted two months. QFES, the QPWS and the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) personnel worked closely during all phases of the K’gari response to contain and extinguish the fire and preserve life, as well as protect property, culturally significant sites, historic structures and the natural flora and fauna. QFES crews assisted QPWS and the BAC in fighting the fires through both ground and air responses.

During Operation Quell, 65 aircraft, including the large air tankers, accumulated more than 3,100 flying hours and dropped more than 19 million litres of water and suppressant.

During the operational period, QFES responded more than 15,500 times to more than 4,500 fires, with personnel contributing at least 170,000 hours of time to manage the bushfires, with approximately 1.57 million hectares burnt. Importantly there was no loss of life and no dwellings destroyed.

Event Scale—1 August 2020 – 5 January 2021

4,500+ fires	Nil dwellings destroyed
1,567,626 hectares burnt	65 aircraft utilised
15,500+ responses	3,160 hours flown
2,100+ appliances	40 LAT drops – 400,000 litres gel and 60,000 litres retardant
Two Emergency Alert campaigns	432 Bushfire Community Warnings issued

COVID-19—planning and response— Operation Exigent

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, QFES has played a significant role in supporting the Queensland Government's operational response through the operation of the SDCC, providing frontline support to the QPS with border control operations, planning, exercising and quarantine hotel management.

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

QFES is responsible for maintaining the SDCC capability which has been stood up for a record amount of time, since 2 February 2020, in support of COVID-19 operations. QFES provides the Deputy Command role and leads the planning and logistics capabilities.

During 2020–21, QFES logistics capability supported quarantine accommodation for more than 91,000 people including international and interstate travellers, mariners, aircrew, Australian Defence Force personnel and seasonal workers.

The SDCC Planning cell has supported the development of foundational and supplementary plans that direct the whole-of-government response to COVID-19 including the State Pandemic and State Quarantine Plans and the State Mass Vaccination plan (draft). These plans are developed in consultation with disaster management stakeholders to ensure clarity in roles and responsibilities and governance and operational arrangements to keep Queenslanders safe.

The QFES SDCC Logistics and Planning team was awarded under the Commissioner's Awards for Excellence—Adaptive – Highly Commended—for continual commitment to upholding and enhancing QFES' reputation in incident and disaster management.

QFES staff and volunteers provided support at land and air borders, vaccination hubs and testing clinics. During 2020–21, QFES staff and volunteers contributed approximately 12,500 shifts to border operations.

QFES Emergency Management Coordinators within each region have worked with partners to ensure local governments and other agencies have pandemic plans in place and are trained in the disaster management arrangements and operations.

QFES has ensured continuity of service delivery across PPRR during COVID-19 and several lockdowns, with some services adapting and moving to online service delivery for training and community engagement.

Severe weather season—Operation Erudite

Operation Erudite was declared to cover the 2020–21 severe weather season (1 November 2020 to 30 April 2021) to facilitate preparation, planning, mobilisation and response during severe weather events to support the reduction of impacts to communities.

QFES planned for the severe weather season by facilitating high-level initiatives focussed on preparation which included connecting with key disaster management stakeholders across Queensland and ensuring they were adequately informed and prepared to help protect Queenslanders.

Preparation and mitigation activities facilitated by QFES included:

- » the annual jurisdictional pre-season briefing held on 29 September 2020 in partnership with Emergency Management Australia. The briefing provided disaster management stakeholders with information on jurisdictional activities over the previous 12 months. It also highlighted important changes in the QDMA and strategic direction of the Australian Government.
- » working with Queensland Health to develop the Evacuation Management Guide for COVID-19 to support decision-makers responsible for evacuation management activities across Queensland within a COVID-19 environment.
- » a number of dual hazard exercises with the Chief Executive Officer Leadership Board, the State Disaster Coordination Group and the District Disaster Management Groups to test capacity and capability to respond to concurrent hazards such as a cyclone and COVID-19 outbreak.
- » enhancing community preparedness with the delivery of QFES *Get Ready* guides, which provide information to Queenslanders about how to prepare for their local risk.
- » enabling QDMA to enhance planning and to be prepared through the integration of the QERMF. Understanding disaster related risk through scientific and intelligence led evidence-based risk assessments, coupled with the development of data sharing initiatives, is advancing Queensland's risk-based planning in a consistent manner. This approach positions QDMA to be proactive in planning for, responding to and recovering from disaster events.

Severe weather events during this period included:

- » Far North Queensland Low Pressure System (15–16 April 2021)
- » Southern Queensland Severe Weather (20–31 March 2021)
- » Tropical Cyclone Niran and Associated Low Pressure System (25 February–3 March 2021)
- » Far North Queensland Tropical Low (24–30 January 2021)
- » Tropical Cyclone Kimi (16 January 2021) – significant event
- » Tropical Cyclone Imogen and Associated Low Pressure System (2–12 January 2021) – significant event
- » Western Queensland Thunderstorms (21–30 December 2020)
- » South East Queensland Coastal Trough (12–15 December 2020).

The day prior to the commencement of the official severe weather season, severe thunderstorms impacted much of South East Queensland (refer page 46).

Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements were activated for a number of these events, including at local, district and state levels.

During the severe weather season, the SES completed 6,176 tasks and 1,165 requests for assistance through TAMS.

As in 2019, the severe weather season began while heightened bushfire conditions persisted in some parts of Queensland, along with the additional complication of COVID-19.

Hailstorm—Queensland 31 October 2020

The severe weather Queensland experienced during 2020–21 is evident in the incident referred to as the Halloween Thunderstorm. Although the event is specific to 31 October 2020 it is worth noting the weather conditions preceding that date.

Widespread thunderstorms affected central and South East Queensland between 24 and 29 October 2020. Thunderstorms affected Brisbane on 24 and 25, then again on 27 and 28 October 2020, bringing heavy rainfall to some sites, flash-flooding and strong wind gusts. The thunderstorms produced large hail with reports of hail up to 6cm in diameter south of Gayndah, fallen power lines in the Caboolture area, and localised flash flooding on 28 October 2020. Severe thunderstorms impacted much of South East Queensland on the afternoon of 31 October 2020. The main impacts were giant hail up to 14cm in diameter along a path from Amberley to the northern suburbs of Logan, giant hail up to 7cm in the Gympie area, and wind damage from Redcliffe to Kingston with gusts over 100 kilometres per hour recorded around Moreton Bay. Giant hail up to 14cm in diameter was reported at Forestdale, south of Brisbane, and hail up to 13cm in diameter was reported at Hillcrest. Other reports indicated giant hail up to 9.5cm in diameter at Amberley, 8cm in diameter at Springfield, 7cm in diameter around Gatton, and 5cm in diameter at Seventeen Mile Rocks.

As parts of South East Queensland were hit by a series of very dangerous and life-threatening thunderstorms, the Bureau of Meteorology issued warnings for people in parts of Queensland's Wide Bay, Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt regions. The Bureau warned the situation was volatile and continuing to change quickly. The path of damage was forecast to hit from the Queensland border to the north of the Sunshine Coast and communities further inland. The Bureau continued to issue warnings for dangerous thunderstorms throughout the afternoon and into the evening of 31 October 2020 for South East Queensland¹. It was also revealed that wind gusts of 115 kilometres per hour were recorded at Cape Moreton which is located on Moreton Island, 40 kilometres off Brisbane. There were nine super cell storms in the designated warning area issued by the Bureau.

West of the city, the SDCC issued an Emergency Alert for Lockyer Valley, Ipswich, Jimboomba and Amberley residents when the severe thunderstorms were forecast to bring destructive winds and giant hail. Another Emergency Alert was issued for parts of the Gold Coast and Logan, namely Woodridge, Beenleigh, Southport and Coomera, as the dangerous storms tracked over the city.

Overall, there were approximately 296,000 lightning strikes across South East Queensland during this event, demonstrating the violent and powerful nature of the storms. Emergency services reported requests for assistance mainly relating to trees falling and damaged roofs. Three people were trapped inside a Springfield Lakes residence after a tree collapsed onto the roof. No injuries were reported.

Following the aftermath of the storm, there were approximately 95,000 homes without power and the Queensland SES received more than 2,900 requests for assistance in the Ipswich and Logan council areas. QFES crews conducted more than 2,000 damage assessments, including more than 500 instances of major damage.

QFES worked collectively with the Ipswich City Council, Local Disaster Management Group and key stakeholders to assist those community members most severely affected. A multi-service approach to recovery operations was implemented, exemplifying the effectiveness of interoperability. Invaluable assistance was also provided by the New South Wales and South Australia SES.

¹ www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-31/qld-weather-storms-rain-hail-south-east/12821060

K'gari fire (Fraser Island)

K'gari is the traditional land of the Butchulla people. K'gari is listed as having World Heritage values, and is located off the coast of Hervey Bay, Queensland. It is 122 kilometres long and is the largest sand island in the world. Majestic remnants of tall rainforest growing on sand and half the world's perched freshwater dune lakes are found inland from the beach. The combination of shifting sand dunes, tropical rainforests and lakes makes it an exceptional site.

In October 2020, the Bureau of Meteorology reported that mean maximum temperatures were above average in the east.¹ Rainfall was below average across most of Queensland for November 2020, which marked the second-warmest November on record for Queensland in terms of mean, maximum and minimum temperatures. A low to severe-intensity heatwave affected much of north-west to south-east Queensland from 15 to 17 November 2020.²

A fire was reported on 14 October 2020 in a camping area at the northern end of K'gari. The fire burned until 16 December 2020, burning approximately 85,000 hectares of bushland.

The source of the fire was determined to be an illegally lit campfire that was not properly extinguished. QPWS responded as soon as the fire was reported and assumed the role of Incident Controller. Due to dry conditions, vegetation, strong winds and inaccessible terrain, it was deemed that a direct attack on the fire was not feasible.

QFES, QPWS, the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), QPS, QAS and Fraser Coast Regional Council worked closely during all phases of the K'gari fire event to contain and extinguish the fire, preserve life and protect property, culturally significant sites, historic structures and the natural flora and fauna. QFES crews assisted QPWS and the BAC in responding to fires through both ground and air responses. Aerial operations commenced on 15 October 2020 with water bombing commencing on 9 November 2020.

At 0800 hours on 24 November 2020, QFES North Coast Regional Operations Centre, based in Maryborough, was activated to support QPWS' response, maintain active oversight of fire activities

on K'gari and the wider region, and coordinate with the relevant disaster management partners. QPWS established an Incident Control Centre (ICC) at its Rainbow Beach depot on 24 November 2020 with a Divisional Command Point remaining on the island. A joint Incident Management Team (IMT) consisting of members from QFES, QPWS and the BAC was established within the ICC.

The fires on K'gari, burning predominantly in inaccessible terrain, were transferred to QFES control on 27 November 2020 from the previous lead agency, QPWS. This occurred following a detailed assessment of the conditions by the agencies which included the predicted weather conditions and the threat to life and assets on the island. On 27 November 2020, the ICC moved to the Rainbow Beach Community Centre to accommodate increased IMT personnel and on 5 December 2020, the ICC relocated to QFES' Maryborough ICC, located at the QFES Complex in Howard. The QFES ICC incorporated representatives from BAC, cultural liaison officers and a number of Fire Behaviour Analysts to inform decision-making.

On 7 December 2020, the Happy Valley township on the Eastern side of the island, and three properties at Yidney Rocks were threatened by the fire. Firefighters conducted structural protection resulting in no loss of life or property. There were multiple fire fronts and significant QFES, QPWS, and BAC resources responded to these fires.

Among many others on the island, three culturally significant sites have been identified in the 'Valley of the Giants' by the Butchulla people. QFES and QPWS worked closely with the Butchulla people in protecting these sites.

¹ Bureau of Meteorology Monthly Climate Summary for Queensland October 2020
www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/month/qld/archive/202010.summary.shtml

² Bureau of Meteorology Monthly Climate Summary for Queensland November 2020
www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/month/qld/archive/202011.summary.shtml

Favourable conditions and rainfall contained the fire and QFES handed back control to QPWS at midday on 13 December 2020. The below table demonstrates the scale of the event.

Event Scale—14 October to 28 December 2020	
85,300 hectares burnt	30 aircraft utilised (1,630 hours)
367 personnel deployed (including eight QPS and 13 QPWS personnel)	13,306,800 litres dropped (freshwater, saltwater and mixed gel additive)
144 appliances (671 responses and 18,979 vehicle hours)	114 predictive services products issued
One Emergency Alert campaign (1,220 text messages delivered successfully)	82 Bushfire Community Warnings issued

On 2 December 2020, the Premier and Minister for Trade announced a review of the event by the Inspector-General Emergency Management (refer page 74). The review focussed on effectiveness of preparedness and response to the bushfire event. The review report provides 38 recommendations for the Queensland Government. The government's response to the report supports or supports in principle the recommendations. As at 30 June 2021, QFES has implemented one recommendation and developed a series of action plans to support the implementation of the remaining recommendations within its area of responsibility.

Marine Rescue Implementation

In 2020–21, QFES commenced work to establish an integrated marine rescue service in Queensland that will provide Marine Search and Rescue capability in support of the QPS and the Queensland boating community. The AVCGA and VMRAQ, with approximately 3,000 volunteers between them, will be encouraged to join the new marine rescue service once established.

Marine rescues are increasing particularly with more Australians holidaying domestically. On average, the AVCGA and VMRAQ complete more than 4,000 activations in a financial year.

The State Government, through QFES, provides financial support to AVCGA and VMRAQ through Service Agreements that have been in effect since 1997–98.

In 2019, the *Review into Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations in Queensland* (Blue Water Review) was released. The review examined and identified key issues in the provision of volunteer marine search and rescue services in Queensland. In response to the Blue Water Review, QFES formed the Blue Water Review Working Group, comprised of maritime experts, representatives of the two existing volunteer marine rescue organisations and government representatives, to define a vision for the sector and a possible model for reform. A key recommendation of the working group was the establishment of a single, integrated volunteer marine rescue service in Queensland.

The MRIWG, established in February 2021, held its inaugural meeting on 2 March 2021 to start planning for the transition. The working group is comprised of volunteers from the AVCGA, representatives from VMRAQ, partner government departments and marine search and rescue experts. The MRIWG provides expert advice regarding the volunteer marine rescue sector in Queensland and assists QFES with planning and delivering the future integrated service.

The transition to an integrated service will provide an enhanced service to the boating public and enable better support for volunteers, giving them greater legal protection, administration and human resources support and seek to reduce their fundraising burden over the coming years. The volunteers will benefit from the QFES Volunteerism Strategy (refer pages 27–28) and being with an organisation with other volunteer services.

In addition, \$17.4 million has been allocated for the replacement of volunteer marine rescue vessels and the 2021–22 Service Agreements will provide an additional grant of \$10,000 per unit for essential equipment, training and facility upgrades.

Once fully established, the new volunteer marine entity will deliver a statewide marine search and rescue service which can further integrate with other emergency services, including the QPS and QAS, while ensuring greater recognition and support structures for Queensland's marine rescue volunteers.

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:

- » Operation Incendium, a joint tactical exercise between the Australian Defence Force, QFES (including FRS, RFS and SES) and HQ Plantations held over three days in April 2021. The exercise tested and enhanced agencies' capabilities in managing large, complex bushfires and other disasters. It also enabled the approximately 130 participants to undertake communications, engagement and deployment in support of disaster operations. The exercise included a one-day strategic round-table discussion in the SOC about how QFES would engage the Australian Defence Force during natural disaster. Followed by two days devoted to tactical exercises including a demonstration of each agency's assets and technology and a tactical IMT exercise.
- » a major training session at Whyte Island in March 2021 to build the skills of 12 volunteer handlers and their dogs from the USAR canine squad. The squad deploys to disasters in Australia and overseas tracking scents to find missing persons under rubble. USAR dogs work in dangerous terrain, off leash and sometimes out of sight of their handler.
- » a joint exercise between emergency service agencies in the Longreach area, held in February 2021, at the Western Queensland Livestock Exchange. Members of FRS, SES, QPS and QAS worked with Western Queensland Livestock Exchange staff to familiarise themselves on the operation of cattle trucks including manually operating the trailers and identifying extraction points. This exercise enabled participants to familiarise themselves with the cattle trucks and support them in responding to incidents involving these vehicles.
- » a live evacuation field exercise, held in October 2020, designed to ensure agencies are prepared to manage evacuation centres during a pandemic. The Logan SES and South Eastern Region Emergency Management representatives joined Logan City Council, QAS, QPS, Queensland Health, NBN, Telstra, Australian Red Cross, Salvation Army and Save the Children, in the three-part exercise program. The field exercise explored different solutions to identify the best multi-agency COVID-19 safe arrangements and covered evacuation centre management, COVID-19 safety measures, sleeping and dining arrangements, short-term isolation areas for evacuees showing symptoms of COVID-19 and technology requirements.
- » a joint maritime exercise, Operation Troubled Waters, at the Port of Gladstone in September 2020. The exercise aimed to test and develop the new Gladstone Maritime Hazard Emergency Response Plan as well as strengthen interagency relationships and maintain operational skills. In the scenario, the gas detection system on a barge was activated and a propane truck driver was found unconscious with a head injury and suspected spinal injuries. More than 30 people participated in the exercise including QFES auxiliary firefighters and new recruits and officers. Participating agencies included QAS, QPS, Maritime Safety Queensland, SeaLink Queensland and Gladstone Ports Corporation. The area's new Combined Aerial Pump Appliance was also utilised for the first time during the exercise.

- » SES Exercise Evacuation 2 was a joint exercise held in June 2021 involving approximately 300 participants from QFES led by Brisbane Region SES with participants from QPS and Queensland Health including QAS. The exercise simulated the evacuation of a multi-storey aged care centre. The centre's residents had various mobility issues and ailments. The SES members responded from their depot as they would in a real event and upon arrival were tasked to support the QAS and Queensland Health under the direction of QPS. The exercise included a briefing from an aged care industry representative on the mobility and care required for elderly residents. The exercise was evaluated to identify opportunities for improvement should this situation arise.
- » the annual Gold Coast Rural Fire Brigade Group Exercise held in August 2020. Approximately 230 volunteers, 52 appliances and a helicopter participated in the exercise including 15 rural fire brigades from the Gold Coast, several brigades from surrounding areas and a strike team from the northern region of New South Wales. The training focussed on core skills such as first-aid, communications and turnover drills. Brigades also practised working with portable dams, pumps and aircraft. Managing such a large exercise also tested the capabilities of the IMT.

Major deployments – interstate

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 has remained activated since 5 August 2019 with staff working to ensure members are mobilised and demobilised safely and efficiently.

Deployments during 2020–21 included:

Western Australia – April 2021

Specialist crews from the SES travelled to Western Australia to support communities with widespread damage caused by ex-Tropical Cyclone Seroja. More than 20 SES personnel who were able to work at heights provided relief to crews and primarily undertook storm damage operations including roof repairs. The deployment was complicated by a COVID-19 outbreak in Perth. QFES successfully supported the SES crews to remain in a ‘bubble’, safely complete their mission and safely return home.

New South Wales – March 2021

Approximately 170 QFES members including SES members and FRS swiftwater technicians were deployed to northern New South Wales to provide support to the flood response in Coffs Harbour, Nambucca Heads, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Taree, Newcastle and around Western Sydney.

Duties undertaken by QFES members included making homes safe and habitable by addressing storm damage, heights work to make buildings safe, public relations, reconnaissance, intelligence gathering, tasks using floodboats including rescues and evacuations and assisting with food and medical resupplies.

Priority area

4. Climate change

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

- » Influence land-use planning and building standards for Queensland.
- » Consider climate change in all our decisions.

Planning for climate change

QFES is a member of the Queensland Climate Change Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) and is actively contributing through the IDC in the development of the Queensland Climate Action Plan (QCAP) which is focussed on positioning Queensland for stronger and sustainable climate action for the future.

In addition, QFES is a member of the Queensland Climate Resilience Councils (QCRC) program which is led by LGAQ. The QCRC provides opportunities for local governments to enhance their ability to plan for and embed climate resilience into their local level planning through climate adaptation, regional climate resilience program grants and corporate training opportunities.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- » published the *Integrating Climate Change @ QFES* report which outlines the department's response to climate change and how QFES will continue to support the *Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy 2017–2030* and the *Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan for climate change*. The report articulates the department's approach to climate change and how QFES is embedding its response into its strategic management processes including strategy development, risk management and governance. *Integrating Climate Change @ QFES* also contains the key climate change actions the department is progressing. The alignment of the department's climate change response into its strategic management processes as outlined in the report will help to ensure the department continues to be agile and responsive to the impacts of climate change.
- » continued to incorporate climate projections into the QERMF to support disaster and emergency risk management across Queensland's disaster management arrangements.
- » continued to work with state government departments including the Department of Energy and Public Works, and the Department of State

Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 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 Department of Environment and Science 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.

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. QFES also contributed to the Burdekin and Haughton Flood Resilience Strategy that was released in June 2021.

At the national level, QFES was a member of the working group which developed the Systemic Disaster Risk Handbook, which forms part of the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection maintained by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience. The handbook, expected to be published in 2021, includes principles for systemic disaster risk reduction, inclusive governance and what to consider when making decisions to support resilience and sustainability.

Disaster resilience is built by mitigating, preventing or managing disaster risk and QFES implementation of the QERMF is a key pillar of disaster resilience. This includes sharing information with the community through education campaigns, community engagement approaches and public information sharing which supports the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster events.

Priority area

5. Stakeholder engagement

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

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

Community safety advertising campaigns

Community safety advertising campaigns continued to be developed and promoted statewide to build resilience in the community enabling members of the public to better prevent, prepare for, and respond to fire and emergency events. These campaigns include:

- » Home Fire Safety: this campaign is timed around winter when there is typically a peak in the number of house fires. The campaign encourages residents to prepare their home for a quick escape, create an escape plan and practise it, and check their smoke alarms are working. The 2021 campaign runs from late May to late August with advertising on social media, radio and digital channels. Advertising links to the Home Fire Safety website (www.qfes.qld.gov.au) which features specific tips for parents of young children as well as older Queenslanders and their carers.
- » If It's Flooded, Forget It: this campaign targets those drivers who might be tempted to drive on flooded roads, putting themselves and potentially their rescuers at risk (www.qfes.qld.gov.au). The campaign launched on 1 November 2020 and ran throughout the summer wet season ending in late March 2021. The campaign featured the 'Back it Up' tagline and used television, radio, social and digital advertising.
- » Smoke alarms campaign: the 2021 campaign runs from 19 April 2021 to 18 July 2021 encouraging landlords to install interconnected, photoelectric smoke alarms in time for the 1 January 2022 compliance deadline for rental properties stipulated by legislation introduced in 2017. Advertisements are run on radio, social and digital channels, as well as YouTube and search engine marketing. The campaign also encourages owner-occupiers to begin transition to their compliance deadline of 1 January 2027. Smoke alarm information can be accessed at www.qfes.qld.gov.au

- » Bushfire Safety campaign: this campaign ran from late July 2020 to late October 2020 prompting residents to prepare themselves and their properties for bushfire season. Advertisements linked to a bushfire risk postcode checker (www.qfes.qld.gov.au) to raise awareness of widespread potential for fire and motivate residents to prepare.

Social media

QFES continues to engage with the community and disseminate important safety messages through its social media channels. Across 2020–21, the department's Facebook posts were viewed more than 70 million times with the page reaching more than five million people. People visited QFES' Twitter account more than 180,000 times, while QFES' Instagram posts and stories reached more than 1.3 million unique users.

The community continues to use QFES' social media as a source of accurate information during times of heightened operational activity and severe weather events. Significant activity was recorded on QFES' social media platforms throughout the severe weather season. More than 190 preparedness posts were published to the QFES Facebook page between October 2020 and April 2021, these posts were collectively viewed more than 12 million times.

The number of people choosing to engage with QFES through its social media channels continues to grow. Followers of the QFES Facebook page increased to more than 473,000 followers, and followers of the QFES Instagram account increased to approximately 41,700 followers. QFES' Twitter account also experienced a steady increase to approximately 78,500 followers.

Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum

The Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum met on 24 September 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 Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Membership of the Forum consists of emergency service organisations across government and the not-for-profit sector.

Topics explored by the Forum included enhanced interoperability across the sector to support recruitment, retention and recognition of emergency service volunteers.

International engagement and assistance—Papua New Guinea Fire Service

QFES engaged with the Papua New Guinea Fire Service (PNGFS) to donate five ex-service QFES fire appliances to PNGFS following an official request from the Chief Fire Officer, PNGFS. The nine-month project 'Operation Paia Truks' (translation—fire trucks) included the identification of suitable fire appliances for donation and refitting, planned maintenance of the appliances prior to donation and re-badging of the appliances as PNGFS vehicles.

A funding grant was provided by DFAT to facilitate the changeover of hose couplings to suit the PNGFS standards and the provision of 16 new breathing apparatus sets and 32 cylinders to complete the equipment inventory. The donation from QFES included extensive appliance inventories incorporating complete Road Crash Rescue kits, over 150 sets of ex-service structural firefighting protective clothing, over 100 sets of bushfire clothing and 100 pairs of ex-service overalls.

Transport of the appliances and the donated equipment was via the Australian Defence Force with delivery to Papua New Guinea in February 2021 by HMAS Choules.

QFES also provides approval for PNGFS personnel to access the QFES On-Line learning cache to assist PNGFS staff to gain personal and professional development opportunities. Access is requested through the PNGFS training department and external access to the outward facing learning tools is managed through the QFES Workforce Development Unit.

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 to implement recommendations from the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report* (28 October 2020) collaboratively with the Australian Government and other states and territories.
- » Supported the LGAQ Disaster Management Conference in June 2021, along with other agencies such as the Office of the IGEM, QPS and QRA. The theme was *Disaster management in the new COVID world* with discussion about the importance of state and local government relationships in the disaster management sector. QFES committed support to the conference to help encourage interoperability across the sector and enhance cooperation, engagement and collaboration in disaster management arrangements.
- » 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.
- » Continued the partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport 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 through a one-off grant of \$150,000 for the Drone Trial Program. The nine-month program was established to integrate ‘rescue drone’ operations with SLSQ’s business-as-usual activities. The program assisted 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 facilitated reciprocal training opportunities between QFES and SLSQ drone operators for the enhancement of emergency response capabilities. The trial program concluded on 31 January 2021 and SLSQ continues to utilise drones in its operations.
- » Installed a new live vision capability tool—the Dejero live broadcasting system—to ease the pressures on QFES producers while filming at the scene of disasters. The system consists of a transmitter that attaches to a camera and instantly sends footage, allowing high-definition video content to be received at the Emergency Services Complex in Brisbane in real time, saving hours of time and effort. The Dejero technology manages data load by using multiple cellular, Wi-Fi and ethernet signals. This is standard practice across news and broadcasting agencies globally but a first for a Queensland Government department. The technology enables the provision of enhanced, vital messaging and multimedia support to QFES, its partner agencies and the whole-of-government.
- » Designed and rolled out the volunteering capability of Field Content Operator through a pilot program to gather live intelligence and media vision from behind the frontline during activations and deployments utilising the skillset of volunteers in RFS and SES.
- » Launched the new QFES website in May 2021. The website is designed to provide quick, reliable and easy to find information. It delivers essential information in a contemporary and logical format aligning to government and industry best practice. The new website is hazard based and provides the community with faster access to the information they need in relation to hazards which impact their communities. Analytics following the website launch reflect an increase of 43.4 per cent (more than 15,000 visitors) and a significant increase in mobile access with 66 per cent of visitors using a mobile device compared to 34 per cent using desktop access.
- » Produced and covered more than 200 strategic content pieces and events for QFES, the QPS, Office of the IGEM and PSBA, successfully delivering on the terms of the department’s Service Agreement.
- » Commenced planning for the review and update of the *Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline* (January 2018) and Support Toolkit suite (the guideline). The guideline complements the legislative responsibilities of the Commissioner (as Chief Executive) and provides guidance supporting the implementation of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and associated legislation, and disaster management policy, plans and standards. The aim of the guideline is to provide flexible, good practice suggestions and advice to those responsible for implementing disaster management practices. Engagement with key stakeholders across Queensland’s disaster management arrangements is scheduled to commence from August 2021.
- » Renewed a one-year partnership between QFES, on behalf of 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 predominantly in rural and remote areas. The equipment supports the SES in providing local communities with the support needed in emergency situations.
- » Renewed a one-year agreement with Energy Queensland in June 2021 that delivers \$85,000 in sponsorship to the RFS. This partnership recognises the value of RFS and the skills and knowledge of volunteers facing emergency events. The partnership delivered an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) for a remote brigade and nine large-scale generators for use by brigades in North Coast, Northern and South East Regions.
- » Launched a new partnership for SES with Suncorp on 20 September 2020. This Principal Community Partnership will increase the social and natural hazard resilience of the Queensland community and advance SES volunteerism. It delivers a combination of valuable equipment for volunteers and resources supporting volunteers in engaging with community in preparedness for severe weather.

Disaster management stakeholder capability development

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 Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework (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 2020–21, a total of 10,800 units of QDMTF training were delivered to disaster management stakeholders. Training numbers remained consistent with 2019–20 and demonstrate the department's commitment to continuity in training delivery for disaster management stakeholders in a COVID safe environment.

COVID-19 resulted in a need for eLearning modules—available to disaster management stakeholders through the Disaster Management Learning Management System. During 2020–21, 30 per cent of all training completions were undertaken through eLearning.

Reflective of their key role in disaster management, 49 per cent of the total training in 2020–21 was delivered to local government stakeholders. Importantly, local governments have continued to engage in face-to-face delivery with only 12 per cent of local government completions undertaken through eLearning.

The Operational Leadership and Crisis Management Masterclass series is a component of the QDMTF and forms a critical element of QFES' capability development program for key disaster management stakeholders.

During 2020–21, QFES offered three Masterclass sessions:

- » *Coordinating Teams Operating in Disaster Masterclass* focuses on enhancing the capability of team leaders to mobilise and manage high functioning teams to operate effectively in disaster, crisis and adversity. Due to COVID-19, 10 Masterclass sessions were delivered virtually across October to November 2020.

- » *Meteorology for Disaster Managers Masterclass* aims to provide disaster managers with expert insights into weather and weather forecasting to support their decision-making. Due to COVID-19, nine virtual Masterclass sessions were facilitated across October – November 2020.
- » *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. Face-to-face delivery returned during the reporting period with 10 Masterclass sessions delivered in Beenleigh, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gympie, Mackay, Rockhampton, Roma, Toowoomba and Townsville across April – May 2021. A total of 181 disaster management stakeholders attended with 48 per cent of participants from local government.

As an alternative offering for those stakeholders who do not require the detailed level of knowledge and understanding gained through QDMTF programs, QFES launched a short awareness video, *Disaster Management in Queensland* in March 2021. The awareness video provides an overview of disaster management and outlines the functions and activities that underpin disaster management and disaster operations in Queensland.

The *Disaster Management in Queensland* awareness video along with the QDMTF and the Disaster Management Training Handbook are available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au

Priority area

6. Strategic investment

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

- » Invest in sustainable, interoperable systems, equipment and infrastructure that is integral to the delivery of our capability.
- » Operate in a financially sustainable way.

Fiscal sustainability

The QFES *Fiscal Sustainability Strategy 2019–2023* is a five-year blueprint to support a fiscally responsible culture across the department. The fundamental principles of the strategy include good governance; leadership; stewardship; efficiency; accountability; transparency; integrity; public defensibility; and performance.

During 2020–21, progress towards embedding the strategy and its principles within the department noted key strategic outcomes delivered, including significant fraud and corruption control measures, strategic asset management and capital program tools, enhanced access to financial information and a refresh of the department's governance frameworks.

Capital program

Significant capital works initiatives were delivered or progressed during 2020–21 including:

- » completion of:
 - new permanent fire and rescue stations at Pimpama and Yarrabilba. The Pimpama facility includes three engine bays, a training room and a ladder drill platform and the Yarrabilba facility includes two engine bays, a training room and a ladder drill platform.
 - a new permanent fire and rescue station and replacement regional QFES headquarters at Charlton. The site includes a new Regional Operations Centre and Fire Communications Centre.
 - replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
 - El Arish
 - Esk
 - Longreach
 - Wooroolin
 - Yarraman
 - a replacement QFES complex at Kilkivan
 - the Mount Isa QFES complex upgrade.

» commencing or continuing the:

- new fire and rescue stations at Caloundra South, Mount Cotton Road, Moreton Bay Central and Springfield
- replacement composite fire and rescue station at Charters Towers
- replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at Gracemere, Rainbow Beach and Rosewood
- replacement permanent fire and rescue station at Loganlea
- replacement QFES complex at Maleny
- replacement QFES mechanical workshop at Pinkenba
- relocation and upgrade of the auxiliary fire and rescue station at Mossman
- replacement regional QFES headquarters and auxiliary fire and rescue station at Maryborough
- upgrade of the Cairns QFES communications centre collocated with the QAS (owned and managed by QAS).

In addition, the department took delivery of fit-for-purpose replacement appliances including 23 FRS appliances and 28 RFS appliances including three Hydraulic Platform aerial appliances to support an advanced level capability in aerial firefighting and aerial rescue.

Capability and Investment Model

The QFES Capability Framework identifies the department's capabilities, elements and associated activities within and across QFES.

The framework was expanded to align to the department's strategic objectives to inform investment into QFES' capabilities, while supporting the long-term fiscal sustainability of the department. The Capability and Investment Model was endorsed by the Strategy and Budget Committee in September 2020. The model has been adapted from the *Investment Management Standard 2017* (a guide for Victorian government departments and agencies) that has been successfully used in other states. The concepts and principles have been applied to understand the current and future needs of QFES capabilities. The model aims to scope the performance of the department's capabilities by holistically aggregating knowledge through an informed discussion with those responsible for delivering capabilities and reviewing the performance data and analytics to assess effectiveness with observations and insights from lessons management to validate performance.

The premise of the model is that all investments and priorities should originate through this integrated and contemporary planning mechanism, and that through the governance process, all planned investments are assessed, prioritised and evaluated using a consistent and transparent methodology. This will help determine where the finite resources of the department are committed.

The implementation of the steps in the Capability and Investment Model will take time to mature and the current implementation has been aimed at identifying the strategic issues associated with each capability. A number of workshops for each QFES capability have been held to identify the strategic issues with key actions identified to address those issues. A plan for the next stage to mature the model will consider a deeper review into how capabilities are delivered within regions and across services. This will enhance and improve investment into QFES capabilities and improve the level of service delivery to the people of Queensland.

Aerial firefighting capability

QFES achieved a significant milestone with the introduction of a large water bombing aircraft to boost the department's aerial firefighting capability during 2020–21. The Dash-8-Q400AT Large Air Tanker (LAT) aircraft was provided on contract through arrangements with the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) for the first year of a five year contract for use throughout the bushfire

season. The LAT arrived from Canada with the contract commencing on 1 September 2020. Due to the continued duration of the bushfire season, the LAT contract was extended with the aircraft released from duty on 19 December 2020.

NAFC initiated the procurement process to provide a LAT contracted service provider to QFES for the following four-year period. On 24 June 2021, the department signed a four-year contract with the successful tenderer, Field Air, who will provide a Bombardier Dash-8 Q400AT LAT (same type of aircraft as the 2020 contracted LAT). The four-year contract will be a collaboration between the Queensland and Victorian governments with a follow-on contracted period in Victoria, referred to as a 'dovetail' service. The aircraft will remain in Australia for the entire four-year period reducing the mobilisation and demobilisation costs.

The Q400AT aircraft is one of the most innovative emergency response air tankers in the world. The aircraft can drop 10,000 litres of water, gel or retardant to reinforce fire breaks or to attack the fire directly. The LAT flies at up to 670 kilometres an hour with a maximum range of approximately 1,800 kilometres. The LAT drops water mixed with retardant or gel depending on the situation. The LAT is supported by a LAT Lead Plane contracted service that performs the Air Attack Supervision duties to ensure safety of the LAT operations. Both aircraft are based in Bundaberg.

All-terrain vehicles—RFS

The RFS has increased operational capability as a result of its continued development of the side-by-side ATVs. The RFS has supported remote brigades through the acquisition of ATVs and trailers for their transportation. Rural fire brigades and groups from across the state are able to seek approval to acquire an ATV which meets organisational standards and requirements to support operational activities. The ATV allows teams to map fires, helps enhance firefighter safety and logistical support, and assists during flood and/or other such events that may affect a community. The ATV allows for quick intelligence gathering during incidents/events. Some units are fitted with firefighting capability for flanking fires and patrolling while other ATVs are utilised in the conduct of support activities.

Fleet management

A new digital system to track the repair and service history of the QFES fleet was rolled out. FRS members can use FleetWave to record services on appliances, making it easier for the department to manage repairs and gauge the condition of the fleet. The system has three components—FleetWave for workshop supervisors, FormsApp for fire officers and The Hub for mechanics. FleetWave makes reporting of a fault much easier and enables officers to follow it through to completion including live updates. The system also gives mechanics a clear line of sight for the faults related to trucks that need repairing enabling them to fit repairs into appliances' existing maintenance schedules. FleetWave will provide QFES with a picture of how much it costs to maintain appliances and enable the department to predict future build plans.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (drones)

Twenty new Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) (drones) were rolled out across Queensland to support frontline personnel, taking the department's drone program to more than 80 drones. QFES expanded the drone program after successfully trialling the drones in vertical rescues, land searches and joint operations with the QPS. QFES personnel use the drones to remotely retrieve vital intelligence at an incident.

Successful uses in 2020–21 include:

- » Ayr, Northern Region, SES used a thermal imaging drone at night to search for a missing man. After 16 minutes airborne, the man was located in long grass unconscious.
- » Tamborine Mountain, South Eastern Region, FRS and RFS used drone fitted with speakers to locate a man who fell down an embankment in dense bushland. The drone's pilot was able to hear the man's cries through the drone's microphone and used the drone to communicate with the man when it was overhead.
- » Callide Power Station, Central Region, RFS assisted FRS in identifying hot spots in the power station fire, which occurred in June 2021, to better inform the incident controller. The drone's pilot and observer had only 15 minutes of flying time before last light and achieved excellent imagery of the situation at the power station.

Other key achievements include:

- » Developed a Total Asset Management Plan that aligns asset investment with QFES' current and future service delivery needs and sets out the department's asset management strategies including those centred around investment, non-investment and partnership solutions.
- » Developed five-year forward pipelines of investment for the department's fleet and built assets to further inform internal asset investment decision-making. This information also informs the Queensland Government Regional Infrastructure Plans and Forward Infrastructure Pipeline.
- » Provided seven floodboats and 11 trailers to support 18 SES groups across Queensland.

Priority area

7. Knowledge

2020–2024 Strategic initiatives

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

Community Insights Survey

A survey of more than 2,000 Queenslanders, undertaken in October 2020, provided QFES with insight into the state of their preparedness and attitude towards disasters. The department undertakes research annually with Queensland households to measure Queenslanders' level of preparedness for fire, emergency and disaster events. The survey helps the department develop community education strategies, including smoke alarm testing and legislation awareness, risk awareness and communication preferences.

Key results from the survey indicate:

- » 97.8 per cent of Queensland households have a smoke alarm installed, with 83.4 per cent of them confirmed to be operational by maintaining and/or testing them in the past 12 months. This is an increase from 97.1 per cent and 79.9 per cent respectively from the 2019 result.
- » Storms (69 per cent), pandemics (64 per cent) and heatwaves (62 per cent) are perceived as the highest risk events (slightly or very likely). These are also the events that people feel the most prepared for.
- » Awareness of the new photoelectric interconnected smoke alarm legislation has remained consistent with the 2019 result at 59 per cent.
- » The majority of Queenslanders do not have fire plans for their household (60 per cent). This number has increased since 2019 (55 per cent without a fire plan). However, significantly more people have checked the QFES or local council websites for information and advice (30 per cent) compared to 2019 (26 per cent).
- » When looking at the allocation of resources, Queenslanders would like to move towards a more flexible service (62 per cent) compared to a permanent presence in the local community (38 per cent).
- » 39 per cent of respondents had received a QFES service in the past 12 months and overall respondents were satisfied with the service received.

Lessons Management Framework

QFES continues to mature its lessons management process through extensive post-season debriefing and reporting. As a component of operational assurance, the lessons management process, through capturing observations and learnings from the local level to state, will enable improvement of service delivery by providing an understanding of how QFES is meeting its day to day obligations, as well as providing innovative solutions to real time problems. This will also connect to the management of audits and external reviews.

To further embed the lessons management process within the department, a lessons management guide was developed. Building on the available tools and templates, QR codes were created to enable ease of capture of observations. This will create an electronic way to capture debrief information that would previously have been captured in manual forms. Each region will be provided with a unique QR code to be affixed in each QFES appliance, station, SES shed, ICC, Regional Operations Centre and area office. This will enable regions to capture and access local observations, identify local lessons and implement local solutions. This local lessons capture will enable a greater understanding of risks and issues such as safety, service delivery and assurance. A trial will be rolled out in Far Northern Region later in 2021 which will allow further consultation with peak bodies to be finalised. Regions will be provided with mentoring and coaching to develop their processes and ongoing mentoring will be provided in the analysis of observations. The mentoring will assist to uplift the capability in identifying, gathering and actioning both local and state learnings.

Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The RFS is the lead agency for the implementation of the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS). The AFDRS Program is a national program intended to:

- » strengthen the ability of fire authorities to accurately communicate bushfire risk to the community
- » enhance agency readiness and preparedness
- » contribute to risk management and prevention.

In July 2021, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory will enter a testing phase designed to test parts of the AFDRS technical builds. Within Queensland, this preliminary testing is aimed to capture the bushfire season and represents an opportunity to ensure the new system is fit-for-purpose and operates as expected. Within Queensland, the following will be tested:

- » a Fuel State Editor: a centrally hosted, interactive and common tool that allows fire and land management agencies to capture field information and update maps relating to grassland fuel types, a critical component of calculating the fire danger
- » a Fire Danger Viewer: a centrally hosted, integrated data viewer for state and territory emergency services agencies to interrogate fire danger information and support effective decisions.

RFS is establishing a grassland fuel load collection network across Queensland to support the testing phase.

Other key achievements include:

- » Continued review of portfolio legislation and progression of legislative amendments to support government outcomes.
- » Established a Fraud and Corruption Control Working Group with its first meeting held in November 2020. The working group supports the department's Fraud and Corruption Control Officer to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption. The department's fraud and corruption control plan and policy were reviewed and approved. These documents outline what QFES is doing about prevention, detection and response; and avenues available to raise concerns of possible fraud or corruption within the department.

- » Established QFES research priorities to enable the department to take a forward leaning approach to drive research opportunity, capitalise on potential investment and where feasible minimise cost to QFES, and improve research alignment with strategic direction. The department's research priorities also consider those being defined by the Natural Hazards Research Australia (formerly the Bushfire and Natural Hazards and Cooperative Research Centre) and AFAC, and aligns with the Disaster Management Research Framework under the State Disaster Management Plan. QFES is also an active member of the IGEM's Research Advisory Panel which enables QFES to seek collaborative research opportunities through this forum.
- » Participated in a driverless car project, led by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, and contributed virtual reality equipment to capture data as well as participating in driving tests to inform the study. QFES' involvement in projects like this enables the department to strategically position itself to ensure these future technologies are better understood and provides early insights for future focussed decision-making.
- » Continued the work of the Knowledge Advisory Group, with representation from most QFES branches, enabling the identification of upcoming doctrine priorities, fostering networks among members and providing a distribution channel for knowledge sharing.
- » Finalised the development of a Human Rights Awareness e-learning package which was rolled out through Nexus (learning management system) to all staff and volunteers and delivered training to management on their obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.
- » Continued participation 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 including fire safety research into the use of Cross Laminated Timber and the performance of, and standards pertaining to smoke alarms.

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements

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.

The Royal Commission's final report was tabled in the Parliament of Australia on 30 October 2020 after it examined the coordination, preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters, improving resilience and adapting to changing climatic conditions and mitigating the impact of natural disasters. The legal framework for commonwealth involvement in responding to natural emergencies was also considered.

The report contains 80 recommendations directed at the commonwealth, state, territory and local governments and a number of other disaster support entities.

The Royal Commission's final report can be accessed at www.royalcommission.gov.au

On 13 November 2020, the Australian Government released its response to the final report:

- » supporting 33 recommendations
- » supporting in-principle 25 recommendations
- » noting 22 recommendations directed to the states and territories.

Tasmanian, Australian Capital Territory, South Australian and Victorian Governments have released responses to the final report.

The National Federation Reform Council has identified the following implementation priorities to be progressed through the National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting (NEMMM) prior to the 2021–22 high-risk weather season:

- » the Australian Warning System
- » the AFDRS
- » nationally consistent pre-agreed disaster recovery funding arrangements
- » a review of the path to expeditiously deliver the Public Safety Mobile Broadband
- » making substantial progress to reform fundraising laws
- » making substantial progress to improve natural disaster risk information to support decision-making such as land-use planning for new development and the construction code.

Hazard reduction data and information is also to be shared across jurisdictions to maximise its utility and value for hazard risk reduction. QFES will continue to work with partner agencies to progress the Queensland response to the NEMMM items.

At 30 June 2021, the final report is being considered by the Queensland Government to initiate actions and address recommendations. QFES will play a critical role in implementing those recommendations supported by the Queensland Government.

Commencing 2021–22, \$10.8 million is provided over four years to address Queensland's response to the relevant recommendations to enhance hazard and risk management, the fire danger rating system and emergency warning activities to support the natural disaster preparedness capabilities of Queensland communities.

Note: The Queensland Government's response to the Royal Commission's final report was tabled in Parliament on 16 July 2021 and is available at: www.disaster.qld.gov.au

Governance

Executive management

As at 30 June 2021

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 34 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 such as the Longford Gas Plant explosion in 1998.

As Commissioner, Greg is the Chair of the QFES Board of Management (BoM).

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.

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.

As the Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services, Mark chairs a number of internal committees including the QFES Honours, Reward and Recognition Advisory Panel and the QFES Capability and Service Delivery Committee (refer page 71).

Mark represents QFES at state and national forums including the Queensland Security and Counter Terrorism Network and AFAC Workforce Management Group.

In March 2021, Mark stood down from his position as 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 after serving in the role for six years.

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, EMPA

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 across QFES. The division includes the Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services; QFES People; 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 across a range of Queensland Government departments in areas including managing state employment services, ICT strategy, Indigenous economic participation, corporate services, industry development and innovation, international trade and investment, strategic economic policy and planning, industrial relations, vocational education and training, and workplace health and safety.

As Acting Deputy Commissioner, Adam chairs the QFES Strategy and Budget Committee (refer page 71).

Adam has a Bachelor of Economics and 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 RFS, SES and EMCC within the department, including supporting approximately 36,000 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 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 Chair of the QFES People Committee (refer page 71).

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).

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)
- » Strategy and Budget Committee
- » Capability and Service Delivery Committee
- » People Committee.

The QFES governance committee structure at 30 June 2021 is as follows:



QFES committees support the Commissioner and BoM in managing their responsibilities of accountability, strategy, monitoring, policies, communication and resourcing. 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, implemented from June 2020, is based on a

reflection of organisational requirements to support the department's continued governance maturity.

The improvements focussed on the committees assisting the BoM to achieve the outcomes and initiatives outlined in the strategic plan.

As part of the review of the governance structure, an in-depth assessment of the ARCC was conducted in March-June 2021, incorporating best practice recommendations from the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) and Queensland Treasury, and fit-for-purpose for QFES. Amendments to the structure and function of the committee were approved by BoM in June 2021 with implementation to commence from July 2021.

The governance committee structure is underpinned by the executive leadership influence, the capability and investment model, strategic and corporate plans, support mechanisms and enablers, and explicit authority aligned with accountability and culture.

The governance structure is supported by the ELT comprised of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Executive Directors. The ELT cohesively drives achievement and actions towards the vision and priorities set by the Commissioner and drives

direction, delivery and performance for QFES. The ELT collectively provides information, advice and support on strategy development, innovation and risk identification and raises implementation issues for discussion that are of a high enterprise risk or strategic consequence to the department.

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 the department.
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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) » Jennifer Robertson, independent member. <p><i>Kurt Marsden, as the then Acting Chief Operating Officer, PSBA, was a BoM member for the period 14 February 2020 to 15 April 2021.</i></p>
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Remuneration	<p>The independent member earned \$14,850 (including GST) in remuneration for BoM member services provided in 2020–21.</p> <p><i>Remuneration of \$3,300 (including GST) for two meetings attended in 2019–20 was paid in 2020–21 due to late processing.</i></p>
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Meetings	<p>The BoM meets every six weeks with additional meetings convened as required.</p> <p>During 2020–21, the BoM met on nine occasions, excluding out-of-session meetings and workshops.</p>
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Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

Role	<p>The ARCC provides independent assurance and advice to the Commissioner and BoM in discharging responsibilities under the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i>, the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990</i>, <i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i> and subordinate legislation, in relation to the department's risk, internal controls, and compliance frameworks and systems.</p> <p>In addition, ARCC assists in the discharge of annual financial management responsibilities as required under the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> and the <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i>.</p>
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Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (cont'd)

Membership

- » Sue Ryan, independent Chair
 - » Glenn Poole, independent member
 - » Adam Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting)
 - » Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience
 - » John Bolger, Assistant Commissioner, RFS
 - » David Hermann, Assistant Commissioner, South Western Region.
- Stephen Smith, Assistant Commissioner, QFES People was a member for the period 1 July 2019 to 31 August 2020.*
- Steve Barber, Assistant Commissioner, Northern Region was a member for the period 1 September 2020 to 31 March 2021.*
- David Hermann was appointed from 1 April 2021.*

Remuneration

The independent Chair earned \$11,586 (including GST) in remuneration for services provided in 2020–21 and the independent member earned \$5,250 (including GST).

Two payments for 2019–20 totalling \$1,750 (including GST) were paid to the independent member in 2020–21 due to late processing.

Meetings

In 2020–21, the committee met on five occasions with an additional meeting in August 2020 regarding the 2019–20 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement.

A maximum of five committee meetings are held each calendar year plus an additional meeting in August to consider the financial reporting to inform the Financial Statements. Emergency or special meetings can be convened as required.

Key achievements

- In 2020–21, the committee's key achievements include:
- » overseeing delivery of the internal audit program and external audit plan
 - » overseeing implementation of agreed recommendations from internal and external audit activities with a continued focus on implementation of overdue and ageing recommendations
 - » overseeing implementation of recommendations made by regulatory authorities such as the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC)
 - » overseeing the transition of relevant PSBA audit recommendations to QFES for continued implementation (following the announcement of the disestablishment of PSBA)
 - » 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 2019–20 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement and providing recommendations to improve clarity and transparency
 - » noting and monitoring the 2020–21 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*

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (cont'd)

- Key achievements (cont'd)**
- » monitoring and reviewing accounting matters related to assets control
 - » undertaking a program of deep dives into Enterprise Risks including Climate Change and compliance activities including Work Health and Safety and frameworks to manage Fraud and Corruption
 - » reviewing and endorsing the QFES 2019–20 Information Security Management System attestation for Commissioner approval (Information security policy IS18:2018: Policy Requirement 5)
 - » addressing actions from the Auditor-General's Insights report: *Effectiveness of audit committees in state government entities* (2019–20) directed at audit committees
 - » overseeing key areas of compliance such as Business Continuity Management and providing recommendations to ensure the department's responsible officers are aware of their responsibilities under relevant legislation and providing the Commissioner and Minister with assurance that delegations are being applied appropriately, consistently and in the manner intended.

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 the department's 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.

Capability and Service Delivery Committee

The Capability and Service Delivery Committee provides stewardship of the appropriate QFES capability and capacity to ensure service delivery is being responsive to the current and future community needs and expectations. The role of the committee includes fostering strategies and activities that promote a positive organisational culture, while seeking to achieve the outcomes in the current QFES strategic plan whilst managing appropriate risk.

People Committee

The People Committee assists the BoM in fulfilling its statutory, corporate governance and oversight responsibilities relating to the people, safety and culture of the organisation. The committee fosters strategies and activities that promote a positive, diverse and safe organisational culture, aligned to the department's values of respect, integrity, courage, loyalty and trust.

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, promotes awareness of, and provides 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 personnel 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 Relations and Standards Branch.

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 2020–21, the following state bodies examined the operations of QFES or other agencies with findings or issues requiring consideration by, or impacting on, QFES—CCC, QAO and Office of the IGEM.

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.

CCC reports are accessible at: www.ccc.qld.gov.au

Assessing allegations of corrupt conduct: Recordkeeping under section 40A (of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001) (September 2020)

The CCC conducted a corruption audit to assess the reviewed entities' capacity to effectively capture complete and accurate records of their assessment decisions relating to complaints about corrupt conduct and correctly form conclusions that the allegations did not raise a reasonable suspicion of corrupt conduct, thereby not meeting the threshold for the complaints to be notified to the CCC. QFES was not a participating agency in this audit.

The report contains three key recommendations requiring action from all government entities to more effectively and correctly capture records to meet the recordkeeping requirements of section 40A of the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*. QFES has implemented two of the recommendations and is progressing the final recommendation to ensure alignment with the Act.

Managing corruption risks associated with timesheet and leave activities (July 2020)

The CCC conducted this audit to assess if employee fraud in public sector agencies is adequately prevented through timesheet and leave processes. The objectives were to ensure agencies appropriately dealt with allegations of corruption and ensure agencies are appropriately reducing the incidences of timesheet and leave fraud. QFES was not an audited entity.

The report contains four key recommendations directed at all government entities to improve their corruption investigation and prevention capabilities. QFES has implemented the four key recommendations.

Queensland Audit Office

The QAO supports the role of the Auditor-General of Queensland in providing Parliament with an independent assessment of financial management and reporting, and performance activities of public sector entities. Performance audit reports may also be in the form of Insights, Information Briefs or Overviews.

QAO reports are accessible at: www.qao.qld.gov.au

State entities 2020 Report 13: 2020–21

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.

The report also provides the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of internal controls across the sector and provides six actions for all entities to consider to decrease the risk of fraud or improve other internal controls. QFES has implemented the six actions.

Delivering successful technology projects Report 7: 2020–21

The Auditor-General's Insights report highlights recurring risks and issues that agencies need to manage, and shares learnings with the wider public sector, in the delivery of technology projects.

QFES was a contributing agency to inform the evaluation.

The report identified four actions for public sector boards and executives to consider to ensure technology projects meet their deadlines, stay within budget and achieve their objectives. QFES continues to develop maturity in relation to project governance and delivery of ICT projects. The department's comments on the actions are included in the report.

Awarding of sports grants Report 6: 2020–21

This information brief presents facts relating to the awarding of sports grants by the then Department of Housing and Public Works, and the then Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, in the period 1 July 2017 to 29 February 2020. It focusses on whether the awarding of sports grants was in accordance with documented processes that were appropriate and resulted in the impartial awarding of grants.

The report directed two recommendations at all departments relating to financial accountability and ongoing compliance.

QFES administers two annual grant programs—the SES Support Grant Program and the RFS Grant Program. In line with the recommendations, these programs are compliant with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Queensland Treasury Financial Accountability Handbook* (October 2019)—such that complete records are retained to support all decisions made in awarding grants and there is clear responsibility for approval of grant recipients.

Effectiveness of audit committees in state government entities Report 2: 2020–21

The objective of the report is to provide insights on the profile and practices of audit committees in the Queensland public sector and to identify actions that can enhance their performance and effectiveness.

The report provides six actions for entities to consider in order to enhance the effectiveness of a committee in supporting the success of an entity's governance framework.

QFES has implemented five of the actions and finalised a review of the ARCC identifying areas of continuous improvement and associated action which will support delivery of the final recommendation relating to training to support committee members in achieving their role and responsibilities.

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

K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review Report 1: 2020–21

This review focused on effectiveness of preparedness and response to the K'gari bushfire event. The review identified opportunities for QFES and the QPWS to better engage with relevant stakeholders, the Butchulla people and the community, to plan and undertake hazard mitigation activities. This was particularly relevant across multiple land tenures with different landowners, which could benefit from further engagement as part of a reinvigorated Locality Specific Area Fire Management Group on K'gari.

The IGEM acknowledged the commitment and fortitude of fire management and response agencies, rural fire brigades, the Butchulla people and community associations on the island in responding to this highly complex and challenging bushfire event.

The review report provides 38 recommendations for the Queensland Government. The government's response to the report supports or supports in principle the recommendations. As at 30 June 2021, QFES has implemented one recommendation and developed a series of action plans to support implementation of the remaining recommendations within its area of responsibility.

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 its people, partners and the community and to ensure the sustainability of the department. The framework was updated and approved in March 2021 by BoM.

QFES manages enterprise, operational and project risks utilising an in-house ICT Risk Solution (Risk App). The Risk Management Framework outlines the escalation of risk to the enterprise risk register (enabling line of sight reporting using a standardised risk assessment process), defines accountability of risk and ensures the BoM maintains assurance through effective risk management. Enterprise risk reports and targeted enterprise risk deep dives are provided to the ARCC to ensure effective and independent risk oversight for the BoM.

In 2020–21, QFES further enhanced its risk maturity by:

- » finalising implementation of recommendations from a Risk Framework Maturity Assessment (internal audit), completed in December 2019, aimed to improve QFES' risk management
- » developing the Risk App to allow for a decentralised approach for the coordination of risk management
- » redesigning the QFES Risk Appetite Statement and associated appetite levels with BoM approval in April 2021
- » developing a suite of key risk indicators and associated tolerance levels (upper and lower) to facilitate a proactive and future focussed approach to risk management which can be embedded within decision-making
- » supporting operational and corporate functions to implement and integrate QFES risk and business continuity management practices
- » preparing enterprise risk reports to inform risk-based decisions for each QFES governance committee.

Internal audit

Following the announcement in September 2020 to disestablish the PSBA, the PSBA Board of Management resolved that the PSBA Internal Audit Unit would transition in its entirety to the QPS with a portfolio service delivery model to remain for internal audit services. The transition of Internal Audit to QPS occurred on 30 November 2020. Prior to that, the QFES internal audit function was provided to QFES by PSBA Internal Audit.

The 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 QFES, QPS and the Office of the IGEM.

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

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 2020–21 and Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2021–24* was endorsed by the QFES ARCC and approved by the then Chair of the PSBA BoM on 4 September 2020.

The Internal Audit 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 2020–21 include:

- » finalisation of internal audit reports from the 2019–20 annual audit plan including:
 - QFES Fire Permits—an assessment of the controls for issuing, recording and monitoring fire permits
 - QFES Management of Sick and Injured Workers—a review of the processes for managing the return to work of sick or injured workers

- QFES Compliance of Critical Equipment—an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of controls to ensure compliance of critical equipment with QFES Doctrine and regulatory requirements
 - PSA System Access Controls—an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of system access controls for critical systems
 - PSA Third Party Contract Management—an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of controls over selected third-party service providers
 - PSA Fraud and Corruption—an assessment of the design and effectiveness of fraud and corruption frameworks
 - PSA Security Awareness Review—an assessment of the effectiveness of physical security controls and security awareness
 - PSA Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement—an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of key controls of processes that inform the Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement.
- » progressed delivery of the annual internal audit plan 2020–21 with specific QFES audit coverage including:
- an assurance mapping exercise (final report)
 - an assessment of the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of workplace stress management (report drafting)
 - an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of processes around proactively capturing knowledge, trends and practices to minimise the risks of latent disease (draft report)
 - an assessment of the financial governance and compliance of QFES funding arrangements for the AVCGA and VMRAQ under the Volunteer Marine Rescue Support Package program (draft report)
 - an assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of key payroll processes and internal controls (fieldwork)
 - an assessment of the appropriateness of the Fraud and Corruption Control work program in achieving the objectives of the Fraud and Corruption Control Plan (report drafting)
 - an assessment of the susceptibility and awareness of QFES senior executives to attack vectors such as whaling (scoping).
- » indirect audit coverage provided to QFES through:
- an assessment of the cyber security risk exposure associated with non-core systems and the degree of visibility QFES has into system use and associated risks (fieldwork).
- » no carry forward of 2020–21 audit activities into the internal audit plan for 2021–22.

It is expected that the final reports for all audit reviews will be issued by 31 October 2021.

Information systems and recordkeeping

PSBA, as the provider of corporate services to Queensland's public safety agencies during 2020–21, was responsible for recordkeeping and information systems across the public safety agencies including QFES. From 1 July 2021, with the disestablishment of PSBA, this service will be provided by QPS to QFES. The records management team and the Information Management Unit continue to provide advice and assistance to QFES on matters related to effective and compliant recordkeeping processes, resulting in improved operational efficiencies.

During the reporting period, the Information Management Unit:

- » provided advice on all aspects of recordkeeping, including the development of the QFES Information Management Framework
- » delivered training in the RecFind System (the department's recordkeeping database)
- » undertook an analysis of recordkeeping systems accessed and utilised by PSBA staff within work units transitioning to QFES, in line with the disestablishment of PSBA, ensuring staff continued to have access to records required to perform their duties.

New and ongoing initiatives supporting the department's recordkeeping and information management activities 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 to the QFES Compliance and Prosecution Unit regarding document retention periods for records relating to periodic and routine servicing and maintenance of prescribed fire safety installations. The process of assessing occupier compliance with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* includes servicing and maintenance records being made available to QFES officers. Recommendations provided to the QFES Strategic Policy and Legislation Unit regarding the review and updating of the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* included recommended changes to retention periods for these records. Updating retention periods to align with QFES inspection protocols and clarifying occupier obligations to maintain these records,

will assist QFES in undertaking assessment of fire safety installations and confirm they are in a suitable working condition.

- » development of clearly defined record classes and recommended document management strategies for all types of footage recorded during the operation of RPAS (drones). Pending formal approval by Queensland State Archives, these record classes will be incorporated into an updated version of the *Fire and Emergency Services Retention and Disposal Schedule*. The schedule is expected to be submitted to Queensland State Archives in 2021–22 for approval.
- » engaged with QFES South Western Region Community Safety and SES business units to identify and implement suitable methodologies for reducing the quantity of physical records required to be maintained on site and to facilitate relocation of these functions to the new regional headquarters at Charlton.
- » commenced re-appraisal of QFES' physical records stored within commercial secondary storage facilities that have not being recalled for access for an extended period (more than five years). This process has been completed for a significant proportion of records within this category and is expected to be finalised within 2021–22. Key outcomes include optimising the process of future retrieval processes via transitioning all archived materials to a single storage provider and the ability to apply updated retention periods to records originally sentenced under previous versions of the Queensland Government's General Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Training and advice are provided by the Information Management Unit 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 2020–21.

Human resources

Strategic workforce planning and performance

Workforce profile

The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in QFES, including auxiliary firefighters, was 3,408.97 at 30 June 2021. 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 MOHRI (Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information) aligned methodology.

The increase of 51.03 FTE staff from 30 June 2020 (3,357.94) to 30 June 2021 was predominantly due to new firefighter and communication officer recruits that commenced in the period. 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 fluctuations in the usage of casual workforce) also impacted the FTE variation.

Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, the QFES permanent separation rate (excluding auxiliary, temporary and casual employees) was 4.2 per cent, with 52 per cent of the number of permanent staff separations due to retirements.

Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

No redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid to QFES staff during 2020–21.

Strategic workforce planning framework

The first QFES Strategic Workforce Plan (2021–2024) is in development and is anticipated to be approved by 31 December 2021. This plan explores the key levers of change identified in the Queensland Government 10-year human capital outlook and aligns these levers with workforce challenges unique to QFES.

The department is also developing a bespoke strategic workforce planning framework, inspired by the Public Service Commission's framework, to match its service delivery with organisational strategy. The tailored framework will enable QFES to realign its strategic workforce planning function to ensure a future-focused, whole-of-department approach to attracting and recruiting talent (for both a paid and volunteer workforce), to develop our people, and to retain and support our people, in accordance with *Strategy 2030*. It is anticipated that the framework will be approved and implementation commenced by 31 December 2021.

QFES Resourcing

An enhanced strategic focus to meet whole-of-government requirements for the department's resource allocations was adopted during the reporting period. This was achieved through:

- » the implementation of a current state Human Capital Optimisation Matrix (HCOM) and the review of the regional HCOMs to create a single point of truth for all QFES paid staff across all services. This supersedes the Resource Allocation Model which reflected FRS resources only.
- » the QFES Establishment, Resource and Vacancy Management Committee (ERVMC) continues to provide enhanced governance of vacancy and position management ensuring there is a strategic and evidence-based view across the department, so that resources are directed to priority areas. The committee processes were reviewed to ensure enhanced alignment with the Strategy and Budget Committee, with the ERVMC providing the resourcing requirements to implement the Strategy and Budget Committee strategic decisions.

Attraction and recruitment

The QFES recruitment attraction campaign ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. is designed to attract new members to the workforce and promote QFES as an employer of choice. The department's website contains detailed information on a variety of career and volunteer roles, a tool to help members of the public find a role that suits their skills and experience, and a range of videos featuring QFES members.

The department 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.

QFES employs a blind selection methodology in the firefighter recruitment process, whereby all personal and identifiable information such as name, age and gender are redacted ensuring all applicants are selected for offer of employment purely based on merit. Candidates successful in a recruitment process where all entry standards and requirements are the same for everyone, regardless of gender, age or background, ensures future recruit firefighters possess and are acknowledged by their peers as having the requisite skills and ability to completely perform the role of a QFES firefighter. The current requirements of the firefighter recruitment assessments reflect the minimum standards required of all operational firefighters on entry, regardless of gender, age or background.

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

Employee performance management framework

Implementation of electronic PADPs for all eligible staff utilising the Performance and Goals module in the Nexus platform continues. PADPs ensure regular informal and formal reviews that promote constructive communication, reflecting positive performance management principles to assist the employee to meet and exceed work performance expectations.

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. The department continues to review the arrangements for flexible work practices to ensure it continues to improve as a contemporary workplace.

QFES values, supports and promotes the 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, Rewards and Recognition suite continues to provide an extensive range of reward and recognition offerings to highlight and celebrate the achievements and successes of the department's 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, Rewards and Recognition booklet is available on the QFES Gateway and website to ensure accessibility to all QFES personnel and includes links to nomination forms. The nomination process was streamlined during the reporting period to ensure an easier process for QFES' volunteers and staff to nominate and to allow

for greater accountability for progression of those nominations.

On 30 March 2020, the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet announced that Tropical Cyclone Debbie 2017 and North Queensland Floods 2019 were 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 continuing work to recognise its members who responded to these National Emergency Medal events, including hosting medal celebrations and coordinating additional retrospective nominations.

In December 2020, the Bushfires 2019–20 was declared a nationally-significant emergency for the purpose of the National Emergency Medal by the Australian Honours and Awards, The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. QFES is working to recognise its members who responded to this event with the QFES Honours and Awards Advisory Panel coordinating nominations for eligible staff and volunteers.

Industrial and employee relations framework

QFES appoints employees pursuant to either the *Fire and Emergency Services 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 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 (including using alternative dispute resolution options), grievances and industrial disputes may be accessed in the manner set out in the Awards, Agreements or Directives 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.

QFES Leadership Framework

The QFES Leadership Framework, approved by BoM in May 2020, supports delivery of key initiatives within the department's strategic plan. Aligned to the human capital lifecycle, the framework provides a continuum of leadership development from emerging leader through to executive. The first of four foundation programs, Leading Self, was developed and piloted in 2020–21 establishing the first step of a pipeline of learning for emerging and current staff and volunteer leaders across the department.

The framework supports the themes of the Queensland Government's 10-year human capital outlook and three-year human capital strategic roadmap. It leverages internal resources and existing whole-of-government programs such as those provided by the Public Service Commission through the Leadership and Learning Hub and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

Work health, safety and wellbeing

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 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and associated procedures.

The department 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 (WHS) 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 the department and emerging risks. During 2020–21, QFES implemented the WHSMS. The system 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 during the reporting period include:

- » management of a health monitoring program which incorporates availability of perfluorooctance sulfonate (PFOS)/per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing for operational staff and volunteers and access to suitable testing following exposure to hazardous substances such as lead and asbestos.
- » access to and communication of the vaccination programs related to influenza and COVID-19 for staff and volunteers and hepatitis B for relevant staff.
- » expansion of the Fitness Passport program to all regions allowing staff and volunteers to access a network of gymnasiums at a discounted rate.
- » refresh of the internal intranet pages related to health, safety and wellbeing to provide further information and guidance to staff, volunteers and leaders.
- » development and communication of a leadership toolkit and health and safety representative toolkit to support leaders and health and safety representatives to effectively identify, assess and manage risk.
- » facilitation of various statewide risk assessments related to high-risk plant, equipment and operational activities such as technical rescue, bariatric patient lifts and training.
- » contribution to various internal and external committees and working groups.
- » delivery of a new learning program titled *Introduction to health, safety and wellbeing for workers*. The program supports the implementation of the WHSMS. The courses are tailored to leaders, staff and volunteers and

provide an overview of the policies, procedures, tools and resources available to support everyone in managing health, safety and wellbeing risks.

- » contribution to workers' compensation laws that mean first responders' diagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder claims will be deemed work-related and they can get immediate treatment and benefits under the workers' compensation scheme. The changes apply to frontline first responders including firefighters, RFS and SES volunteers and departmental employees who are exposed to traumatic incidents such as fire communications officers.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing

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

The Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (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.
- » critical incident and disaster support services promoting psychological first-aid for members exposed to emotionally challenging experiences.
- » systematic training and education sessions promoting mental health and resilience.
- » leadership advice services to inform and assist all leaders in managing the mental health of their people as they carry out the duty of care for QFES.
- » mental health awareness material/pathways and promotion of available support networks.

Highlights during the reporting period include:

- » participation in the *After the Fires* national research project investigating mental health across first responder agencies with particular attention to the psychological outcomes of the 2019–20 bushfires.
- » participation in the *Are they Triple OK?* initiative by R U OK? which specifically recognises the mental health challenges faced by first responder agency members.

- » raising approximately \$50,000 in support of Movember (raising funds and awareness for men's mental and physical health).
- » celebrating Peer Support Week including the awarding of 10 regional and one statewide award for exceptional commitment to the support of QFES members.
- » reviewing Critical Incident Response processes and delivering Critical Incident Response Management Training for Peer Support Officers with 20 Peer Support Officers approved for Peer Support Officer critical incident response activation.

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:

- » more than 100 QFES members participated in the Australian Chief Executive Officer Challenge Darkness to Daylight event held in October 2020. The event raises awareness and funds towards helping to end the cycle of domestic and family violence. Due to COVID-19, the event was held virtually with participants across the state logging steps through mobile applications and social media.
- » QFES again partnered with Zephyr Education to provide new lunchboxes and school supplies for children living in domestic and family violence shelters with collection points around the state. More than 400 lunchboxes, lunch bags and water bottles were collected.
- » QFES participated in Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month during May 2021 to raise awareness amongst the QFES workforce through a number of initiatives including:
 - QFES representatives attended the Candle Lighting Vigil hosted by DV Connect on 5 May 2021 at Kangaroo Point, Brisbane as well as the Redlands Coast Candle Lighting Vigil at Cleveland.

- QFES participated in the 2021 Darkness to Daylight challenge throughout the month of May, for the fifth year. One hundred QFES members from across the state supported bringing an end to domestic and family violence through building awareness and fundraising. At the conclusion of the month, the department hosted a live panel to discuss how staff and volunteers could support victims of domestic and family violence in an emergency services context. The panel featured voices from within QFES, QPS, and the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and was livecast across the state.

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Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2021

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Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of comprehensive income
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 Actual \$'000	2021 Original Budget \$'000	2021 Budget Variance* \$'000	2020 Actual \$'000
Income from continuing operations					
Appropriation revenue	4	233,451	124,309	109,142	136,493
User charges and fees	5	53,711	52,298	1,413	55,463
Emergency management levies	6	580,589	581,326	(737)	562,483
Grants and other contributions	7	134,389	98,184	36,205	52,688
Other revenue		5,869	2,354	3,515	3,229
Total revenue		1,008,009	858,471	149,538	810,356
Gains on disposal/remeasurement of assets		1,239	-	1,239	1
Total income from continuing operations		1,009,248	858,471	150,777	810,357
Expenses from continuing operations					
Employee expenses	8	452,941	467,936	(14,995)	459,942
Supplies and services	10	420,013	244,389	175,624	320,440
Grants and subsidies	11	22,841	38,625	(15,784)	18,551
Depreciation and amortisation	14-16	36,645	37,509	(864)	7,009
Impairment losses / (gains)		157	520	(363)	(77)
Revaluation decrement	15	19,402	-	19,402	-
Interest on lease liability		103	116	(13)	116
Other expenses	12	12,164	11,642	522	12,372
Total expenses from continuing operations		964,266	800,737	163,529	818,353
Operating result for the year		44,982	57,734	(12,752)	(7,996)
Other comprehensive income not reclassified subsequently to operating result					
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	15	16,255	-	16,255	-
Total other comprehensive income		16,255	-	16,255	-
Total comprehensive income		61,237	57,734	3,503	(7,996)

* 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 2021

	Notes	2021 Actual \$'000	2020 Actual \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		34,495	28,414
Receivables	13	85,177	54,479
Inventories		8,324	6,345
Prepayments		5,955	2,598
Total current assets		133,951	91,836
Non-current assets			
Intangible assets *	14	2,131	3,008
Property, plant and equipment *	15	731,391	18,328
Right-of-use assets	16	6,286	6,510
Total non-current assets		739,808	27,846
Total assets		873,759	119,682
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Payables	17	37,204	34,965
Lease liabilities	16	1,434	1,586
Accrued employee benefits	18	17,639	20,423
Other current liabilities	19	2,002	1,632
Total current liabilities		58,279	58,606
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	16	4,910	4,894
Total non-current liabilities		4,910	4,894
Total liabilities		63,189	63,500
Net assets		810,570	56,182
Equity			
Contributed equity		719,232	26,081
Accumulated surplus		74,795	29,813
Asset revaluation surplus		16,543	288
Total equity		810,570	56,182

* On 1 July 2020, the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) transferred assets to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) as a result of a shift in assets accounting management and policy. Refer to Note 3 for further details.

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of changes in equity
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Contributed equity			
Opening balance		26,081	36,522
Transactions with owners as owners:			
Appropriated equity adjustments	4	(6,515)	(10,441)
Net transfers from PSBA - 1 July 2020	3	699,666	-
Closing balance		<u>719,232</u>	<u>26,081</u>
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)			
Opening balance		29,813	37,809
Operating result		44,982	(7,996)
Closing balance		<u>74,795</u>	<u>29,813</u>
Asset revaluation surplus			
Opening balance		288	288
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus		16,255	-
Closing balance *		<u>16,543</u>	<u>288</u>
Total equity		<u>810,570</u>	<u>56,182</u>

* Asset revaluation surplus is comprised of: Land \$nil (2020: \$0.069m), Buildings \$16.531m (2020: \$0.210m) and Heritage and Cultural \$0.012m (2020: \$0.009m).

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	Actual	Actual
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Service appropriation receipts	215,249	134,718
User charges and fees	55,049	57,281
Emergency management levies	572,440	554,525
Grants and other contributions	122,689	42,236
GST input tax credits from ATO	40,352	24,262
GST collected from customers	7,736	6,545
Other	5,863	2,747
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Employee expenses	(461,553)	(457,417)
Supplies and services	(425,961)	(311,955)
Grants and subsidies	(22,842)	(18,551)
GST paid to suppliers	(43,040)	(24,571)
GST remitted to ATO	(7,736)	(6,545)
Other	(1,629)	(3,882)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	56,617	(607)
Cash flows from investing activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Sales of property, plant and equipment	4,556	-
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(63,173)	(4,078)
Payments for intangibles	-	(534)
Payments for right-of-use assets	(1,209)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(59,826)	(4,612)
Cash flows from financing activities		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Equity injections	12,960	250
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Equity withdrawals	(19,475)	(10,691)
Lease payments	(1,447)	(1,422)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(7,962)	(11,863)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(11,171)	(17,082)
Increase/(decrease) in cash from transfers between Government entities	17,252	-
Cash at beginning of financial year	28,414	45,496
Cash at end of financial year	34,495	28,414

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the statement of cash flows
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities		
Operating result	44,982	(7,996)
Non-cash items included in operating result:		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	36,645	7,009
Revaluation decrement	19,402	-
Donated assets received	(1,673)	(506)
Assets written on	(6)	(481)
Assets donated	6	-
Net (gains)/losses on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(839)	432
Impairment losses	140	-
Lease interest expense	103	116
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in emergency management levies	(8,149)	(7,959)
(Increase)/decrease in trade debtors	1,215	(353)
(Increase)/decrease in net GST receivable	(2,688)	(309)
(Increase)/decrease in annual leave receivables	(2,958)	3,598
(Increase)/decrease in long service leave receivables	80	87
(Increase)/decrease in departmental services revenue receivables	(17,963)	-
(Increase)/decrease in accrued debtors	(556)	1,021
(Increase)/decrease in other receivables	169	140
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(1,979)	(776)
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(3,357)	(191)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	(3,541)	6,943
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	(2,784)	(432)
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	368	(950)
Net cash from operating activities	56,617	(607)
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	6,480	7,706
New leases acquired	1,208	80
Non-cash changes:		
Interest	103	116
Cash flows:		
Lease liability repayments	(1,447)	(1,422)
Closing balance as at 30 June	6,344	6,480

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

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 2020 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 14, 15 and 16
- Revaluation of property, plant and equipment - Note 15

(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 reporting period.

(g) Future impact of accounting standards not yet effective

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

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

2 Objectives and principal activities of the department

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

QFES' purpose is to help Queensland communities prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the impact of fire and emergency events, including natural and human-induced disasters. QFES' vision is a connected and capable Queensland in the face of emergencies and disasters.

QFES delivers services in line with the key focus areas of the Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan by continuing to provide fire and emergency services to Queensland communities with a focus on local risk and demand.

3 Transfers between Government departments

The PSBA transferred operational 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 and equipment* from this date. The transfer was endorsed by the Treasurer on 13 June 2020.

Effective from 1 July 2020, the assets and liabilities transferred as a result of this change were as follows:

Assets	\$'000
Cash	17,252
Intangibles	28
Property, plant and equipment	690,194
	<u>707,474</u>
 Liabilities	
Payables	7,808
	<u>7,808</u>
 Net assets	<u><u>699,666</u></u>

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
4 Appropriation revenue		
Reconciliation of payments from Consolidated Fund to appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income		
Budgeted appropriation revenue	124,070	106,546
Unforeseen expenditure	91,179	28,172
Total appropriation receipts (cash)	215,249	134,718
Plus: closing balance of appropriation receivable	17,963	-
Plus: Opening balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	239	2,014
Less: Closing balance of deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund	-	(239)
Net appropriation revenue	233,451	136,493
Appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income	233,451	136,493
Variance between original budgeted and actual appropriation revenue	109,381	29,947
Reconciliation of payments from Consolidated Fund to equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity		
Budgeted equity adjustment appropriation	(6,515)	(10,441)
Equity adjustment receipts	(6,515)	(10,441)
Equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity	(6,515)	(10,441)

Accounting Policy - Appropriation revenue

Appropriations provided under the *Appropriation (2020-2021) Act 2020* 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.

5 User charges and fees

Alarm maintenance and monitoring	22,447	21,705
Attendance charges	12,734	11,553
Building and infrastructure fire safety	15,748	16,742
Sale of goods and services	2,782	5,463
Total	53,711	55,463

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.

6 Emergency management levies

Gross emergency management levies	591,138	572,666
Less: pensioner discount	(10,549)	(10,183)
Total	580,589	562,483

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*.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
7 Grants and other contributions		
Commonwealth contributions	2,878	3,242
Contributed assets	1,673	643
Grants from Queensland Health *	81,900	-
Grants from other Queensland Government entities **	34,070	35,447
Motor Accident Insurance Commission	3,244	2,758
Services received below fair value ***	10,014	9,946
Other	610	652
Total	134,389	52,688

* Grants from Queensland Health are for the recovery of COVID-19 hotel quarantine expenses. Refer note 10.

** Grants from other Queensland government entities include Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Assistance from Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) of \$32.847m (2019-20: \$34.090m), sponsorships and contributions for State Emergency Services and Rural Fire Brigades of \$0.746m (2019-20: \$1.030m), contribution from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy for the HRIS integration project of \$0.461m (2019-20: nil) and Volunteer Compensation payments from QRA of \$0.016m (2019-20: \$0.326m).

*** 2020-21 services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy.

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.

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.

Volunteer services are only recognised where a fair value can be reliably measured and the services would have been purchased if not donated. QFES has not recognised the value of volunteer services, including the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Services (SES), as the fair value of their services cannot be measured reliably.

8 Employee expenses

Employee benefits

Wages and salaries - General *	303,441	305,168
Wages and salaries - Overtime	27,271	35,728
Annual leave levy	39,916	36,607
Employer superannuation contributions	40,859	39,780
Long service leave levy	8,134	8,535

Employee related expenses

Training expenses	1,990	3,648
Workers' compensation premiums	19,727	18,217
Other employee related expenses	11,603	12,259
Total	452,941	459,942

* Wages and salaries in 2020 included \$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).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

8 Employee expenses (continued)

The number of employees as at 30 June (based upon the fortnight ending 2 July 2021), including both full-time employees and part-time employees, measured on a full-time equivalent basis, reflecting Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI), is:

	2021	2020
Full-Time equivalent employees (number)	3,409	3,358

The increase in FTE's is a result of the Government's election commitment to recruit additional paid firefighter positions to strengthen Queensland's frontline emergency response for fire and emergency services.

Accounting Policy - Employee expenses

Wages, salaries and sick leave

For unpaid entitlements expected to be paid within 12 months of the reporting date, the liabilities are recognised at their undiscounted values.

As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

Annual leave and long service leave

The department is a member of the Queensland Government's Annual Leave and Long Service Leave Central Schemes. A levy is payable to cover the cost of employees' annual leave (including leave loading and on-costs) and long service leave. The levies are expensed in the period in which they are payable. Amounts paid to employees for annual leave and long service leave are claimed from the scheme quarterly in arrears.

Superannuation

Post-employment benefits for superannuation are provided through defined contribution (accumulation) plans or the Queensland Government's QSuper defined benefit plan as determined by the employee's conditions of employment.

Defined contribution plans - Contributions are made to eligible complying superannuation funds based on the rates specified in the relevant EBA or other conditions of employment. Contributions are expensed when they are paid or become payable following completion of the employee's service each pay period.

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

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.

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for former employees, including permanent firefighters and part-time auxiliary firefighters, for cover for latent onset diseases, in accordance with the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2015*.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

9 Key Management Personnel disclosures

(a) Details of Key management personnel (KMP)

The department's responsible Minister 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 for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services.

The other non-Ministerial KMP personnel include those positions that form the Board of Management and 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 and effective functioning of FRS, RFS and SES, and emergency management and disaster mitigation programs and services throughout Queensland. The Commissioner represents QFES at local, community, state, national and international forums.
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	Leadership and management of the FRS, RFS and SES across QFES's Regions. This service primarily provides the response to emergencies, and includes specialist services such as Community Infrastructure, Research and Scientific, and Specialist and Technical Response.
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.
Deputy Commissioner - Strategy and Corporate Services	Leading the department's strategic framework and vision, driving performance and integrated capability across QFES. The Division includes Strategic Services, Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services, and QFES People Directorates and works closely with the public safety agencies.
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. Effective 15 April 2021 the COO ceased to be a member of the QFES BOM.

There was one independent external member appointed to the QFES Board of Management. The independent external member received \$18,150 in remuneration (2019-20: \$12,430).

(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. No KMP remuneration packages provide for performance or bonus payments.

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9 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.
- Termination benefits include payments in lieu of notice on termination and other lump sum separation entitlements (excluding annual and long service leave entitlements) payable on termination of employment or acceptance of an offer of termination of employment.

(c) Remuneration Expenses

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Termination Benefits	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses	Non-Monetary Benefits				
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Commissioner	428	-	10	53	-	491
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	254	25	6	31	-	316
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism & Community Resilience	259	24	6	31	-	320
A/Deputy Commissioner - Strategy & Corporate Services	256	-	6	30	-	292
Chief Operating Officer (PSBA)	Remuneration is reported by the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA).					

1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Termination Benefits	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses	Non-Monetary Benefits				
	\$'000	\$'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).					

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

There were no material related party transactions associated with the department's KMP during 2020-21 (2019-20:nil).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
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	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
10 Supplies and services		
Aircraft related costs	19,186	32,076
Cleaning and laundering	1,808	2,598
Communications	33,822	33,933
Computer expenses	8,333	7,463
Contractors	8,889	14,840
COVID-19 State hotel quarantine costs *	179,547	25,016
Emergency management levy administration fees	6,966	6,921
Lease expenses	4,786	4,899
Marketing expenses	2,430	2,835
Minor equipment purchases	11,977	11,219
Motor vehicle expenses	16,695	20,439
Property expenses	4,845	6,590
PSBA - operating expense **	81,911	106,162
Repairs and maintenance	12,416	13,562
Travel and accommodation	9,116	10,896
Other	17,286	20,992
Total	420,013	320,440

* Includes all costs associated with COVID-19 hotel quarantine provided by the State through the State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC). These costs have been reimbursed by Queensland Health (costs incurred to November 2020) or via appropriation revenue (costs incurred from December 2020).

** PSBA 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 of property, plant and equipment (2019-20 only) and amortisation of intangible assets owned by PSBA but used by QFES to deliver fire and rescue and emergency management programs and services throughout Queensland.

Accounting policy - 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.

11 Grants and subsidies

Air sea rescue, coast guard and life saving organisations	11,397	10,396
Local governments	3,966	3,295
PSBA-capital grant *	2,849	1,057
State Emergency Services	1,323	1,351
Volunteer rural fire brigades	1,693	493
Other	1,613	1,959
Total	22,841	18,551

* Capital grant paid to PSBA in 2020-21 represents funding to deliver information and communication technology.

12 Other expenses

Audit fees *	279	234
Insurance premiums-QGIF	1,092	1,013
Insurance premiums-other	86	53
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	400	432
Services received below fair value **	10,014	9,946
Special payments ***	101	399
Other	192	295
Total	12,164	12,372

* Total audit fees quoted by Queensland Audit Office for the 2020-21 financial statements are \$301,000 (2019-20: \$231,000).

** Services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy.

*** Special payments in 2020-21 include:

- Ex-gratia payments made to Rural Fire Service volunteers under Category D of the Queensland Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
- Reimbursement of medical expenses not covered by Workcover for a RFS volunteer
- Refund of EML levies to two companies.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

12 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.

Volunteer services are only recognised where a fair value can be reliably measured and the services would have been purchased if not donated. QFES has not recognised the value of volunteer services, including the RFS and SES, as the fair value of their services cannot be measured reliably.

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.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
13 Receivables		
Emergency management levies	42,698	34,549
Trade debtors	7,127	8,355
Less: Allowance for impairment loss	(697)	(557)
	<u>49,128</u>	<u>42,347</u>
GST receivable	4,340	3,341
GST payable	(177)	(1,866)
	<u>4,163</u>	<u>1,475</u>
Accrued debtors	2,805	2,248
Annual leave reimbursements	9,187	6,228
Departmental services revenue receivable *	17,963	-
Long service leave reimbursements	1,467	1,547
Other	464	634
	<u>31,886</u>	<u>10,657</u>
Total	<u>85,177</u>	<u>54,479</u>

* The 2021 Departmental services revenue receivable is mainly due to year-end recovery of costs from the centrally held Contingency Fund for COVID-19 health response expenses incurred by QFES on behalf of the State of Queensland. These costs include quarantine accommodation, quarantine logistics and border control activities for the period 7 May to 30 June 2021 and are claimable on an acquittal basis.

Accounting Policy - Receivables

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*.

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.

Other receivables generally arise from transactions outside the usual operating activities of the department and are recognised at their assessed values. Settlement terms depend on the nature of the receivable. No interest is charged (other than for overdue emergency management levies) and no security is obtained.

Accounting Policy - Impairment of receivables

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

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

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

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

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
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13 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 2021. 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.

14 Intangible assets

	Software purchased	Software internally generated	Software work in progress	Total
	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Gross value	317	25,301	-	25,618
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(317)	(23,170)	-	(23,487)
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,131</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,131</u>
Reconciliation				
Opening balance	-	2,474	534	3,008
Transfers from/(to) - PSBA 1 July 2020	3	25	-	28
Transfers between asset classes	-	534	(534)	-
Amortisation	(3)	(902)	-	(905)
Closing balance	<u>-</u>	<u>2,131</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,131</u>
	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Gross value	-	23,989	534	24,523
Less: Accumulated amortisation	-	(21,515)	-	(21,515)
	<u>-</u>	<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>-</u>	<u>2,474</u>	<u>534</u>	<u>3,008</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. Historical cost, which is determined as the value provided as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition and costs incurred in getting the asset ready for use, is used for the initial recording of these assets. 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

Each intangible asset, less any anticipated residual value, is amortised over its estimated useful life to the agency.

For each class of intangible asset the following amortisation rates are used:

Class	Amortisation rate (%)
Software - Purchased	8.3% to 25%
Software - Internally generated	7.7% to 33.3%

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.

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15 Property, plant and equipment

	Land	Buildings	Heritage and cultural	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Gross value	156,247	512,469	2,245	508,546	41,065	1,220,572
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(213,078)	(2,055)	(274,048)	-	(489,181)
	156,247	299,391	190	234,498	41,065	731,391
Reconciliation						
Opening balance	521	594	21	16,997	195	18,328
Acquisitions	1,500	18	-	3,327	57,529	62,374
Donations received	30	-	-	1,643	-	1,673
Donations made	-	-	-	(6)	-	(6)
Transfers from/(to) - PSBA 1 July 2020	176,738	256,653	176	198,870	57,757	690,194
Transfers between asset classes	207	37,404	-	36,805	(74,416)	-
Disposals	(3,278)	(88)	-	(351)	-	(3,717)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in operating surplus/(deficit)	(19,402)	-	-	-	-	(19,402)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	(69)	16,322	2	-	-	16,255
Depreciation	-	(11,512)	(9)	(22,787)	-	(34,308)
Closing balance	156,247	299,391	190	234,498	41,065	731,391
	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
Donations made	-	-	-	-	-	-
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

Accounting Policy - Ownership and acquisitions of assets

Whilst section 7 of the *Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014* requires the PSBA to hold and maintain infrastructure, fleet and communication technology assets for the public safety entities, on 1 July 2020 the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) transferred assets to QFES as a result of a shift in assets accounting management and policy. These assets are now recognised and reported in the financial statements of QFES and not the PSBA. Refer to Note 3 for further details.

Historical cost is used for the initial recording of all property, plant and equipment acquisitions. Historical cost is determined as the value provided as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition and costs incurred in getting the asset ready for use.

Where assets are received free of charge from another Queensland Government department (whether as a result of a machinery-of-Government change or other involuntary transfer), the acquisition cost is recognised as the gross carrying amount in the accounts of the transferor immediately prior to the transfer together with any accumulated depreciation.

Accounting Policy - Recognition thresholds for property, plant and equipment

Basis of capitalisation and recognition thresholds

Property, plant and equipment with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of the following thresholds are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition:

Land	\$1
Buildings	\$10,000
Heritage and cultural	\$5,000
Plant and equipment	\$5,000

Items purchased or acquired for a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

15 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

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 an independent professional valuer 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, 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 2021. The fair value as at 30 June 2021 is materially the same as the valuation completed as at 31 March 2021.

Land

During 2020-21 independent revaluations were performed for land in the QFES Brisbane and South-East Regions, 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.

Buildings and Heritage and cultural assets

During 2020-21 independent revaluations were performed for buildings in the QFES Brisbane and South-East Regions, 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 2021.

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15 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

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	
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
Land	154,226	521	-	-	154,226	521
Buildings	20,013	76	279,851	518	299,864	594
Heritage and cultural	-	-	190	21	190	21

Level 3 fair value reconciliation

	Buildings		Heritage and cultural		Total Level 3 assets	
	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Carrying amount as at 1 July	518	376	21	21	539	397
Acquisitions	18	23	-	-	18	23
MOG In	241,826	-	176	-	242,002	-
WIP Transfers	34,368	23	-	-	34,368	23
Donations	-	110	-	-	-	110
Disposals	(88)	-	-	-	(88)	-
Net revaluation increment recognised in other comprehensive income	14,170	-	2	-	14,172	-
Depreciation	(10,961)	(14)	(9)	-	(10,970)	(14)
Carrying amount as at 30 June	<u>279,851</u>	<u>518</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>280,041</u>	<u>539</u>

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15 Property, plant and equipment (continued)

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%
Heritage and cultural	0.4% to 1%
Plant and equipment	1% to 33.3%

16 Right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

Right-of-use assets

	Land 2021 \$'000	Buildings 2021 \$'000	Total 2021 \$'000
Gross Value	23	8,971	8,994
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(12)	(2,696)	(2,708)
	<u>11</u>	<u>6,275</u>	<u>6,286</u>

Reconciliation

Opening balance	-	6,510	6,510
Acquisitions	23	1,185	1,208
Depreciation	(12)	(1,420)	(1,432)
Closing balance	<u>11</u>	<u>6,275</u>	<u>6,286</u>

	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Gross Value	-	7,786	7,786
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(1,276)	(1,276)
	<u>-</u>	<u>6,510</u>	<u>6,510</u>

Reconciliation

Opening balance	-	7,706	7,706
Acquisitions	-	80	80
Depreciation	-	(1,276)	(1,276)
Closing balance	<u>-</u>	<u>6,510</u>	<u>6,510</u>

Lease liabilities

Current

Lease liabilities	1,434	1,586
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Non-Current

Lease liabilities	4,910	4,894
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Total

<u>6,344</u>	<u>6,480</u>
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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 - Depreciation of right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight line basis from the commencement date of the lease to the end of the lease term.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

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

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 Energy and Public Works (DEPW) 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 DEPW has substantive substitution rights over the assets. The related services expenses are included in Note 11.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
<i>(iii) Amounts recognised in profit or loss</i>		
Interest expense on lease liabilities	103	116
Breakdown of 'Lease expenses' included in Note 10		
- Expenses relating to short-term leases	382	2,040
- Expenses relating to leases of low value assets	27	31
- Expenses relating to office accommodation and employee housing provided by DEPW	4,377	2,827
<i>(iv) Total cash outflow for leases</i>	4,786	4,899

17 Payables

Accrued creditors	24,956	14,009
Trade creditors	11,991	20,690
Tax liabilities	136	138
Other	121	129
Total	37,204	34,965

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.

18 Accrued employee benefits

Annual leave levy payable	10,825	9,495
Long service leave levy payable	2,247	2,087
Salaries and wages outstanding	1,859	6,589
Other	2,708	2,252
Total	17,639	20,423

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*.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
19 Other current liabilities			
Deferred appropriation payable to Consolidated Fund		-	239
Unearned revenue		1,946	1,309
Other		56	84
Total		2,002	1,632

20 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 Consolidated Fund. Refer Note 3 and the Statement of changes in equity.

Services below fair value transactions with other departments are disclosed in Note 7 and Note 12.

Operating expense include fair value transactions with other departments disclosed in Note 10.

21 Commitments

Capital expenditure commitments

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

Class of asset

Buildings		24,529	-
Plant and equipment		9,056	550
Intangibles		176	-
Total		33,761	550
Not later than one year		31,532	550
Later than one year and not later than five years		2,229	-
Total		33,761	550

On 1 July 2020, the PSBA transferred assets to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) as a result of a shift in assets accounting management and policy. Refer to Note 3 for further details.

22 Financial instruments

Financial instruments categories

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

Financial assets

Cash		34,495	28,414
Financial assets measured at amortised cost:			
Receivables	13	85,177	54,479
Total financial assets		119,672	82,893

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost:			
Payables	17	37,204	34,965
Lease Liabilities	16	6,344	6,480
Total financial liabilities at amortised cost		43,548	41,445

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.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

22 Financial instruments (continued)

(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 13).
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 17).
Market risk	The risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.	The department does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to commodity price changes or other market prices.

(b) Risk Measurement and Management Strategies

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 13).

(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	2021 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	17	37,204	-	-	37,204
Lease liability	16	1,434	3,962	948	6,344
Total		38,638	3,962	948	43,548

Financial liabilities	Note	2020 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	17	34,965	-	-	34,965
Lease liability	16	1,586	4,894	-	6,480
Total		36,551	4,894	-	41,445

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

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 \$0.061m (2020: \$0.069m).

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 \$0.499m (2020: \$3.566m).

Total cash at bank at reporting date was \$1.799m (2020: \$2.882m) with total donations payable to brigades \$1.799m (2020: \$2.882m).

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

As a result of Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 2) 2021, effective 1 July 2021, the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) was disestablished and as a consequence a share of the Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Assets, Fleet, Property and Facilities Management functions were transferred to QFES and the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Internal Audit functions were transferred solely to QPS, with QPS to provide ICT and internal audit services to QFES.

Effective 1 July 2021 167 FTE from finance, procurement, HR and asset management functions transferred to QFES from PSBA. This will increase employee expenses by approximately \$19.533m and supplies and services expenses by \$13.901m, with a corresponding reduction in the PSBA – operating expense amount as per note 10.

The PSBA will transfer an estimated \$108.9m net assets, including \$100.5m in plant and equipment and work in progress to QFES on 1 July 2021. The associated Machinery of Government documents have not yet been finalised and signed at the time of the authorisation of these financial statements.

26 Significant financial impacts from COVID-19 pandemic

During the 2020-21 financial year \$179.547m (2019-20: \$25.016m) has been recognised by the department in response to COVID-19 relating to quarantine expenses (refer to Note 10).

27 Budgetary reporting disclosures

Explanation of major variances - Statement of comprehensive income

Appropriation Revenue: Additional funding over budget was received for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation costs (\$108.409m), COVID-19 quarantine logistics support and border control (\$4.583m), supplementary aerial firefighting costs for the 2019-20 bushfire season (\$3.448m), additional firefighter positions (\$3.834m). This is partially offset by funding returned to the Consolidated Fund associated with new programs which commenced in 2020-21 which experienced recruitment and delivery delays (\$11.628m).

Grants and Contributions: Exceeded budgeted revenue due to recoveries from Queensland Health for COVID-19 related hotel quarantine accommodation (\$15.664m), Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) revenues associated with current and prior year severe bushfire and weather events (\$16.600m), contributed assets (\$1.673m), additional contributions from the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) (\$1.451m), sponsorships and contributions for State Emergency Services and Rural Fire Brigades (\$0.371m), and contribution from Department of Communities, Housing and Public Works towards the HRIS integration project (\$0.461m).

Other revenue: Exceeded budgeted revenue mainly due to interstate disaster event deployment recoveries (\$2.136m).

Employee expenses: Variance is mainly due to the commencing timing of funding for the 'better support for firefighters' (\$3.550), recruitment delays for bushfire mitigation (\$2.537m), predictive services and strategic capability enhancement capabilities (\$1.489m), land use planning (\$0.569m), and intelligence capability for bushfire and disaster events enhancement program (\$0.247m). Also contributing to the variance was lower than expected auxiliary wages (\$3.621m), delayed rollout of uniform and personal protective equipment (\$3.269m) and reduced training expenses (\$3.632m) due to the impacts of COVID-19, and lower salary and wage related expenses (\$0.973m) recruitment restrictions. These underspends are partially offset by additional overtime expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and COVID-19 border control logistics (\$4.674m).

27 Budgetary reporting disclosures (continued)

Supplies and services: Variance is mainly due to COVID-19 hotel quarantine accommodation costs (\$138.511m), COVID-19 response including quarantine logistics and border control (\$1.380m), expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments (\$16.577m), and expenditure for State Radio Upgrade (\$5.804 million), SES onboarding to the Government Wireless Network (\$2.110 million) and Field Mobility (\$2.520 million) projects. Additionally, QFES was required to provide additional contributions towards the national Emergency Alert project (\$9.493 million).

Grants and subsidies: Variance is predominantly due to lower than expected funding provided to the Public Safety Business Agency, with funding redirected to QFES managed projects (supplies and services).

Revaluation decrement: Variance is due to a revaluation decrement for land assets (\$19.402m).

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Management Certificate for the year ended 30 June 2021

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 2021 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 Services, 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



S. Lowth
B Commerce
FCPA

Chief Finance Officer

27 August 2021

27 August 2021

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Accountable Officer of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of 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 2021, 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 2021, 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 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 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

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial report of the current period. I addressed these matters in the context of my audit of the financial report as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Specialised building valuation (\$299.391 million) and depreciation expense (\$11.512 million)

Refer to note 15 in the financial report.

Key audit matter	How my audit addressed the key audit matter
<p>Except in rare circumstances where a market price in an active market exists, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) derives the fair value of its buildings using the current replacement cost method that comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross replacement cost, less Accumulated depreciation <p>QFES values its buildings each year through a combination of specific appraisals for selected regions on a rolling basis, with the remainder of buildings revalued by applying relevant indices in the years between specific appraisals.</p> <p>QFES derived the gross replacement cost of its buildings at balance date using unit prices that required significant judgements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying whether the existing building contains obsolescence or less utility compared to the modern substitute, and if so, estimating the adjustment to the unit rate required to reflect this difference. buildings not specifically appraised in the current year, indexing unit rates for increases in input costs. <p>The measurement of accumulated depreciation involves significant judgements for estimating the remaining useful lives of assets. The significant judgements required for gross replacement cost and useful lives are also significant for calculating annual depreciation expense.</p>	<p>My procedures included, but were not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing management's controls over the valuation process. Assessing the appropriateness of the process used for measuring gross replacement cost with reference to common industry practices. For unit rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the competence, capability and objectivity of the experts used by QFES to develop the unit rate models. Obtaining an understanding of the methodology used and assessing its appropriateness with reference to common industry practices. For building specific appraisals in the current year, evaluating on a sample basis the relevance, completeness and accuracy of source data used to derive the unit rate of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> modern substitute (including locality factors and on costs) adjustment for excess quality or obsolescence. For buildings revalued through indexation, recalculating the index with reference to the current year's specific appraisal. Reviewing management and the expert's assessment and application of asset componentisation and the consequential impact on depreciation expense. Evaluating useful life estimates for reasonableness by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing management's annual assessment of useful lives. Assessing whether assets still in use have reached or exceeded their useful life. Where changes in useful lives were identified, evaluating whether the effective dates of the changes applied for depreciation expense were supported by appropriate evidence.

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.

From the matters communicated with the Accountable Officer, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial report of the current period and are **therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.**

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Statement

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 30 June 2021:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- b) I consider that, 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.



John Welsh
as delegate of the Auditor-General

31 August 2021
Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Human Rights Act 2019

Annual Performance Report 2020–21

Introduction

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) is the primary provider of fire and rescue, emergency services and disaster management capability services throughout Queensland. The department encompasses the Fire and Rescue Service, disaster management services, the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service. The department works with community and partners to minimise the impacts and consequences of disasters and emergencies on persons, property and the environment. 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.

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.

In preparation for the commencement of the Act and prior to 1 July 2020, QFES undertook significant work to progress compatibility with the Act including:

- » all QFES doctrine were reviewed and an assessment tool developed to align future documents to the Act. Assessing all QFES doctrine against the human rights legislation is a business-as-usual activity within QFES.
- » the Complaints Management procedure was updated to include complaints about human rights and the Complaints Assessment process and forms were updated to ensure compatibility with human rights.

- » training material for the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training was aligned with the Act including the QFES handbooks, implementation documents and course guides.
- » 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.
- » a training video on the topic of decision-making for human rights in operational scenarios was released on the QFES Gateway.
- » the requirements of the Act were 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.

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.*

During 2020–21, QFES received three human rights complaints. At 30 June 2021, one complaint is being managed within QFES and is part of a broader workplace conduct complaint that is in progress; and two complaints have been lodged with the Queensland Human Rights Commission and are in progress.

Actions taken to further the objects of the Act

QFES continued to further the objects of the Act during the reporting period by:

- » including in the QFES Strategic Plan 2021–2025 the following statement: *When implementing our strategies QFES will respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision-making and actions.*
- » finalising the development of a Human Rights Awareness e-learning package. The package was rolled out through Nexus (learning management system) to all staff and volunteers.
- » delivering training to management on their obligations under the Act; and on specific changes to policies, procedures and practices relating to human resources and complaints management.
- » convening a working group in March 2021 to evaluate the department's progress in meeting its responsibilities under the Act. The evaluation was undertaken to ensure no activities were overlooked due to the department's focus on supporting the government's response to COVID-19. The working group was disestablished in June 2021 after confirming that all required activities have been completed, other than awareness and training activities which are continuing to be progressed to further embed a culture of human rights in QFES.
- » undertaking consultation and planning to establish the purpose, scope and membership of a QFES Human Rights Information Awareness collaborative team, in preparation for the first meeting to be held in July 2021. This team will continue the development and implementation of QFES specific human rights information awareness and training activities for paid staff and volunteers to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the workforce in terms of accessibility and content.

In addition, manager and staff education on human rights and how they are applied in managing complaints and within the decision-making framework is continuing through QFES' Senior Advisor Workplace Standards network. Human rights are considered in the implementation of staff personal achievement and development plans and flexible work arrangements.

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

The following activity occurred during 2020–21:

- » internal processes for drafting of legislative amendments were modified to build in human rights considerations.
- » proposals, business cases and approvals are considerate of human rights and QFES' obligations under the Act.
- » assessing all QFES doctrine (policy, procedures, standards, role manuals and operations doctrine) against the human rights legislation continues to be a business-as-usual activity within the department.
- » an ongoing partnership with QFES doctrine owners through the QFES Knowledge Advisory Group continues to enhance a broader understanding of human rights.
- » the requirements of the Act have been incorporated into Service Level Agreements through variations with the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and PCYC Queensland (Emergency Services Cadets).

Acronyms

AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System	FTE	Full-time equivalent
AFSM	Australian Fire Service Medal	GST	Goods and services tax
AML	Advanced Mobile Location	GWN	Government Wireless Network
ARCC	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	HazMat	Hazardous materials
ATV	All-terrain vehicle	HCOM	Human Capital Optimisation Matrix
AVCGA	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association	ICC	Incident Control Centre
BA	Breathing Apparatus	ICT	Information and communications technology
BAC	Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation	IGEM	Inspector-General Emergency Management
BoM	Board of Management	IMT	Incident Management Team
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch	ISMS	Information Security Management System
CCC	Crime and Corruption Commission	LAT	Large Air Tanker
COVID-19	Coronavirus	LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	MRIWG	Marine Rescue Implementation Working Group
ELT	Executive Leadership Team	NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
EMCC	Emergency Management and Community Capability	NEMMM	National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting
EML	Emergency Management Levy	OCB	Operation Cool Burn
ERDSS	Emergency Response Decision Support System	PADP	Personal achievement and development plan
ERVMC	Establishment, Resource and Vacancy Management Committee	P-CEP	Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness
FFF	Fight Fire Fascination	PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Club

Acronyms (cont'd)

PFAS	polyfluoroalkyl substances	RFBAQ	Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc.
PFOS	perfluorooctance sulfonate	RFDF	Rural Fire Development Framework
PNGFS	Papua New Guinea Fire Service	RFS	Rural Fire Service
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment	RLSSQ	Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc.
PPRR	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	RPAS	Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems
PSA	Public Safety Agencies	SABRE	Simulation Analysis-Based Risk Evaluation
PSBA	Public Safety Business Agency	SDCC	State Disaster Coordination Centre
QAO	Queensland Audit Office	SES	State Emergency Service
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service	SFEST	School of Fire and Emergency Services Training
QCRC	Queensland Climate Resilience Councils	SLSQ	Surf Life Saving Queensland
QDMA	Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements	SOC	State Operations Centre
QDMDCI	Queensland Disaster Management Data Coordination Initiative	TAMS	Task and Management System
QDMTF	Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework	TCIM	Tropical Cyclone Impact Model
QERMF	Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework	USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	VfQ	Volunteering for Queensland
QLDSESVA	Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association Inc	VMRAQ	Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland
QPS	Queensland Police Service	WfQ	Working for Queensland
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service	WHS	Work health and safety
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	WHSMS	Work Health and Safety Management System
RAAP	Road Attitudes and Action Planning		

Compliance checklist

	Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Page reference
Letter of compliance	A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s	ARRs – section 7	iii
Accessibility	Table of contents	ARRs – section 9.1	1
	Acronyms		116–117
	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
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Non-financial performance	Government’s objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans and specific initiatives	ARRs – section 11.1	6
	Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs – section 11.2	7–8, 23–26
	Agency service area and service standards	ARRs – section 11.3	23–26
Financial performance	Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	18–22
Governance – management and structure	Organisational structure	ARRs – section 13.1	13–16
	Executive management	ARRs – section 13.2	64–71
	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	72
	Human Rights	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5	114–115
	Queensland public service values	ARRs – section 13.6	8–9

Compliance checklist (cont'd)

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Page reference
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	Audit committee	ARRs – section 14.2	69–71
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Governance – human resources	Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 15.1	78–82
	Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2	78
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	109
	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	110–113

ARRs: Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies

