

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022–23



## **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 and present—for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state. First Nations people have expert knowledge developed over thousands of generations in caring for country.*

*As an emergency services organisation, we look to our First Nations communities for their knowledge and wisdom—developed over tens of thousands of years—in caring for country, and to learn how we can support in healing country, now and into the future.*

This annual report provides information about Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' financial and non-financial performance for 2022–23. 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 (2022–2023 reporting period)*.

The annual report includes significant highlights against the objectives and strategies, and service area detailed in the *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2022–26* and the 2022–23 Service Delivery Statement.

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### Feedback

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# Letter of compliance



Queensland  
Government

Office of the  
**Commissioner**

**Queensland Fire and  
Emergency Services**

22 September 2023

The Honourable Mark Ryan MP  
Minister for Police and Corrective Services  
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 2022–23 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*
- detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Leach'.

Greg Leach AFSM  
**Commissioner**

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# Commissioner's message

This year has been a sombre one for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES). When one of our own is lost, the hurt is felt deeply and the tragedy that unfolded at Slacks Creek in May 2023 has had a profound impact on many people. The passing of Firefighter First Class Izabella (Izzy) Nash, and the serious injuries suffered by her crewmate Senior Firefighter Lia Drew, bring to the forefront the dangers frontline firefighters face every time they start a shift. QFES members have drawn strength from the firefighter and broader emergency services communities in Queensland, across Australia and internationally. Thank you to all who have and continue to offer comfort and support in the face of this loss. It is through the strength and tenacity of our people that we continue to work with communities and partners, building resilience for our shared future.

The past 12 months have seen the first reform process changes progressed as we work towards creating the new Queensland Fire Department.

The successful transition of the Marine Rescue Implementation Program to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) on 1 May 2023 has provided a blueprint for the State Emergency Service (SES) and disaster management functions move to QPS by 30 June 2024. In preparation, the SES Uplift program invested \$10 million during 2022–23 to boost capital projects and initiatives, provide extra staff, assist volunteers to undertake formal training and increase the SES Support Grant Program. The hard work put in during the past year sets us up for a smooth SES transition. Extensive preparatory work and close collaboration will also ensure seamless service delivery across the disaster management season.

Operationally it has been a busy 12 months. Operation Ochre ran from July 2022 through to April 2023, extended from the usual end of the bushfire season in December due to an unseasonal fire risk in the Western Downs. While the state experienced a quieter bushfire season as a whole, significant fires took hold in the South Western Region from mid-January. Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) crews were quickly deployed to the region with more than one hundred personnel on the ground and several aircraft on standby as fires multiplied. By the season's end, the

Western Downs had recorded 428 vegetation fire incidents with more than 90,000 hectares burnt and 30 structures destroyed or significantly damaged.

In September 2022 we switched to the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS). Adopted Australia-wide, the system helps communities better prepare for bushfires by improving the science behind the ratings and making them easier to understand. As part of adopting AFDRS, QFES began the installation of 130 new automatic electronic roadside signs to provide timely and accurate information in high-risk bushfire areas.

The severe weather season was an eventful one due to the ongoing La Niña weather system. Throughout Operation Nimbusus, which ran from the start of October 2022 until the end of April 2023, severe thunderstorms and flooding impacted every region. The start of the season saw QFES members from all three services deployed to southern states to assist their colleagues in response and recovery as widespread flooding caused significant disruption and damage. Teams sent to New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia supported swiftwater rescue operations and community recovery, ably supported by the State Operations Centre and State Deployment Centre which coordinated resources and logistics. The floods took a heavy toll on communities, particularly during the festive season, and emergency service agencies worked as one to support the devastated communities.

The first few months of 2023 saw heavy rainfall and flooding impact our Central, Northern and Far Northern Regions. The Whitsundays and Mackay were impacted in January 2023 while extensive flooding during March 2023 in Burketown and Doomadgee saw food supplies being flown into the towns and at-risk residents flown to Mt Isa for safety. Cape communities were also affected with essential food supplies air-dropped into Coen.

I have a close connection to the Coen community as their Government Champion and travel there often to listen to the community and collaborate with them to improve life outcomes. As at June 2023, the finishing touches were being put to a Men's Shed, a project first conceived in 2019. The shed is a culturally safe space to deal with men's business, to bond, and receive short-term support and will lead to good

outcomes for individuals, partners and families. On behalf of QFES, I am proud to have been part of this joint initiative by the Coen Regional Aboriginal Corporation and Queensland Government.

In 2022–23, QFES deployed highly experienced personnel to assist with international disasters and emergencies. In February 2023, Aotearoa New Zealand experienced the deadliest cyclone system in recent history—Severe Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle. Members of the QFES AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) arrived in the Hawke’s Bay area to join the harrowing recovery effort. The specialist firefighters undertook rapid damage assessments on the ground along with Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel and police canine squads. Also in February, two QFES firefighters joined the AUS-2 DART deployment to Türkiye after a series of earthquakes struck the region; while in May and June 2023 approximately 70 personnel over three teams were deployed to Canada to assist during their destructive bushfire season. The affected communities and Canadian firefighters were grateful for our help, and it was an honour to return the favour after Canada lent a hand during our intense 2019–20 bushfire season. To be called on during major international incidents demonstrates our personnel’s high level of skill and expertise.

QFES regularly participates in multi-agency response exercises to practise and refine processes before disasters and emergencies strike and to strengthen our stakeholder network. In August 2022, QFES led Exercise Bombora—a joint desktop exercise with New South Wales and the National Emergency Management Agency simulating a catastrophic east coast tsunami. This collaborative exercise between local, state, interstate and commonwealth government agencies, along with partner organisations, was made possible by National Emergency Management Agency funding. The annual AUS-1 DART exercise was held in July 2022 and included participants from FRS, Queensland Ambulance Service and volunteer engineers, doctors, canine handlers and their canines. It included a 36-hour earthquake exercise where participants lived and operated in realistic field conditions, such as sleeping in tents and dining on ration packs.

While Queensland is no stranger to disasters, the climate crisis is having a significant impact on emergency services due to more frequent and severe weather events. An involved and interested workforce engaged with committees and groups, such as the QFES Climate Change Advisory Group and the QFES Alternative Energy Systems Advisory Group, are key to creating innovative policies and procedures that adapt to climate change. These groups provide strategic advice to generate informed and coordinated

whole-of-QFES decisions on climate change transition and alternative energy systems and operational response to infrastructure and vehicle incidents. QFES continues to work on reducing fleet emissions and research alternative vehicle technologies and reduced carbon fuel options. In May 2023, QFES placed the first Australian order for an electric Volvo FMX prime mover and an order for a Volvo FMX 6x4 prime mover with the latest 13-litre Euro 6 technology enabling us to trial fossil-fuel-free Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil as a drop-in diesel replacement. This is part of our ongoing work to provide effective emergency services with sustainable solutions in a climate challenged world.

QFES prides itself on its values of respect, integrity, courage, loyalty and trust and our department continues to work on ways to embed these values and connect them with everyday situations. In December 2022 we released our QFES Charter, which aligns each value with specific behaviours. The Charter is the result of hundreds of hours of conversations among staff and volunteers at all levels discussing how each value should be demonstrated in the workplace. The Charter encourages and inspires our people to live our shared values through modelling acceptable behaviours, including calling out inappropriate actions, treating each other kindly and embracing diversity.

The mental health and wellbeing of QFES members is a top priority and in 2022 the Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN) celebrated 30 years of providing mental health support. The service began in 1992 as the Occupational Support Service in response to clinical evidence highlighting the mental health risks related to emergency services. Thirty years later it has evolved to deliver a level of support in line with best practice anywhere in the world. FESSN’s multi-layered approach, including counsellors, psychologists and Peer Support Officers, ensures mental health and support stays top of mind for our people.

This year, as always, QFES members have worked through physically and mentally demanding operations, both on the frontline and in support. I thank all QFES members for your ongoing dedication, persistence and camaraderie.



**Greg Leach AFSM**  
*Commissioner*  
*Queensland Fire and Emergency Services*

22 September 2023

# About the department

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is a Queensland Government public sector department under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. QFES was initially established as a department on 1 November 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* and for working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to undertake and manage disaster management activities as legislated by the *Disaster Management Act 2003*.

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 a community-based, volunteer emergency service and the lead service for bushfire in Queensland. The RFS has been an integral part of Queensland's bushfire response for more than 75 years. The RFS operates in rural, semi-rural and some urban fringe areas and provides firefighting; fire prevention and community education services; permits to light fires; road crash rescue; and deployments and assistance during emergencies and disasters.

The RFS was honoured as a 2023 Queensland Great in the Institution category of the Queensland Greats Awards which recognise the efforts and achievements of Queensland organisations for their remarkable contribution to the history and development of Queensland.

The SES is a community-based, volunteer emergency service enabled by state and local governments. The SES has been an integral part of Queensland's emergency response for more than 48 years. 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 capabilities.

The disaster management capability is responsible for ensuring all aspects of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR) arrangements between local, state and the commonwealth are effective and consistent with state policy, guidelines and the *Queensland State 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, 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:

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

## Emergency Services Reform

The Independent Review of QFES was undertaken to examine the department's capability and funding model. The review assessed the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the department, including structure and funding in relation to QFES' core services and associated volunteer entities.

The final report and Queensland Government Response to the Independent Review was released on 26 October 2022. The Government accepted in principle all recommendations of the Independent Review with the exception of one recommendation to implement a SES levy, which was not accepted. The recommendations accepted in principle included the establishment of the Queensland Fire Department which will incorporate the FRS, RFS and operational and corporate support. Additionally, the SES, marine rescue services, service agreements and some disaster management functions, will transition to the QPS and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

To support implementation, the Government committed up to \$578 million over five years, with an uplift of over 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to strengthen Queensland's fire and emergency services.

A Reform Implementation Taskforce (RIT) was established in January 2023 to lead timely implementation of the outcomes arising from the Independent Review. The QFES RIT Support Directorate was also created to work closely with, and assist, the taskforce to deliver on the transition of functions and the significant uplift for fire and emergency services across Queensland.

The first transition piece occurred on 1 May 2023, when the Marine Rescue Implementation Program transitioned to the QPS.

The establishment of the Queensland Fire Department is expected by 1 July 2024.

QFES will continue to work closely with partner agencies and the RIT throughout the reform program.

The *Independent Review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Final Report* (2 November 2021) and Government Response (October 2022) are accessible at:

[www.qfes.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-services/reports-plans-and-reviews](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-services/reports-plans-and-reviews)

## Legislation administered

In accordance with *Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2023*, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services administers the following Acts and subordinate legislation relative to the Fire and Emergency Services portfolio:

- ✦ *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*
  - *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*
  - *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* (responsibility is shared with the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement)
- ✦ *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 the 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.

## **Strategy 2030**

*Strategy 2030* 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* (refer page 7) are embedded across governance, risk, planning and performance mechanisms to further support and ensure alignment and execution.

Since *Strategy 2030* was first published in June 2019, Queensland has experienced a severe bushfire season in late 2019 and major flooding in February 2022 as well as the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19).

As part of a review into *Strategy 2030*, and in partnership with Natural Hazards Research Australia, the impact of four transformative scenarios on *Strategy 2030* in a climate challenged world were considered in 2022–23. This research utilisation project applied a wind tunnelling approach using transformative scenarios developed over the last 18 months through a partnership between Natural Hazards Research Australia, Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and fire and emergency services agencies across Australia and New Zealand.

Workshops were held with the QFES Climate Change Advisory Group and the QFES Board of Management (BoM) to test the validity of the *Strategy 2030* guiding principles against those scenarios. The application of the transformative scenarios provided an engaging method of exploring strategy implications of a climate challenged world and it was assessed that the guiding principles were still relevant and foundational to strategy design for the Queensland Fire Department.

*Strategy 2030* will be reviewed and a new strategic plan developed for the Queensland Fire Department.

*Strategy 2030* can be accessed at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/QFES-Strategy-2030-Full.pdf](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/QFES-Strategy-2030-Full.pdf)

# QFES Strategic Plan 2022–26

## Guiding principles from Strategy 2030



<b>Our vision</b> To create and sustain a safe and resilient Queensland in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters	<b>Our purpose</b> Deliver contemporary and effective fire, emergency and disaster management services that meet Queensland communities' needs
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### Our opportunities

- » Optimise existing and leverage emerging partnerships to improve community connectedness and capability to manage risk and enhance resiliency.
- » Harness research and enable technological and innovative advancements to deliver more sustainable services.
- » Adapt our workforce arrangements to provide greater flexibility and budget sustainability and comply with COVID-19 directives as we transition to a new normal.

### Our challenges

- » Continue to meet community, stakeholder and government expectations.
- » Continue to ensure information technology infrastructure and information management enable us to adapt to new and emergent technology while reducing impacts on future efficiency and effectiveness.
- » Continue to ensure the 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 and is a continuous focus for QFES leadership. Information about how QFES is responding to these challenges can be found in Our performance (refer pages 24– 62).

### 2026 Objectives

A strong, collaborative and sustainable <b>QFES</b> recognised for contemporary and adaptable fire, emergency and disaster management service delivery	<b>Collaboration</b> occurs with communities and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters	<b>Communities</b> are connected and capable in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters
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### 2022–2026 Strategies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Lead and support locally trusted networks to prioritise risk reduction, preparedness and information sharing.</li> <li>❖ Deliver public value and service optimisation through contemporary and sustainable resource management.</li> <li>❖ Lead the development and implementation of future-focused legislation and policy.</li> <li>❖ Connect evidence-based decision-making to operationalise strategy, enhance performance and realise efficiencies.</li> <li>❖ Maintain a commitment to ensure the health and safety of our staff and volunteers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Work collaboratively with communities and our partners to plan and deliver efficient and effective emergency services across the PPRR phases of all types of fires, emergencies and disasters.</li> <li>❖ Harness the knowledge, diversity, ability and experience of all our staff and volunteers to improve the scope and quality of the services we deliver.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Use place-based, decentralised service delivery to inform, empower and support our communities, people and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters.</li> </ul>
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### Measures of Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Percentage increase in the number of clients who identify that they have had a positive interaction with QFES</li> <li>❖ Maintain percentage of total QFES expenditure within QFES' total operating budget tolerances</li> <li>❖ Percentage increase in our Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys of our people, who recognise a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Percentage of service delivery partners who feel that QFES works collaboratively to achieve results</li> <li>❖ Percentage of delivery partners who are satisfied that QFES' service delivery offerings match local risk profiles</li> <li>❖ Percentage increase in the number of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Percentage increase in the number of communities who recognise and understand their local risks</li> <li>❖ Percentage increase in community engagement across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery</li> </ul>
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Refer to Key performance measures on pages 20–23.

## Queensland Government objectives

The *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (section 10) requires that the government prepares and tables in the Legislative Assembly a statement of the government's broad objectives for the community.

The objectives for the community reflect the government's vision for Queensland and outline the plan to build future prosperity and growth across the state.

QFES supports the government's objectives for the community:

- ✦ Good jobs: Good, secure jobs in our traditional and emerging industries.
- ✦ Better services: Deliver even better services right across Queensland.
- ✦ Great lifestyle: Protect and enhance our Queensland lifestyle as we grow.

QFES strongly contributes to these sub-objectives:

- ✦ Backing our frontline services
- ✦ Keeping Queenslanders safe.

Further detail about QFES' role in supporting the government's objectives is detailed throughout this report.

## Our values

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



For further information regarding QFES values refer to page 43.

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. Through active environmental and horizon scanning activities, QFES monitors external trends that have the potential to shape or influence future service delivery needs to ensure the department is well-positioned to continue to meet the challenges shaping the environment.

Some of the strategic environmental factors QFES is working to address include:

- ✦ the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on Queensland's population which will continue to be felt over the medium term. These include reduced international migration which has led to an increased ageing population, and a shift in projected population dispersal, with greater numbers moving to rural and peri-urban locations across 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 for government services including service delivery and engagement
- ✦ changes in the volunteer landscape
- ✦ low unemployment rates that will continue to challenge the ability to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce.

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.

QFES also actively participates in a range of national forums including AFAC, the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee, and the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee and its sub-committees, to inform and influence the development of future focused operational and strategic research and policy.

Further information about how QFES is responding to these environmental factors can be found in Our performance (refer pages 24–62).

## Outlook

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

Key priorities for the department during 2023–24 include:

- ✦ continue to maintain a responsive FRS delivering state-of-the-art response, rescue, scientific and specialist capabilities to Queensland communities
- ✦ continue to focus on reducing bushfire risk through year-round planning and conducting of mitigation activities through Operation Sesbania; improving community safety awareness and knowledge in relation to bushfire safety and prevention; and increasing the skills and experience of RFS volunteers
- ✦ continue to work in collaboration with local governments and partners across Queensland to operate an effective SES and support the establishment and transition of the SES as an entity within the QPS from 1 July 2024
- ✦ continue to promote the home fire safety message highlighting the importance of fire escape plans; the roll out of smoke alarm legislation milestones; the Fire Ed program delivered to year one students to develop an understanding of the dangers of fire and the appropriate response; and the Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) initiative designed to support parents and guardians educate children to remain safe from fire

- ✦ promote Bushfire Safety through an enhanced campaign program to continue to educate Queenslanders on how to prepare their property and family for bushfire
- ✦ continue to educate the community on road safety and promote safe driving practices through the Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program delivered in diverse areas and education settings including Queensland schools (Year 11 and 12 students) and youth detention centres
- ✦ continue to ensure information technology infrastructure enables QFES to adapt to new and emerging technology to support and enhance frontline service and operational capabilities, and minimise risk to information and communication technology (ICT) assets disrupting response to Queensland communities
- ✦ continue to support Queensland's response to key priority actions addressing relevant recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (RCNDA) Report (28 October 2020)
- ✦ continue to support Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) stakeholders to reduce disaster risk to communities
- ✦ transition to the new Queensland Fire Department to ensure there is an ongoing and specific focus on fire service delivery, and support the reforming of fire and emergency services so that they are best positioned to meet challenges that Queensland faces due to climate change, increases in the regularity and intensity of natural disasters, and the changing face of communities and community expectations.

## 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
- ✦ 1,392 volunteer-based rural fire brigades including 525 which have a station or shed
- ✦ 76 SES units consisting of 304 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 (QCESA) 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, State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) and Brisbane Region Fire Communication Centre.

A list of key locations including contact details for QFES is available at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/contact-us](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/contact-us)

## Human resources—Workforce profile—refer page 78

### Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of frontline services contributing to the strength of QFES and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience. QFES is one of the largest volunteer organisations in the state with approximately 32,000 dedicated volunteers in the RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Auxiliary Support Officers and Peer Support Officers (PSOs).

As Queensland is one of the most disaster-prone states in Australia, communities rely on volunteers to deliver frontline operations and support before, during and after an emergency.

### 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, external structural firefighting and road crash rescue for rural and semi-rural communities and some urban fringe areas across 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 2023, there are 1,392 rural fire brigades and 2,287 Fire Warden Districts across the state, supported by approximately 26,500 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 flood boat 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 2023, there are approximately 5,200 SES volunteers including Active, Probationary and Reserve 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 Scientific Officer 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 2022–23, the branch responded to a range of incidents including chemical reactions and spillages; gas and vapor cloud releases; clandestine drug and home-made explosives laboratories (in support of the QPS); incidents involving radioactive substances; and fires involving hazardous materials. These incidents ranged in circumstances from domestic situations and transport settings, through to large scale industrial chemical emergencies. The branch contributes to the safe resolution of approximately 500 incidents per year with up to 10 per cent of these requiring the activation of regional volunteers.

As at 30 June 2023, there are 50 research and scientific volunteers including 44 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, hazardous materials specialists, 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 handlers. These specialists come from private industry, local governments and tertiary institutions across Queensland.

As at 30 June 2023, the AUS-1 DART has 24 volunteers including doctors, engineers and canine teams (including handlers and canines).

## **Auxiliary Support Officers**

Auxiliary Support Officers are volunteers who provide non-operational support and assist with a range of duties depending on their skills, knowledge and abilities. Auxiliary Support Officers may assist with a range of duties including community education and messaging activities, maintenance and repair of station facilities, training activities, and administration and recordkeeping.

As at 30 June 2023, there are 31 Auxiliary Support Officers.

## **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 consists of PSOs from various roles, ranks and positions across the state. PSOs are selected and trained to support colleagues who may be experiencing work or personal difficulties. By virtue of a common working environment and shared experiences, they are equipped to provide early intervention, social support, understanding, practical assistance and links to professional services if necessary. PSOs are involved in supporting members following exposure to critical incidents, as well as informal individual support and delivering education sessions to promote mental health and wellbeing.

As at 30 June 2023, there are 180 active PSOs.

# Structure

As at 30 June 2023, QFES comprises the:

- ❖ Office of the Commissioner
- ❖ Capability and State Services Division
- ❖ Readiness and Response Services Division
- ❖ Fire and Rescue Service 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 **Capability and State Services Division** is responsible for providing overall strategic leadership, direction and support to RFS, SES and other volunteer groups involved in emergency response and leads disaster management capability.

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 26,500 RFS volunteers and approximately 5,200 SES volunteers.

The **RFS Reform Implementation Group** was established in February 2023 within Capability and State Services Division to work with the RIT to deliver 114 new staff positions to directly support frontline volunteers, as well as restructuring RFS so it can fulfill its role as a separate entity within the future Queensland Fire Department. RFS is supporting the implementation of the Independent Review of QFES recommendations through the RFS Reform Implementation Group.

The **Emergency Management and Community Capability (EMCC) Directorate** incorporates the Office of the Assistant Commissioner; Community Capability and Volunteerism; Community Resilience and Risk Mitigation; and State Operational Coordination.

The 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 State Operations Centre. In addition, the EMCC Assistant Commissioner represents QFES' whole-of-government disaster management responsibilities as a member of the State Disaster Coordination Group.

The **Rural Fire Service Directorate** incorporates the Office of the Assistant Commissioner; Rural Regional Coordination; Office of Bushfire Mitigation; Volunteer and Frontline Support Services Branch; and the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) Implementation Team.

The Office of the Assistant Commissioner sets the strategy and policy position for the RFS at state level in support of regional operations. Rural Regional Coordination 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, 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 AFDRS Implementation Team was established in February 2022 to effectively deliver the Queensland Government's response to the RCNDA Report recommendations relating to the AFDRS.

The **State Emergency Service Directorate** incorporates the SES State Coordination Branch.

The 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 coordinating the regional services and interoperability of QFES capabilities including ensuring the response readiness and 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 strategic leadership, coordination and direction through its contribution to disaster management and fire and emergency service activities across Queensland.

The **seven regions** statewide comprise over 4,300 permanent and auxiliary firefighters, approximately 26,500 RFS volunteers and approximately 5,200 SES volunteers and are supported by fire communications officers, emergency management coordinators, community engagement officers and corporate staff.

Each region is led by a regional Assistant Commissioner who focuses 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.

Each region has an established Regional Leadership Team consisting of the regional Assistant Commissioner and individual service leaders to effectively coordinate QFES capabilities across regions. The Regional Leadership Teams use an all hazard and all services approach as the foundation for planning, managing emerging issues and working collaboratively to improve service delivery to Queensland communities.

The regions work in partnership with other state government departments, local governments and communities to improve resilience and enhance operational capacity during times of emergency.

The **Fire and Rescue Service Division** is responsible for providing services and capabilities including standards and policies, operational response and technical support, and coordination of training and support to all regions to deliver 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 **Fire and Rescue Service Directorate** includes the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, the FRS Branch and the specialist services of Community Infrastructure; Research and Scientific; and Specialist and Technical Response.

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

The **QFES RIT Support Directorate** supports the RIT as it leads the Emergency Services Reform agenda arising from the Independent Review of QFES. Comprised of staff with skills in program management; communications; organisational design; and change management processes, the directorate provides a central mechanism for information sharing and program support to enable effective reform.

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 Finance, Procurement and Levy; Strategy; Assurance; Asset Services; Information and Technology; and QFES People Directorates, and Internal Audit.

The **Finance, Procurement and Levy** Directorate includes Finance Services, and Levy and Procurement Services.

The directorate provides a range of financial services including budget preparation, financial reporting, financial systems administration and training, and financial risk management and compliance. The directorate also monitors local government administration of the Emergency Management Levy to ensure compliance with the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* and *Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011*. The directorate also leads the department's procurement and travel functions and is responsible for procurement governance, strategic sourcing and contract administration and support.

The **Strategy** Directorate includes Organisational Capability Doctrine and Lessons; Strategic Policy; Legislation; Strategic Intelligence and Planning; and Ministerial and Cabinet Legislation and Liaison Services.

The 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, planning and compliance functions, and capability development and review.

The **Assurance** Directorate includes Media, Communication and Online; Strategic Content Services; Legal Services; Governance and Reporting; and Priority Project Support.

The directorate is responsible for ensuring QFES has a contemporary governance framework and also delivers vital operational support capabilities to enhance the department's operational and corporate reputation. The directorate also ensures QFES' obligations are met in terms of whole-of-government and legislated reporting requirements.

The **Asset Services** Directorate comprises the Building and Property Management Branch and the Fleet and Logistics Branch.

The directorate is responsible for managing the delivery of the department's Capital Investment Programs for Built Infrastructure and Fleet. The Building and Property Management Branch is responsible for managing all QFES property interests

including land and built assets. The Fleet Unit provides oversight of the department's fleet related matters notably the fleet delivery, fleet leasing and fleet maintenance programs. The Uniform and Logistics Unit is responsible for the provision of uniforms, personal protective equipment and equipment to the QFES workforce.

The **Information and Technology** Directorate includes ICT Portfolio Management and Information Technology Applications and Information Management.

The directorate supports operations and organisational capability through the facilitation, development and management of technological solutions and initiatives that help solve ICT business problems. This includes the provision of advice, analysis and governance for ICT projects, programs and portfolio management frameworks, and oversight of the ICT functions delivered by the Frontline and Digital Division of QPS. For further information refer pages 33–34.

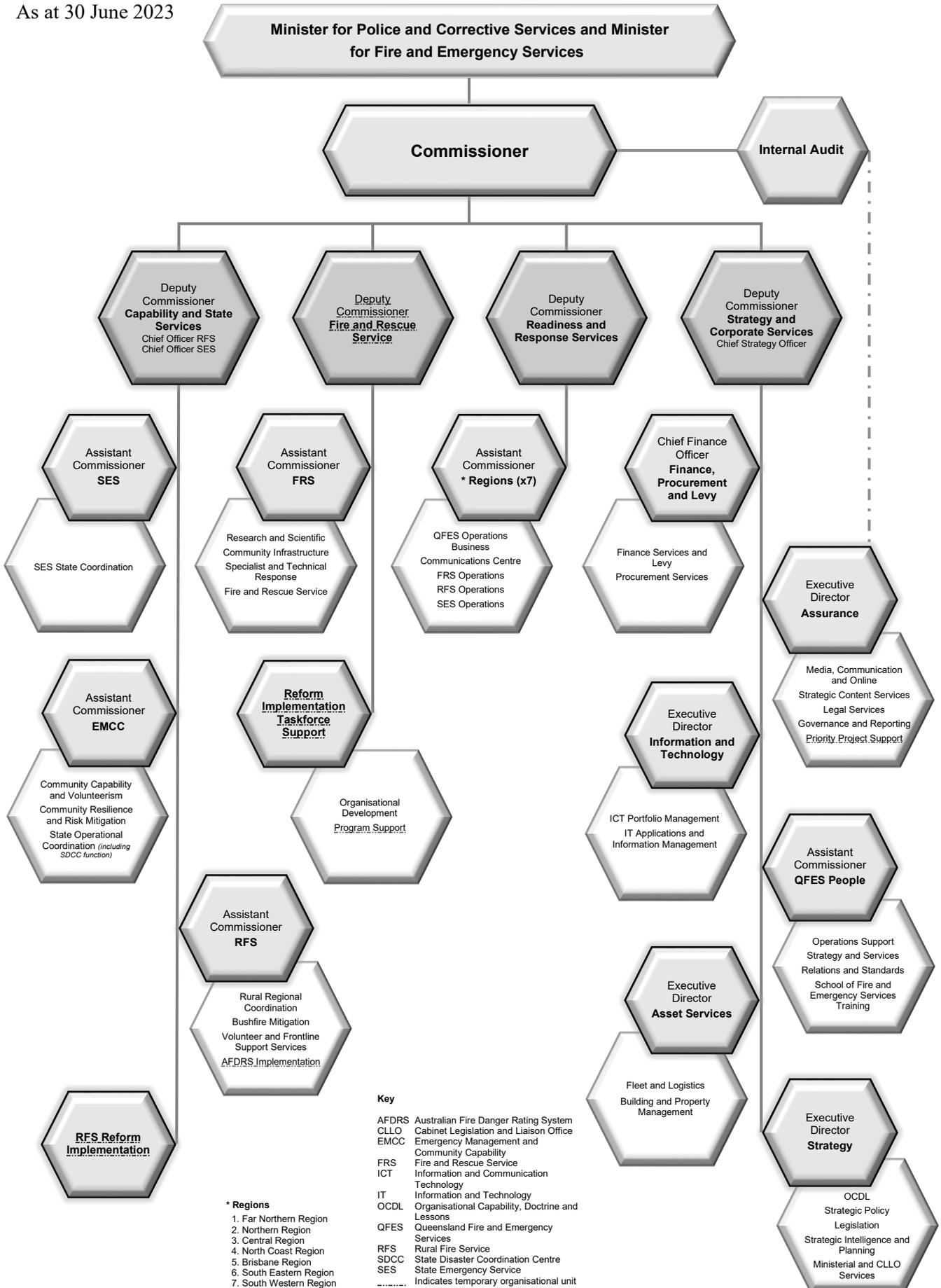
The **QFES People** Directorate includes Operations Support; Strategy and Services; Relations and Standards; and the SFEST.

The directorate supports and improves the end-to-end workforce experience by providing strategic and value-added people-focused programs and services. The directorate spans the entire workforce lifecycle including attraction, recruitment, training and support with specific focus on workforce safety and wellbeing, conduct, culture and development.

**Internal Audit** is a key component of the department's corporate governance. It provides independent assurance that the department's policies, operations, systems and procedures meet appropriate standards of effectiveness, efficiency, propriety, regulatory requirements and good business practice, while adequately recognising and managing risk and complying with internal policies. The Head of Internal Audit is directly accountable to the Commissioner for the efficient and effective operation of the Internal Audit function. The Head of Internal Audit also reports regularly to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC) based on Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines Improving Accountability and Performance* (July 2020).

# Organisational structure

As at 30 June 2023



# Regions

As at 30 June 2023



	State Total	Far Northern	Northern	Central	North Coast	Brisbane	South Eastern	South Western
Fire and rescue stations	244	25	20	38	46	38	38	39
SES units	76	20	16	14	7	3	5	11
SES groups	304	54	41	69	48	22	27	43
Rural fire brigades	1,392	177	177	392	201	29	79	337
Regional offices	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Communication centres	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Queensland population \* 5,378,277

\* Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue no. 3101.0 National, state and territory population (December 2022)

# Financial summary

## Summary of financial performance

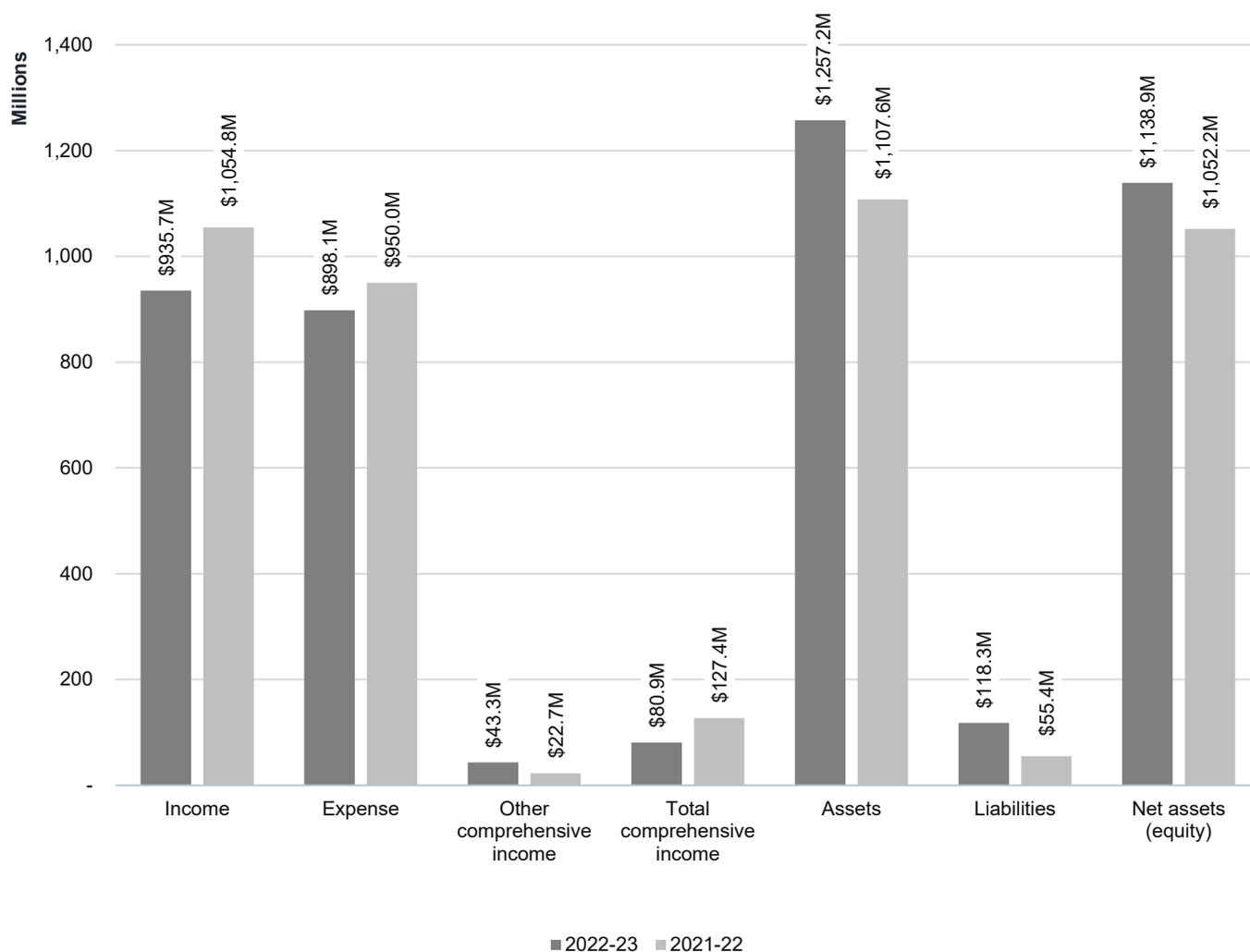
The following table summarises the operating result and financial position for QFES 2022–23 and 2021–22.

<b>Statement of comprehensive income</b>	<b>2022–23 \$'000</b>	<b>2021–22 \$'000</b>
Total income from continuing operations <sup>1</sup>	935,673	1,054,797
Total expenses from continuing operations <sup>2</sup>	898,072	950,049
Other comprehensive income	43,311	22,684
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>80,912</b>	<b>127,432</b>
<b>Statement of financial position</b>	<b>2022–23 \$'000</b>	<b>2021–22 \$'000</b>
Total assets	1,257,185	1,107,622
Total liabilities	118,304	55,429
<b>Net assets (equity)</b>	<b>1,138,881</b>	<b>1,052,193</b>

Notes:

- 1 2021–22 total income includes \$193.9 million for recovery of COVID-19 quarantine accommodation, quarantine logistics support and border control costs incurred.
- 2 2021–22 total expenses includes \$179.2 million for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation related expenses.

## The operating result and financial position are represented below:



### Notes:

- 2021–22 total income includes \$193.9 million for recovery of COVID-19 quarantine accommodation, quarantine logistics support and border control costs incurred.
- 2021–22 total expenses includes \$179.2 million for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation related expenses.

## Income and expenses from continuing operations

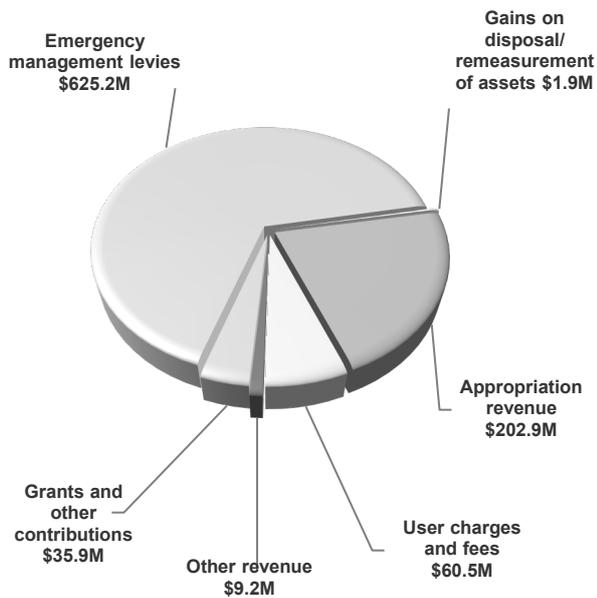
QFES is funded to deliver a wide range of fire and emergency management and recovery services through the Emergency Management Levy paid by prescribed property owners across the state.

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

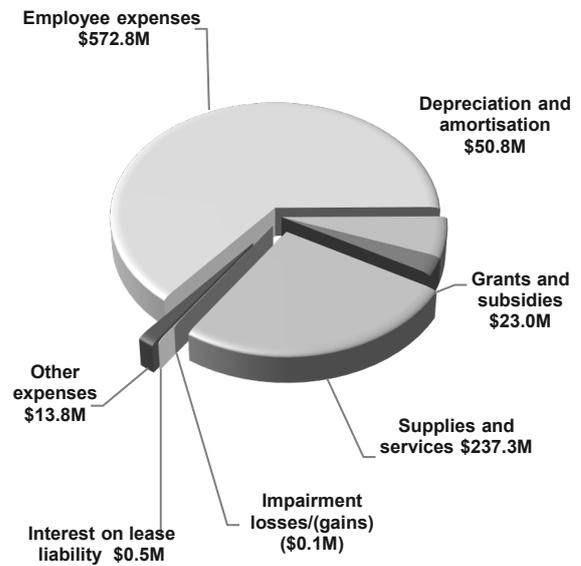
QFES aims to protect persons, property and the environment through the delivery of emergency services, awareness programs, response capability and capacity and incident response and recovery for a safer Queensland. The expenses incurred in the delivery of these services are summarised further on page 19.

For 2022–23, QFES received income from continuing operations totalling \$935.7 million and incurred total expenditure from continuing operations of \$898.1 million. This comprises:

### Income



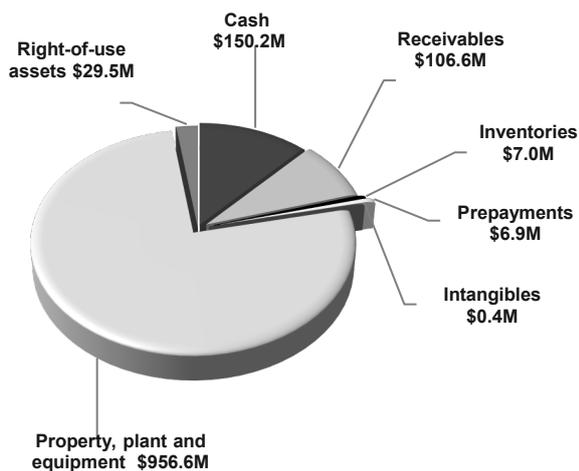
### Expenses



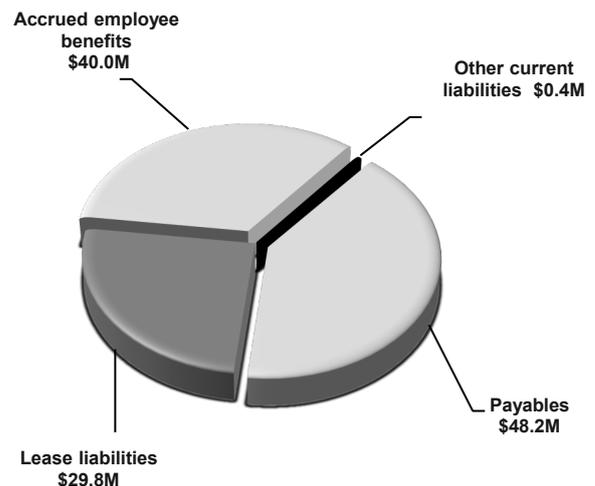
## Summary of financial position

QFES was in a positive financial position at the end of the financial year. The total equity (assets less liabilities) of QFES at the end of 2022–23 was \$1,138.9 million. The financial position predominately comprises:

### Assets



### Liabilities



# Performance

## Key performance measures

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 service area aligns with the department's 2026 objectives outlined in the strategic plan and supports the Queensland Government's objectives for the community (refer page 8).

The table below provides an overview of the key performance measures for QFES for 2022–23.

Service area: Fire and Emergency Services							
Performance measures	Notes	2022–23 SDS	Strategic plan	RoGS	2021–22 Actual	2022–23 Target/ Estimate	2022–23 Actual
Rate of accidental residential structure fires reported (per 100,000 households)	1, 2, 3	✓		✓	51.1	<60	48.0
Response times to structure fires including call taking time:	3, 4, 5	✓		✓			
• 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	6				8.3 minutes	<7.8 minutes	8.2 minutes
• 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	7				12.9 minutes	<14 minutes	12.5 minutes
Percentage of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin	3, 4, 8	✓		✓	81.6%	≥80%	80.6%
Estimated percentage of households with smoke alarm/detector installed	9	✓			97.9%	95%	98.5%
Percentage of building premises inspected and deemed compliant at first inspection	10	✓			57.5%	50%	52.9%
Rate of Unwanted Alarm Activations per Alarm Signalling Equipment	11	✓			2.5	<4	2.3
Engagement levels for volunteers from the Rural Fire Service	12				78%	-	82%
Engagement levels for volunteers from the State Emergency Service	12				80%	-	84%
Percentage of state-wide State Emergency Service volunteers that meet minimal operational training requirements	13	✓			69%	65%	74%
Percentage of disaster management training participants with enhanced capability	14	✓			91%	80%	92%
Fire and Emergency Services expenditure per person	15	✓			\$156	\$166	\$177
Percentage increase in the number of clients who identify that they have had a positive interaction with QFES	16		✓		+ 2 percentage points	+ 2 percentage points	Nil – no change

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

Performance measures	Notes	2022-23 SDS	Strategic plan	RoGS	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Target/ Estimate	2022-23 Actual
Maintain percentage of total QFES expenditure within QFES' total operating budget tolerances	17		✓		96%	100%	108%
Percentage increase in our Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland surveys of our people, who recognise a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery	18		✓		-	-	-
Percentage increase in engagement levels for volunteers from the Rural Fire Service	19				Nil – no change	-	+ 4 percentage points
Percentage increase in engagement levels for volunteers from the State Emergency Service	19				- 2 percentage points	-	+ 4 percentage points
Percentage of service delivery partners who feel that QFES works collaboratively to achieve results	20		✓		91%	90%	92%
Percentage of delivery partners who are satisfied that QFES' service delivery offerings match local risk profiles	21		✓		-	80%	87%
Percentage increase in the number of exercises that involve partner organisations and the community	22		✓		+ 1 percentage point	+ 1 percentage point	- 9 percentage points
Percentage increase in the number of communities who recognise and understand their local risks	23		✓		+ 3 percentage points	+ 5 percentage points	- 3 percentage points
Number of mitigation activities completed within Operation Sesbania	24				-	-	1,042
Percentage increase in community engagement across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	25		✓		6%	5%	5%

### Key

- Not available/not applicable

RoGS: Report on Government Services

SDS: Service Delivery Statement

Strategic plan: *Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Plan 2022-26*

## 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, released 14 March 2019.
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 population growth, road congestion, driver behaviour (distraction and inattention to emergency responder), high density urban residential designs, competing demand and weather.
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.
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. These measures replace 'Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the Rural Fire Service' and 'Percentage of volunteers satisfied with the experience of volunteering for the State Emergency Service' which are discontinued in the 2023–24 SDS. The annual QFES Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) survey, based on the Queensland Government Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey, was amended in 2022 and the questions relating to the general satisfaction measures were removed. Data for the replacement measures are sourced from the VfQ survey. The measure is calculated from the results for three questions: 'I am proud to tell others I volunteer for my organisation', 'I would recommend my service as a great place to volunteer' and 'I feel strong personal attachment to my organisation'. For each question, a result is calculated from the number of respondents selecting 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' divided by the number of respondents to the question. The overall engagement measure is the average of the results for the three questions.
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 2022–23 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. The 2022–23 and 2021–22 Actuals were above the Target/Estimate of 80 per cent. These higher than anticipated results 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 based on the Queensland Treasury population estimates. This measure is a proxy measure for efficiency, reported in line with the RoGS methodology. Expenditure includes QFES operating expenditure plus a calculated user cost of capital for property, plant and equipment assets excluding land assets. The 2022–23 Actual is above the 2022–23 Target/Estimate mainly due to onboarding of additional firefighting staff, and additional funding for the RFS, SES and enterprise bargaining outcomes. The 2021–22 Actual was below the 2021–22 Target/Estimate of \$162 as QFES was significantly impacted by global supply chain challenges, workforce impacts associated with COVID-19 and vendors not being able to supply services.
16. Data is sourced from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey. Values calculated for 2022–23 and 2021–22 were 83 per cent.
17. This measure reports QFES actual operating expenditure as a percentage of the operating budget. The 2022–23 Actual was above the Target/Estimate of 100 per cent with additional expenditure wholly funded by additional income received during the financial year, which mainly related to additional funding for the RFS, SES, and marine rescue, and enterprise bargaining outcomes. In 2021–22, QFES expenditure was within the total operating budget as QFES did not fully expend the planned budget due to being significantly impacted by the ongoing global supply chain challenges, workforce impacts associated with COVID-19, and vendors not being able to supply services.
18. The WfQ and VfQ surveys were amended in 2022 with 'safety' assessed under a new sub scale, subsequently changing the methodology for this measure. The percentage of respondents who recognised a collaborative and safe approach to service delivery in 2022–23, based on the revised methodology was 74 per cent which sets the new benchmark for the calculation of this measure into the future.
19. These measures replace the strategic plan measure 'Percentage increase in volunteers who are satisfied with the experience of volunteering for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services'. The annual QFES VfQ survey, based on the Queensland Government WfQ survey, was amended in 2022 and the questions relating to the general satisfaction measures were removed. Data for the replacement measures are sourced from the VfQ survey and show the change in results for the questions detailed in note 12.
20. Data is sourced from the annual QDMTF Satisfaction and Capability Enhancement Survey.
21. Annual surveys are conducted with QFES partners pertinent to QDMA. No survey was undertaken in 2022–23 for the Queensland Disaster Management Guideline and the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan*. The source for the 2022–23 result is via the QDMTF annual survey only and as such is not comparable to previous years. This survey measures the percentage of respondents who indicated they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' across a number of items.
22. The 2022–23 and 2021–22 Actuals are determined from the percentage of exercises that QFES participated in that involved QFES partner organisations and the community (a multi-agency exercise)—the 2022–23 result was 83 per cent, in 2021–22 it was 92 per cent and 2020–21 it was 91 per cent. The decrease from 2021–22 (92 per cent) to 2022–23 (83 per cent) can be attributed to a number of targeted internal exercises run across QFES service streams which subsequently did not require the involvement of partner organisations and the community. The number of exercises (multi-agency and internal) conducted in 2022–23 is 30, an increase from 25 conducted in 2021–22.
23. Results are derived from the annual QFES Community Insights Survey. The 2022–23 and 2021–22 Actuals are determined from the percentage of communities who recognise and understand their local risks. The percentage of communities who recognise and understand their local risks in 2022–23 is 47 per cent, in 2021–22 was 50 per cent and 2020–21 was 47 per cent.
24. This measure replaces the strategic plan measure 'Percentage of high-risk bushfire communities where mitigation strategies have been undertaken by QFES'. Operation Sesbania is a three-year rolling program which enables bushfire mitigation activities to be conducted year-round across Queensland, safely and in line with fuel and weather conditions. On 2 May 2022, the Operation Sesbania Dashboard went live and 2022–23 is the first full year of its operation. Refer page 59 for further information regarding Operation Sesbania.
25. This measure is calculated based on core community engagement activities delivered in 2022–23, 2021–22 and 2020–21 through the programs of FFF, RAAP and Safehome. For each discrete program, the percent change was calculated and the three change values were averaged to yield an overall change value.

# Our performance

This section reports on the objectives and strategies of the QFES Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and is a sample of the department’s performance highlights from 2022–23. It is not representative of all work undertaken during this period.

## 2026 Objective

1. A strong, collaborative and sustainable **QFES** recognised for contemporary and adaptable fire, emergency and disaster management service delivery.

## 2022–2026 Strategies

- ❖ Lead and support locally trusted networks to prioritise risk reduction, preparedness and information sharing.
- ❖ Deliver public value and service optimisation through contemporary and sustainable resource management.
- ❖ Lead the development and implementation of future-focused legislation and policy.
- ❖ Connect evidence-based decision-making to operationalise strategy, enhance performance and realise efficiencies.
- ❖ Maintain a commitment to ensure the health and safety of our staff and volunteers.

## 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 32,000 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 and PSOs.

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, established in 2019 and reviewed in 2021, concluded at the end of December 2022. The implementation program contained nine key themes with 27 initiatives aligned with the strategy’s strategic priorities and guiding principles. The key themes were:

- ❖ Recruitment and Onboarding
- ❖ Leadership Development
- ❖ Honours and Awards
- ❖ Training
- ❖ Engagement
- ❖ Sustainability
- ❖ Identity and Communication
- ❖ Wellbeing
- ❖ Consultation.

The implementation program was developed to realise the intention of the Volunteerism Strategy through tangible projects that would strategically and sequentially facilitate improvements identified as priorities for volunteers and volunteering within the department and the Queensland community.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy will be reviewed in light of the Emergency Services Reform.

During the reporting period, the department:

- ❖ developed a digital solution known as the Volunteer Onboarding Improvement Project as part of the Volunteer Onboarding Project. The Volunteer Onboarding Project aims to achieve shorter timeframes for onboarding completion for volunteers in each of the services (FRS, RFS and SES) and increase consistency and reliability in onboarding systems and processes

- ✦ continued to provide Mindarma (refer page 50) an online evidence-based learning program that supports the psychological wellbeing of QFES' volunteers and is proven to enhance psychological resilience. The program is customised for volunteers from FRS, RFS and SES, ensuring the message resonates with each participant and identifies service specific scenarios
- ✦ continued to support delivery of the Emergency Service Volunteer Pin launched in 2019
- ✦ reviewed the Honours, Awards and Recognition Handbook and developed a quick guide for volunteers.

The QFES Volunteerism Strategy is available at: [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/Volunteerism-Strategy.pdf](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/Volunteerism-Strategy.pdf)

## Aerial firefighting capability

The QFES State Air Operations Unit provides support to ground crews during bushfire and other emergency events through the provision of safe aircraft, trained personnel and relevant aviation resources.

Queensland has access to over 150 call-when-needed aircraft and National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) contracted aircraft capable of performing water-bombing, airborne coordination, line scanning or intelligence gathering functions in support of ground crews during bushfires and other emergency events.

QFES will also use aircraft through these commercial providers during severe weather events to assist with transport of rescue crews and cargo, and resupply within affected communities.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) (drones) are also extensively used during these types of events as well as more broadly in search incidents and in support of investigations. The RPAS have demonstrated a solid intelligence gathering capability that is increasingly being applied by QFES.

Commencing 2023–24, additional funding is being provided to enhance Queensland's aerial firefighting capability. This investment will provide enhancements to the response capability for the 2023–24 bushfire season by increasing the number of NAFC contracted aircraft.

During Queensland's bushfire season, a Large Air Tanker (LAT) and lead plane is based at Bundaberg due to the coverage area for an hour's flying time of a typical LAT. Coverage includes from the New South Wales (NSW) border to Proserpine, and West to Tambo, allowing for support to the majority of Queensland communities.

The Queensland contracted LAT service is for 84 days starting September each year, with the possibility of extension dependant on seasonal conditions and fire activity at the time. On completion of the service delivery contract, the LAT is transferred to Victoria during its bushfire season and remains in Victoria between seasons, as part of a co-sharing arrangement.

The LAT is a strategic asset equipped to deliver 10,000 litres of fire retardant or firefighting gel to reinforce fire break activities and protect structural or economic assets during bushfire seasons.

The 2022–23 bushfire season saw very limited aircraft activity from August to mid-December 2022, the main timeframe of the NAFC contracted fleet. The bulk of the 2,013 hours flown by aircraft during bushfire operations was with call-when-needed assets from January to March 2023 and predominantly in South Western Region. The LAT did not conduct any operational responses during the 2022 contracted period.

## QFES' Climate Action Plan

In anticipation of a climate-challenged future and following the release of the *Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030* (QCAP), QFES has worked to align its services with future needs and reduce its carbon footprint. The department's aim is to build resilience, manage risk, reduce emissions, and lead the emergency management sector's adaptation efforts in response to the challenges posed by a changing climate.

The *QFES Climate Action Plan 2022–26* was released in April 2022. The plan articulates the department's approach to aligning its climate change transition and adaptation actions with the QCAP and contains 13 actions. The department's action plan is available at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-05/QFES-Climate-Action-Plan-2022-26.pdf](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-05/QFES-Climate-Action-Plan-2022-26.pdf)

The Queensland State Disaster Risk Report highlights the changing climate's impact on disaster risk in Queensland. It emphasises the need to manage long-term climate-induced changes in hazard events. The Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for South-East Queensland recognises and describes heightened risks across the state, including the population centres in the South-East Queensland region. For further information refer page 49.

In 2022–23, QFES developed its inaugural Infrastructure Resilience Plan. QFES assists communities in understanding their local hazards and ensuring they have the right knowledge, information, and resources to strengthen capability and resilience. These same principles extend to the assets owned or operated by QFES. The QFES Infrastructure Resilience Plan enhances the maturing approach for infrastructure investment for the department as it transitions to the Queensland Fire Department. The department will incorporate key information and guidance from the plan into the capital program to ensure future investment decisions help mitigate future risk factors and are sustainable.

QFES is also exploring emissions reduction with electric vehicles and alternative fuels (refer page 27) while addressing fire safety concerns related to lithium-ion batteries and distributed energy resources.

Pioneering a set of transformative scenarios co-designed by emergency service agencies across Australia and New Zealand, QFES applied socio-geo-political and climate scenarios to assess the adaptability of *Strategy 2030* in a climate-challenged world, facilitating preparedness for future disruptions and confirming alignment of high-level strategy with disaster resilience goals (refer page 6).

QFES had previously established Climate Change as a discrete enterprise risk; growing maturity appreciating climate risk and a review of enterprise risks has seen climate change incorporated as a specific cause into a number of enterprise risks rather than as a stand-alone enterprise risk (refer page 75 for more information regarding enterprise risks).

## Capital program

Significant capital works initiatives were delivered or progressed during 2022–23 including:

- ◇ **completion** of the:
  - replacement Maryborough permanent and auxiliary fire and rescue station and regional QFES headquarters
  - replacement permanent Loganlea Fire and Rescue Station
- ◇ **commencing (includes planning) or continuing** the:
  - new permanent fire and rescue stations at:
    - Caloundra South
    - Greater Springfield
    - Moreton Bay Central
    - Mount Cotton Road
  - replacement permanent fire and rescue station at Gympie South

- replacement permanent and auxiliary fire and rescue stations at:
  - Airlie Beach
  - Drayton
- QFES Northern Region Emergency Services Complex
- Maryborough Area rural fire brigade headquarters.

In addition, the *Strategic Asset Management Plan 2022–26* (SAMP) was developed and approved by BoM on 30 September 2022. The SAMP provides a high-level overview of the department's:

- ◇ strategic asset management direction and ensures alignment with QFES' strategic business direction
- ◇ asset lifecycle management approach including a summary of the asset portfolio the department controls and uses to support operational and operational support capability
- ◇ asset investment over the next 10 years providing strategic oversight of the department's capital requirements to support future operational capability.

The SAMP will be reviewed and updated annually as part of the department's strategic business and asset planning processes and the capital investment planning process.

To enable the economic delivery of standardised operational facilities statewide, QFES developed a suite of standard fire and rescue station designs which will provide standardised blueprints of facilities for construction purposes, supporting the contemporary delivery of emergency services now and into the future.

QFES has three FRS Indigenous Projects underway that support the *Queensland Government Building and Construction Training Policy*—Caloundra South, Moreton Bay Central and Mount Cotton Road Fire and Rescue Stations. The policy forms part of the State Government's commitment to Closing the Gap and providing equal opportunities to First Nations people through skill development and employment opportunities in the construction sector. Working on the projects, contractors engage First Nations workers as apprentices, trainees or through other workforce training.

The department also continued the practice of recognising Traditional Owners on QFES naming plaques of QFES newly constructed facilities to recognise and increase knowledge and understanding of First Nations cultures, such as the replacement Maryborough permanent and auxiliary fire and rescue station and regional QFES headquarters recognising the Butchulla People.

## Fleet management

During 2021–22, the department implemented a multi-year approach to fleet procurement enabling QFES to plan for, and the market to respond to, global and local supply and resource challenges.

The multi-year build program provided for the delivery of 147 RFS appliances (over two years commencing 2022–23) and 118 FRS appliances (over three years commencing 2022–23) bringing the total program to 265 appliances.

Although QFES awarded contracts for the majority of the program prior to the commencement of 2022–23, suppliers experienced ongoing global and local supply and resource challenges limiting the planned deliveries during 2022–23 with 26 fit-for-purpose appliances delivered—20 RFS appliances and six FRS appliances.

Of the remaining 239 appliances on the multi-year build program (127 RFS and 112 FRS appliances), 130 are scheduled for delivery in 2023–24 (72 RFS and 58 FRS appliances), with 109 rolling over into 2024–25 (55 RFS and 54 FRS appliances).

QFES continues to work proactively with suppliers and body build vendors to streamline program delivery and mitigate risks within their capacity to deliver the appliances.

In addition, QFES is also funding and supporting the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc. to build an additional appliance to enable RFS staff and volunteers the opportunity to evaluate alternative fleet options as part of QFES' approach to long-term fleet planning and innovation.

QFES continues to undertake research into fleet emissions reduction and decarbonisation strategies including alternative vehicle technologies and reduced carbon fuel options. This aligns with the QCAP and will inform the identification of opportunities to consider lower carbon emission vehicle and fuel options where appropriate across the entire QFES fleet (pool cars, Emergency Response Vehicles and light, medium and heavy appliances for FRS and RFS).

QFES continued to introduce lower carbon emission vehicles into the department's leased fleet, including a combination of hybrid and electric vehicles and continues to assess replacement options on a case-by-case basis.

In May 2023, QFES placed the first Australian order for an electric Volvo FMX prime mover and an order for a Volvo FMX 6x4 prime mover with the latest 13-litre Euro 6 technology which will be trialling fossil-fuel-free Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a drop-in diesel replacement.

The trial of these two prime movers is being conducted in the Logistics Fleet segment which is a non-critical tier for response and operations and will allow QFES to measure the benefits of both fully electric heavy vehicles and the application of alternative fuels such as HVO, with a view to further adoption across the wider QFES fleet.

## Working for Queensland and Volunteering for Queensland Surveys

QFES is committed to positive workforce experiences and conducts annual workforce experience surveys, such as the Queensland Government Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey and the Volunteering for Queensland (VfQ) survey to measure and monitor staff and volunteer experiences.

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

QFES considers the surveys an opportunity to hear the views of the workforce and understand their lived experiences. The results 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, strategically and tactically designed to focus on positive work environments and experiences that are centred around shared values.

The results from the 2022 workforce experience surveys demonstrate positive results with some areas for improvement.

More than 3,500 QFES members shared their thoughts in the WfQ and VfQ surveys in September 2022. The survey included new questions about health and wellbeing, fairness, equality and diverse experiences. Some of the most positive results related to social support within work groups and teams, particularly in terms of respect and psychological safety.

Survey results show that over 90 per cent of staff and volunteers understand the importance of aligning behaviour to the QFES values. In addition, more than 90 per cent of staff and volunteers felt QFES has a positive impact on Queenslanders' lives, and more than 80 per cent of staff and volunteers reported contributing to positive workplace experiences over the past 12 months.

The surveys also highlighted some areas where QFES needs to develop including leadership, change management, workload and demands, health and wellbeing, performance management and professional development.



- ◇ continued development of the RPAS (drone) capability across the department. At 30 June 2023, there are 125 drones in service, with 138 trained pilots and nine authorised Senior Remote Pilots. The RPAS capability was used in departmental operations during the reporting period including bushfires, land search, mountain rescue searches, flood events, compliance and prosecution, fire investigation and damage assessments
- ◇ continued development of the Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft (MSRC) capability with the purchase of an additional four MSRC units. This takes the total QFES capability to 35 MSRC units across all regions, with a deployment and training cache at the State Deployment Centre in Brisbane for surge capacity. At 30 June 2023, there are 412 trained swiftwater rescue technicians across Queensland that provide emergency response to affected communities in flood and swiftwater rescue incidents. All regions have the swiftwater rescue capability that is delivered from strategically located stations to provide regional and state level response. Of the 412 trained swiftwater rescue technicians, 126 are also trained in MSRC operations, providing an increased level of response capability to support community need. Queensland is the only state that provides this level of MSRC response to flood and swiftwater rescue incidents
- ◇ continued to develop a place-based capability in Mountain Rescue to address the increasing incidence of rescues from the Glasshouse Mountains area, as a result of the surge in popularity of recreational climbing and hiking. North Coast Region has 19 trained FRS Mountain Rescue operators and one trained SES Mountain Rescue operator. This group is supported by an additional nine trained Mountain Rescue Operators from Brisbane Region
- ◇ continued participation in fire safety research activities with various external stakeholders aimed at increasing the department's knowledge and understanding of innovative and emerging building products, technologies, and methods of construction. This included collaboration, research, and policy development relating to electric vehicles and battery energy storage systems, and fire safety principles
- ◇ continued membership of the Safer Buildings Inter-Departmental Committee and Safer Buildings Taskforce. The inter-departmental committee provides oversight of, and direction to the taskforce. The taskforce builds on the work of the previous Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce.
- ◇ formed the Alternative Energy Systems Advisory Group within QFES to generate an informed and co-ordinated whole-of-department position on matters relating to alternative energy systems and operational response to infrastructure and vehicle incidents
- ◇ maintained a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Papua New Guinea Fire Service (PNGFS) (commenced in 1992) to assist with development and capacity building in PNGFS. The 2017 MoU expired in September 2022 and has been reviewed and is expected to be finalised by 31 August 2023. The renewal of the MoU will assist further development of capacity building initiatives in PNGFS to build on the success of previous donation activities such as the donation of five ex-service QFES fire appliances in 2020–21
- ◇ continued to support Fire and Emergency New Zealand with the provision of expert advice for the safe management of hazardous materials
- ◇ provided expertise nationally and internationally to improve the preparation and response to hazardous materials and chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incidents. This included engagement with the CBRN Environments STaR Shot Community Advisory Group and multi-national research projects addressing detection, destruction and decontamination of identified threat agents such as the decontamination and laundry effectiveness of personal protective equipment project led by QFES. These engagements improve QFES' capability more broadly and globally across fire response agencies
- ◇ provided a range of invited presentations to state and international audiences addressing emergency planning and responses to incidents, including the Safe Australasia and Hazardous Material Instructors Conference in the United States. Presentations included responses to ammonium nitrate incidents, preventing and planning for fires at hazardous waste management sites, and emergency planning for incidents involving electric buses and other vehicles
- ◇ continued to maintain the currency of fire investigation training with a cohort of nine candidates from around the state commencing the nationally recognised qualification of Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Fire Investigation) in July 2022.
- ◇ reduced the risk to firefighters from harmful chemicals and contaminants at incidents through the development of a strategic risk-based action plan by the Firefighters Safety Working Group.

- This included improving processes, delivering enhanced personal protective equipment and behavioural changes including the delivery of an education program to effect cultural change. Furthermore, the recording of hazardous material exposure at incidents was improved and air monitoring of a sample of fire stations was undertaken to understand the risk of exposure to diesel emissions
- ✧ endorsed the reviewed QFES Protective Security Strategy and *QFES Strategic Security Plan 2022/2023* in September 2022 as part of the department’s commitment to embedding the *Queensland Protective Security Framework* and continued the security risk assessment program to ensure that QFES adequately manages security risks to its critical functions and assets. The security risk assessment program will continue into 2023–24
  - ✧ partnered with Blue Card Services within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Customer Service Area of the Department of Transport and Main Roads to pilot an initiative to assist regional volunteers with the blue card process, whilst providing clarity on the legislative requirements under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*. Further community engagement will be undertaken across regional Queensland to deliver on QFES’ commitment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in Queensland in line with the QFES Safety for Children Risk Management Strategy (February 2022)
  - ✧ developed training packages and video content for staff and volunteers on:
    - AFDRS
    - bushfire warnings
    - wire entanglement safety for firefighting breathing apparatus teams involved in structural fires
    - structural firefighting helmet deployment for FRS permanent and auxiliary firefighters
    - the Australian and New Zealand Emergency Response Guide Book for hazardous materials incidents.
  - ✧ purchased 20 flaim extinguishers which immerses trainees in virtual reality, delivering a realistic simulation of a range of fire events to train rural volunteer firefighters in first aid firefighting. The kit comprises two elements—the flaim extinguisher and the video monitor case to support brigades who may not have access to suitable monitors. The use of the flaim extinguisher is supported by an accredited training package
  - ✧ reviewed all Continuous Learning Program sessions to update content and developed new sessions for electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and green energy. The review was aligned to the repositioning of the Continuous Learning Program into aXcelerate—the new Student Management System
  - ✧ acquired an updated software package in response to the increased use of the VR Space tactical incident management software by auxiliary firefighters for incident command training. The updated software package allows for use on head mounted devices, mobile devices and flat screens, and is expected to be implemented by 30 June 2024
  - ✧ increased capability using body worn cameras and live video broadcast solutions enabling the livestreaming and transmission of high-value transmedia content from the field to support Public Information and Intelligence functions
  - ✧ concluded the Field Content Operator Trial in South East and North Coast Regions in October 2022 and rolled out a business-as-usual program for Field Content Operators. The program enabled QFES volunteers within RFS and SES to capture transmedia content from operations on the ground. During the reporting period, Field Content Operators were deployed more than 60 times delivering content to inform intelligence and for use in social and traditional media products, internal communications and training.

## **A tribute to fallen firefighters**

QFES pays tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The fourth of May is International Firefighters' Day—a day to remember, thank and honour past and present firefighters from across the world. The day coincides with the feast of Saint Florian, the patron saint of all firefighters.

This year, the day was particularly poignant for us. Only days earlier QFES lost one of our own, Firefighter First Class Izabella (Izzy) Nash, to injuries sustained during a fire at Slacks Creek. Her crewmate, Senior Firefighter Lia Drew, also suffered serious injuries fighting the fire.

Those who are called to serve as firefighters risk their lives each time they answer a call.

On International Firefighters' Day, as well as Firefighters Remembrance Day held on the tenth day of the tenth month, we remember and reflect upon the sacrifices made by firefighters, their families and friends.

Solemn memorial services are held across the state on Firefighters Remembrance Day and one minute's silence is observed to honour those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. As a further sign of respect, all flags are flown at half-mast at Queensland fire stations.

The hard work, dedication and contributions of our fallen firefighters will always be remembered and QFES thanks all those who have and continue to offer comfort and support in the face of the loss suffered by the close-knit Queensland firefighting family this year.

## Celebrating our volunteers

QFES and the community recognise and celebrate the contribution of the approximately 32,000 volunteers that play an essential role in helping to build safer, more connected and resilient communities across the state. QFES volunteers train year-round to prepare for any event and to support communities through the difficulties of response and recovery. Many volunteers work 'day jobs' as well as volunteering and the department also acknowledges the support of their employers who release volunteers in times of need.

QFES volunteers include RFS, SES, Research and Scientific Branch Volunteer Scientific Officer network and AUS-1 DART, and Auxiliary Support Officers and PSOs.

During 2022–23, QFES celebrated:

- ✦ National Volunteer Week (15–21 May 2023)—an opportunity to thank volunteers for their important contributions to society and for volunteers to reflect on their experiences in service to the community.
- ✦ SES WOW Day (17 May 2023) (Wear Orange Wednesday)—the national day to celebrate and thank SES volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the community. SES volunteers' orange uniforms have become a symbol of hope and support when times get tough. On WOW Day Queenslanders are encouraged to wear orange in a show of thanks and for SES volunteers to reflect on and recognise their contribution to the Queensland community.
- ✦ Peer Support Week (13–17 March 2023)—to promote and recognise the valuable contributions of PSOs in supporting the mental wellbeing of QFES staff and their families. PSOs play a crucial role in practical and emotional support such as follow-up after critical incidents, providing information sessions on mental health, and assisting colleagues with work or personal challenges. During the week, the statewide QFES Olga Wilson PSO of the Year Award was presented to Station Officer Andrew Vaughn for his extraordinary efforts in supporting local QFES members and the PSO team.
- ✦ Yellow Ribbon Day (13 September 2022)—a statewide celebration of RFS volunteers, first initiated by the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc. in 2012. RFS volunteers provide a range of services from frontline firefighting to behind-the-scenes community education and support. Community members show their support by wearing a yellow ribbon or something yellow as a sign of support for, and acknowledgement of, the commitment and dedication of the RFS volunteer workforce.
- ✦ SES Week (3–10 September 2022)—the outstanding efforts of SES staff and volunteers were honoured at awards ceremonies across the state. Award recipients included Inaugural Suncorp Spirit of SES Award—Peter Rice, Townsville SES Group; Commissioner's Cup for Unit of the Year—Townsville/Thuringowa SES Group; and Life Member Awards—Alan Green, Innisfail SES Group and Robert Sutcliffe, Home Hill SES Group.
- ✦ RFS week 2022 (31 July 2022 – 6 August 2022)—activities were held across the state to recognise RFS volunteers while promoting RFS as an ideal volunteering opportunity. RFS week was also an opportunity to formally recognise RFS volunteers who have demonstrated a special contribution to the service through the presentation of awards with seven recipients of the Regional Volunteer of the Year Award and seven recipients of the Regional Young Volunteer of the Year Award. The State Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Savannah Terrar of the Kuranda Myola Rural Fire Brigade, Kuranda and the State Young Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Caitlyn Simpkins-Field of Branyan Rural Fire Brigade, Bundaberg.

## Information and Technology Directorate

Since the establishment of a standalone Information and Technology Directorate within QFES in July 2021 and the appointment of a dedicated Information and Technology Executive Director in May 2022, QFES has continued to stabilise and mature its internal Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) capability across strategy, project delivery, information management and cyber security awareness.

Although ICT service delivery continued to be provided by Frontline and Digital Division within the QPS during the reporting period, QFES put in place robust planning, assurance, investment and governance activities related to QFES led projects and worked with Frontline and Digital Division to develop and deliver projects.

Additionally, the Information and Technology Directorate continued to support core operational systems for frontline personnel and systems within disaster management.

Key achievements during the reporting period include:

- ✦ finalisation of an approved ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap for QFES
- ✦ mapping of current state systems and links to the ICT technology roadmap providing critical information on ageing technology replacement to ensure QFES systems are maintained and supported
- ✦ maturing and uplifting project assurance activities in alignment with the Queensland Government Office of Assurance and Investment criteria
- ✦ establishment of ICT portfolio reporting and governance dashboards enabling improved project oversight
- ✦ improved ICT governance for new initiatives in line with the QFES Capabilities Map
- ✦ continued implementation and maturity of the QFES Information Security Management System (ISMS) (refer page 77)
- ✦ development of the QFES Information Asset Register which identifies information assets and assigns custodians to those assets to ensure accountability and transparency of QFES information
- ✦ commenced a review of personal identifiable information across the department and the development of an action plan to strengthen the security posture to prevent a cyber-attack and data breach
- ✦ participated in the whole-of-government Cyber Security Exercise known as Steel Brolga, held in November 2022, leading to several lessons and recommendations for QFES to increase cyber security response
- ✦ drafted a QFES Cyber Security Incident Response Plan which will undergo an exercise test in July 2023 to inform the final plan
- ✦ increased support for disaster and incident management systems, expediting a significant reduction in outstanding issues for users and enabling improved support for critical systems that support operational capability
- ✦ increased vulnerability management to ensure QFES systems remain compliant and fit-for-purpose, and provided improved assessment of automatic patching, back-up and restoration for critical QFES systems such as the Operational Management System and the Operational Coordination System
- ✦ implemented single sign-on for two of the department's key enterprise systems and completed assessment for additional single sign-on implementations
- ✦ established the ICT Engagement and Partnerships Unit to allow improved engagement with ICT stakeholders across QFES
- ✦ improved connectivity for QFES sites in regional and remote locations with the installation of low earth orbit satellite receivers in multiple locations and approved additional sites
- ✦ commenced site visits in all QFES regions to increase engagement with frontline staff about ICT issues and risks.

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## ICT Investment Plan

The ICT Investment Plan plays an important role in supporting and enabling operational and business requirements in the PPRR of fires, emergencies and disasters.

The investment process continued to significantly mature during the reporting period enabling the development of a five-year technology roadmap which aligns to the department's strategic direction and Queensland Government priorities.

The 2022–23 program of work under the investment plan had a budget of \$25 million and delivered an increase in capability for cyber security, refresh of technology devices and upgrades to regional communication centres and communications infrastructure. Further initiatives are underway that will deliver on outcomes to enhance firefighter safety and firefighting capabilities including improvements to the mobilisation of firefighting resources in the field.

As at 30 June 2023, key initiatives underway include:

- ✦ Field Mobility for Emergency Services
- ✦ Volunteer Onboarding Improvement Project
- ✦ Modern Field Communications field testing and proof of concept
- ✦ Digital Breathing Apparatus Control Board
- ✦ Computer Aided Dispatch Infrastructure Upgrade
- ✦ Development of the Business Case for Computer Aided Dispatch and Station Alerting.

A total of 23 projects and initiatives were continued or stood up within the reporting period. These projects are multi-year projects with several expected to realise benefits during 2023–24. Significant gains were made in key strategic projects throughout 2022–23.

## Information and Technology Directorate Transition Project

Since the disestablishment of the former Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) effective 1 July 2021, ICT services have largely been provided by Frontline and Digital Division within QPS on behalf of QFES, the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) and QPS.

In April 2022, a project was stood up to separate these functions from QPS and embed them into the individual agencies (QFES, QAS and QPS) that consume the services. The QFES Information and Technology Directorate's ambition is to transition from a mostly traditional model heavily reliant on one service provider, to a more operations and business aligned, contemporary model. This includes:

- ✦ increasing the strategic value of information technology within QFES
- ✦ aligning a future information technology operating model to the needs of the department's frontline and corporate services
- ✦ focusing information technology to be more customer centric for QFES staff and volunteers
- ✦ greater interaction and partnership with the operations and business to deliver ICT outcomes
- ✦ assessing capability and capacity to deliver the ICT Strategy and five-year technology roadmap
- ✦ introducing agile practices and ways of working, focussing on delivering value earlier through iterations and regular feedback cycles.

An Information Technology Transition Interdepartmental Committee was established in September 2022 with membership from QFES, QAS, QPS and Digital Services within the Department of Transport and Main Roads to provide executive oversight of the separation of ICT functions. Through this committee, agencies have approved principles and will determine the transition approach and timing.

## 2022–23 Bushfire season—Operation Ochre

QFES' response to the 2022–23 Queensland bushfire season was known as Operation Ochre with the key objective of minimising the impacts of bushfires on Queensland communities. The bushfire season ran from 4 July 2022 to 30 April 2023. The season was extended from December 2022 due to the unseasonal fire risk in Southern Queensland, particularly the Western Downs area. During Operation Ochre, Queensland experienced 4,402 vegetation fires with 636 bushfire warnings issued.

Across the state, bushfires were generally less severe and onerous than the extreme bushfire seasons of 2018–19 and 2019–20 due to the wet conditions created by the La Nina weather pattern. Queensland is a large state however, and the serious fire situation in the Western Downs from January to March 2023 illustrated how conditions can vary. A further indication of the contrasting conditions between different areas of Queensland is that bushfire related air operations were limited until the end of December 2022 however, they played an important role during the Western Downs fires.

The Western Downs fires were the most significant bushfire incidents during Operation Ochre and were driven by very dry conditions in that particular area, especially over the spring and summer months when there would normally be significant rainfall. The Western Downs fires involved 428 vegetation fire incidents and burnt more than 90,000 hectares with 30 structures (including sheds) destroyed or significantly damaged. QFES personnel from across the state were deployed to the Western Downs fires and QFES worked with numerous partner agencies to manage the fires.

The QFES response to the 2023–24 bushfire season will commence on 1 August 2023 and will be known as Operation Melaleuca.

QFES' is preparing for the upcoming bushfire season by:

- ✧ providing training and assessment for more than 100 Warning Officers across the state, to allow bushfire warnings to be issued locally.
- ✧ conducting Intelligence Fundamental courses which will provide Intelligence Officers with the skills and knowledge to produce predictive intelligence products to inform decision-makers for future events, risks and hazards.
- ✧ extending the Incident Management training to Public Information Officers which will significantly improve the capabilities of QFES to deliver frontline incident management across the state.
- ✧ establishing and undertaking multiple exercises and training activities to enhance Incident Management coordination across the state.
- ✧ preparing to undertake the SDCC capability training to support the whole-of-government workforce.

## 2022–23 Severe weather season—Operation Nimbosus

QFES' response to the 2022–23 Queensland severe weather season was known as Operation Nimbosus. The severe weather season ran from 1 October 2022 to 30 April 2023. Nimbosus is a Latin word for cloudy, stormy, rainy and surrounded by rain clouds.

QFES' approach facilitated preparation, rapid planning, mobilisation, response during events and the reduction of impacts to communities' post event. QFES works closely in partnership with its key stakeholders, including local governments and communities, to improve resilience and enhance operational capacity during times of emergency.

QFES planned for the severe weather season by undertaking high-level initiatives focussed on preparation and connecting with key disaster management stakeholders across Queensland ensuring they were adequately informed and prepared to help protect Queenslanders. This included pre-season briefings with internal and external stakeholders and Queensland Government and Australian Government partners. The briefings provided disaster management stakeholders with information on jurisdictional activities and operational capacity.

Paid and volunteer RFS and SES personnel, along with FRS firefighters, officers and staff, honed their skills, exercising with partner agencies and engaging with communities to prepare for the severe weather season.

The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements were activated to provide financial assistance and relief to disaster affected Queensland communities on three occasions during the 2022–23 severe weather season:

- ✦ Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (20 December 2022 – 30 April 2023)
- ✦ Whitsunday Rainfall and Flooding (30 November – 1 December 2022)
- ✦ Southern Queensland Severe Weather (18 October – 23 November 2022).

During the severe weather season, the SES received 2,787 tasks and 706 agency support requests for assistance through TAMS (Task and Management System); and FRS swiftwater rescue personnel responded to 71 swiftwater rescue and water rescue incidents.

QFES' State Operations Centre also facilitated requests for assistance from interstate counterparts, including:

- ✦ Western Australia for fire response in January 2023
- ✦ South Australia for river flooding response throughout December 2022 and January 2023
- ✦ Victoria for severe weather response between October and December 2022
- ✦ NSW for severe weather response between October and November 2022.

Media campaigns included *If It's Flooded, Forget It* behaviour change advertising on social media and radio. The advertisements targeted areas experiencing heavy rain to encourage drivers to plan ahead to avoid unnecessary travel when it is wet.

## Major deployments

Deployments can be an opportunity to gain personal and professional development including learnings around incident management and resourcing systems, as they often involve an integration of QFES permanent, auxiliary, civilian and volunteer staff and resources. International deployments also provide an opportunity to share knowledge with emergency services professionals and dedicated USAR teams from around the globe.

QFES maintains the AUS-1 DART, which is the Queensland USAR Team, for immediate deployment to international disasters. This team is classified by the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) under the oversight of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance.

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

Depending on the nature of the emergency, an inter-agency response may also be required.

During 2022–23, QFES international deployments included:

- ✦ the deployment of 25 QFES personnel from AUS-1 DART and two FRS NSW personnel from AUS-2 DART to New Zealand following Severe Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle. It was the deadliest system to hit the country since Cyclone Giselle in 1968 and for only the third time in New Zealand's history, the country declared a national state of emergency. The cyclone claimed 11 lives, including two New Zealand firefighters who died after being caught in a landslide in Muriwai. The QFES personnel were deployed to Hawke's Bay—one of the hardest hit areas—from 17 February to 25 February 2023. The AUS-1 DART technicians worked closely with the New Zealand USAR team, the police canine squad and excavators to conduct full coverage searches for missing victims and to clear priority buildings and key points of interest. The AUS-1 DART's swiftwater rescue technicians were integrated into the New Zealand USAR team to provide advice on hydrology—water movement through and around structures and strainers, together with

related swiftwater rescue advice. In addition, the team provided assistance with the coordination of clean up and recovery efforts

- ✦ three separate deployments of QFES personnel to Alberta, Canada, in May and June 2023 to assist with large wildfires, which marked an intense start to the Canadian wildfire season. The three deployments, known as Alpha, Bravo and Charlie, are for a nominal period of 40 days. FRS, RFS, SES and QFES Corporate Services are represented by staff across these deployments. Significantly, this is the first international deployment to include RFS volunteers, who comprise the majority of the Arduous Firefighter positions and a number of other functional roles. Warm temperatures and dry conditions created the perfect storm for powerful fires in the initial stages of the wildfire season. Despite changing weather conditions, including torrential rain and snow, as of 30 June 2023 approximately nine million hectares were burnt, with nearly 400 fires out of control, close to 200 fires under control and just over 100 fires being held.

- The Alpha deployment comprised 14 incident management staff, 20 Arduous Firefighters, two Air Attack Supervisors and one agency representative (Liaison Officer). The deployment departed 26 May 2023 and by 30 June 2023 all employees had returned to Australia.
- The Bravo deployment comprise 13 Incident Management staff. The deployment departed 10 June 2023 and at 30 June 2023 is still in country.
- The Charlie deployment comprise 20 Arduous Firefighters and one Air Attack Supervisor. The deployment departed 24 and 26 June 2023 and at 30 June 2023 are still in country.

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✧ two firefighters joined the FRS NSW AUS-2 DART deployment to Türkiye to support rescue efforts in the wake of a massive earthquake following a series of earthquakes that struck southern Türkiye, on 6 February 2023 including 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes. About 7,000 aftershocks shook the region with more than 45,000 people losing their lives, 115,000 people injured and an estimated two million displaced. In the aftermath, the Government of Turkey called for international USAR teams to support rescue efforts. Australia deployed a 72 person DART from NSW including the two QFES firefighters and two from the Australian Capital Territory.

In addition, interstate and intrastate deployments included:

✧ the deployment of resources from Northern Region to assist with flood response and recovery in Burketown and Urundangi Shire in March 2023. This event was a multi-agency response by QFES, QPS and the QRA. QFES assisted with evacuation, resupply and the transport of essential staff and goods into Burketown, Gregory and Doomadgee. Local SES personnel assisted with evacuation and resupply efforts. In addition, FRS conducted damage assessments, and FRS and RFS conducted washouts of houses to enable locals to return to their homes

✧ the deployment of multiple teams to support swiftwater rescue operations in the southern states. This included deployments to NSW, Victoria and South Australia during October 2022 to January 2023. The State Deployment Centre managed deployments of swiftwater rescue teams to Brewarrina, Collarenebri, Gunnedah, Mungindi, Narrabri, Nyngan and Parkes in NSW, provided an interstate liaison officer to the State Control Centre in Melbourne and managed the rotation of FRS swiftwater rescue and MSRC operators to South Australia in support of the slow-moving flood event on the Murray River.

## Supporting inclusion and diversity

Queensland has an increasingly diverse population which QFES seeks to consider 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, initiatives and activities included:

### Social Policy

- ◇ Commenced development of a Social Policy Framework and implementation plan to establish an overarching guidance and governance framework to ensure alignment to social responsibilities as a government department, employer of choice, and in the delivery of safety and services to the Queensland community. The framework places social inclusion at the centre of decision-making to foster inclusive behaviours and safe workplaces.

### Cultural Capability

- ◇ Publication of the QFES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2022–2025 in August 2022. The plan supports implementation and delivery of the Queensland Government Cultural Capability Framework, ensuring First Nations perspectives are an inherent part of core business.
- ◇ Attended the First Nations Public Administration conference, held in March 2023, with the theme *First Peoples to All Peoples* which examined the intersection between First Nations knowledge and modern public policy.
- ◇ Continued the First People’s Consultative Group (FPCG) (established in 2021) within Brisbane Region to improve communications between First Nations peoples, QFES and the community. The group meets monthly and supports the department’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel to share their experience and knowledge; and develop personnel’s knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and support and empower regional staff and volunteers to engage with First Nations peoples in the community. In March 2023, the FPCG was awarded the QFES Close the Gap Award for supporting and enhancing engagement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and cultures in QFES and the community.

- ◇ Continued delivery of the online *Starting the Journey* learning program providing insight into interpreting people’s own culture as well as the lived experiences of First Nations peoples.
- ◇ Partnered with the Department of Resources to deliver its acclaimed cultural agility program *Building on the Strengths of our Stories* on 21 and 22 June 2023 providing an opportunity for the 25 QFES participants to draw on the ancient practice of storytelling to engage in a journey of truth-telling and to challenge thinking beyond rhetoric towards a shared approach to understanding and collaboration.
- ◇ Celebrated NAIDOC week (3–10 July 2022) with the theme *Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!*—encouraging everyone to continue implementing positive systemic changes and improvements for First Nations peoples.

### Gender Equity

- ◇ Continued the Gender Equity Advisory Group. The advisory group, which meets every two months, supports the empowerment, development and retention of women and others within the paid and volunteer workforce who are from under-represented groups. The advisory group achieves this by encouraging and connecting the QFES workforce to support women, providing training and development in relation to gender equity, advocating and advising on issues affecting women and gender equity, and promoting initiatives that support diversity and inclusion. Following a suggestion by the advisory group, a one-stop-shop page on the QFES Gateway was developed for information about pregnancy, birth and babies in the workplace, providing a resource for pregnant people and supervisors to access information about entitlements and obligations.
- ◇ Continued to support Women and Firefighting Australasia (WAFA) with QFES representatives on the WAFA Board and annual corporate membership. In addition, QFES is a host agency for the WAFA conference to be held in Brisbane in August 2023, parallel to AFAC23 (refer page 51).

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- ✦ Celebrated International Women’s Day on 8 March 2023 and International Men’s Day on 19 November 2022 with events across the state. Queensland Corrective Services hosted the International Women’s Day event for the Leading Women’s Network (formerly known as the Queensland Public Safety and Integrity Agencies Women’s Network) including QFES with the theme *Courage, Strength, Resilience*. The event included the Women in Fire and Emergency awards which recognise staff and volunteers who have made outstanding contributions in embracing gender equality and promoting the rights, interests and wellbeing of women in QFES. International Men’s Day provided an opportunity to celebrate men and boys and ask what it means to be a positive male role model in modern society. QFES again supported the Movember campaign, to work towards a world where men take proactive action to be mentally healthy and are supported by those around them.
- ✦ Continued membership and support of the Leading Women’s Network with Executive Sponsor, Change Champion and committee representation including participation in, and hosting and livestreaming of network events. The purpose of the network is to promote a diverse and inclusive work environment through the representation of women at all levels.
- ✦ Continued delivery of the QFES Allies of Inclusion program that builds an internal network of staff and volunteers committed to their workplaces being safe, healthy and inclusive of everyone. The network has grown by 21 per cent since 30 June 2022.
- ✦ Commenced production of a series of recruitment videos and associated social and traditional media content, highlighting the unique qualities of a FRS firefighter for the purposes of building greater diversity within the service, specifically increasing awareness of a career within under-represented groups whilst targeting female school students.
- ✦ Partnered with Women’s National Basketball League team—the Townsville Fire, to help promote women’s sport, a career as a firefighter and volunteering in emergency services. As part of the partnership, QFES will be included as an official off-court activity where academy participants can tour a fire station and have direct access to QFES to

discuss employment or volunteering opportunities. QFES will also engage in off-season community activities with the team in female-focused camps, leadership development and networking opportunities.

- ✦ Celebrated Brisbane PRIDE on 24 September 2023 with QFES representatives attending the PRIDE March and Fair Day to acknowledge and support LGBTIQ+ staff, volunteers and communities.

### **Culturally and linguistically diverse**

- ✦ Conducted three focus groups with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community leaders in the South Eastern Region to better understand the emergency and disaster preparedness information needs of local CALD communities. The project aimed to identify better ways of delivering inclusive preparedness initiatives through tailored engagement approaches. The focus groups were conducted as part of a research project through the University of Southern Queensland. A total of 16 community leaders participated in the focus group discussions which were held in Logan and the Gold Coast in August 2022 and Ipswich in November 2022. Participants represented communities from a broad range of backgrounds including Kenyan, Tongan, Burmese, Qatari, Sudanese, Samoan, Nigerian, South Sudanese, Chinese and Indian. Topics explored in the focus groups included community attitudes toward emergency and disaster preparedness, communication channels and formats, language and cultural considerations, information sources, engagement opportunities and resources. Key themes were identified and shared with internal and external stakeholders.
- ✦ QFES is a founding member of the Ipswich CALD Disaster Management Collaboration Network established in January 2023. The network includes representatives from Multicultural Australia, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), City of Ipswich, Red Cross Australia, QPS and the Polynesian African Cross-Cultural Advisory Group. The purpose of the network is for disaster management agencies and CALD communities in Ipswich to work together in a collaborative and coordinated way to support and deliver emergency and disaster resilience initiatives.

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- ✦ Hosted a workshop in March 2023 at the Disaster Community Connectors run by Central Queensland Multicultural Association in Rockhampton. Participants from China, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Bangladesh and Brazil, learnt about the roles of QFES, the Australian Warning System (AWS), local risks and about the value and process of volunteering. Workshop discussions provided an understanding of the disaster preparedness information needs of CALD communities.
- ✦ Continued to deliver inclusive community engagement resources to build the resilience of vulnerable community members and published translated public safety and preparation messaging for smoke alarms, home fire escapes, bushfire safety and fire danger ratings in multiple languages including Easy English ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au/safety-education/resources](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/safety-education/resources)).
- ✦ Delivered resources for SES volunteers within the *Get your kit together* range including a visual preparedness guide aimed at supporting CALD communities and those with limited language.
- ✦ Celebrated Multicultural Queensland Month in August 2022 with the theme of *Inclusion in action* which explored the many ways language helps build an inclusive Queensland.
- ✦ Hosted, in partnership with QPS, Multicultural Australia, the Queensland Human Rights Commission and the Rockhampton Regional Council the sixth annual multi-Faith Dinner in June 2023. The dinner enables government and other agency representatives to join together and promote the shared values of all faiths. There were 125 guests representing 21 cultures and 11 religions.
- ✦ Hosted a meeting in November 2022 with community leaders from the Queensland African Communities Council, Queensland Muslims Inc., Islamic Society of Gold Coast, Multicultural Social Network, Future Leaders Advocacy Group, Ethiopian Community Association, Syriac Community Association, Congolese Community, Australian Karen Organisation, QPASTT, Australian Red Cross and Multicultural Australia. Key discussion points included roles of community leaders and training opportunities, dissemination of information through community and religious leaders and earning the trust of CALD community members through grass-roots relationship building.

## Supporting people with disability

- ✦ Launched Fire Ed for Children with Neurodiversity as a statewide program on 26 August 2022 following the successful pilot in South Eastern Region. The initiative to modify the Fire Ed program for children with autism was developed by FRS South Eastern Region in partnership with the AEIOU Foundation for Children with Autism. This version of the program is targeted towards working with children with neurodiversity including autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia. The program introduces fire safety education to young audiences so they can better understand fire safety and participate in the Fire Ed program when they reach year one schooling. The program is being delivered across the state in AEIOU and other targeted learning facilities by firefighters in partnership with educators, parents and carers.
- ✦ Continued provision of assistance to 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 Connect (previously Deaf Services Queensland). In 2022–23, a total of 178 deaf and hard of hearing smoke alarms were provided.
- ✦ Supported the Queenslanders with Disability Network and local governments in South Eastern Region to deliver Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives with a QFES representative on local action groups, participation in community forums and Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness workshops and the provision of disaster preparedness engagement materials.
- ✦ Participated in a disability workshop pilot program with Carers Queensland in Central Region in August 2022. The program aims to build the knowledge and skillsets of emergency services staff and volunteers to be able to support people with disability before, during and after a disaster. The learnings from the program will inform future training requirements within the Rockhampton area, as well as future approaches with other emergency response organisations.
- ✦ Provided Auslan interpreters when broadcasting fire and emergency safety information.
- ✦ Included closed captions in all video content and supported live broadcasting of emergency messaging through Auslan and live captioning functions.

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## Seniors

- ◇ Attended the Jimboomba Seniors Expo in February 2023 along with Logan City Council and a range of community services, government departments and healthcare providers, with FRS crews delivering a home fire safety presentation and SES members engaging with attendees about storm and flood preparedness.

## Youth

- ◇ Continued delivery of the RAAP program throughout Queensland and into more diverse areas and education settings, with delivery of the program into youth detention centres and in conjunction with youth justice programs such as Transition 2 Success and Project Booyah. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers, facilitated by operational firefighters (refer page 52 for more information about the program).

- ◇ Continued a partnership between SES and Girl Guides Australia Queensland to encourage young women to improve general life skills around severe weather preparedness and to consider volunteering with the SES (refer page 54 for further information).
- ◇ Forged strong ties with Iron Traks who deliver a program that encourages young women aged from 14 to 18 years to become empowered, encouraged and inspired to broaden their career pathways, and learn the value of determination to succeed in their choice of career. Since late 2022, QFES has engaged with Iron Traks and arranged presentations with motivational speakers, organised for participants to undertake fire station visits and practical training providing insights into life as a firefighter.

In addition, the department committed to the establishment of the First Nations Strategy and Partnerships Branch within the Strategy Directorate. The branch will lead a comprehensive body of work to embed cultural capability across the department including the development of a First Nations Framework to reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Queensland's Path to Treaty. The branch is expected to be established by September 2023 and will include an identified Director and an identified Senior Project Officer.

The Commissioner, in his role as Government Champion for the remote Indigenous township of Coen in Cook Shire, undertook four visits to the community. The Commissioner met with stakeholders including the Coen Regional Aboriginal Corporation, Cook Shire Council, Wunthulpu Aboriginal Land Trust, Yintjingga Aboriginal Corporation, Apunipima Health and Wellbeing Centres and other Queensland Government departments. As a result of stakeholder discussions, the Commissioner advocated for the Coen community in a range of social and economic activities including for capital funding for an Indigenous arts centre, increased social housing for the community, increased car parking and safety around the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy—Coen Campus and support for mental health and suicide prevention services in Coen.

Further initiatives and activities and target group data is included in Strategic workforce planning and performance—refer pages 78–84.

## The QFES Charter: how we live our values

The QFES Charter was launched in December 2022 and sets behavioural expectations for the QFES workforce.

The QFES values guide the way we behave towards ourselves, our colleagues and others and hold significant meaning across the workforce, with 95 per cent of staff and 94 per cent of volunteers saying they understand the importance of behaving in a manner that aligns to the QFES values.

Building on the 2021 *Values in action* activity, in which over 100 teams across the department identified the *above-the-line* behaviours they expect and those *below-the-line* behaviours they reject, the QFES Charter succinctly reinforces the values-aligned behaviours people want to see in their work environment.

A range of tools were developed to support managers and their teams collaboratively implement the Charter, and continue QFES' values journey. These include a promotional video, resources to support leaders to encourage *above-the-line* behaviours and respond to *below-the-line* behaviours, a leader's guide to assist discussions with their teams, and a number of digital assets to promote the values across the department.

The values also form a core component of the quarterly QFES Corporate Induction Forum and are being progressively introduced into the Leadership Foundation Programs (refer page 82).

<b>Courage</b>	<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Loyalty</b>	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Trust</b>
Call it out Own mistakes Challenge ourselves	Be accountable Be honest Be transparent	Support each other Be committed Work as a team	Embrace diversity Communicate openly Be kind	Empower others Be open Be dependable

## 2026 Objective

**2. Collaboration** occurs with communities and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters

### 2022–2026 Strategies

- ❖ Work collaboratively with communities and our partners to plan and deliver efficient and effective emergency services across the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of all types of fires, emergencies and disasters.
- ❖ Harness the knowledge, diversity, ability and experience of all our staff and volunteers to improve the scope and quality of the services we deliver.

### Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework

The *Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework* (QERMF) was endorsed by the Queensland Disaster Management Committee in 2017 as Queensland's approach to current and future disaster and emergency risk management.

The framework allows disaster management stakeholders to identify, assess, manage, and if required, communicate their disaster risks to the state and commonwealth levels of government.

An independent review of the QERMF was delivered in November 2020. An action plan was developed to deliver on the 15 findings and 12 recommendations from the review and improve how the current disaster risk management framework enables the prevention of new disaster risks, reduction of existing risks and management of residual risks. Delivery of the action plan was overseen by the QERMF Review Action Plan Working Group, formed under the State Disaster Coordination Group.

During 2022–23, the QERMF Review Action Plan Working Group met on four occasions. The State Disaster Coordination Group agreed to close the working group in April 2023 noting that the key components of the action plan were delivered. This included the revision of the risk assessment methodology and approach, as well as testing through pilot implementation.

Finalisation of the revised QERMF is pending implementation of recommendations from the review by the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM) into QDMA (refer External Scrutiny page 73). Under the Emergency Services Reform and transition arrangements the QRA will lead state-level hazard and risk functions.

### National and international engagement—AUS-1 DART

QFES continues to develop and maintain an internationally recognised Disaster Assistance Response capability through AUS-1 DART. This team is managed through FRS and is made up of full-time and volunteer members, 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 continued an arrangement with DFAT during 2022–23 for the availability of internationally deployable DART personnel and equipment if required for international deployment assistance. An annual grant of \$475,000 to QFES provides assistance for the development and maintenance of AUS-1 DART capability, along with international engagement activities.

QFES also continued to provide personnel for international working groups, team leader 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.

AUS-1 DART representatives participated in international engagement opportunities including:

- ❖ the INSARAG Leadership Training course in the Netherlands during June 2023. This training provided Australia with a third qualified Classification Team Leader and Mentor to assist with the development of global USAR teams to INSARAG standards
- ❖ the Humanitarian Networks Partnership Week meeting in Switzerland in April 2023 to progress global engagement and development in international humanitarian and USAR response

- ◇ the annual INSARAG Team Leaders' Meeting and Classifiers' Workshop in Singapore during February 2023 to continue the development of international USAR capability standards
- ◇ the INSARAG External Reclassification of the Japan Disaster Relief Team (JPN-01) in Kobe in November 2022. This reclassification was attended by an AUS-1 DART Classifier and an observer for capability development and training opportunities. The Classifier ensured that all Japanese USAR team logistics requirements were maintained to international standards throughout the re-classification exercise
- ◇ the annual Asia-Pacific regional meeting in South Korea during October 2022 to further develop and maintain the delivery of integrated and coordinated international response to disaster situations. QFES officers also met with representatives from the Gyeonggi Fire and Disaster Department to share strategies for bushfire management and resource allocation, and identify areas for future collaboration
- ◇ the INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Earthquake exercise in Indonesia in September 2022. Attendees included four AUS-1 DART participants and two Exercise Controllers to coordinate the exercise.

In addition:

- ◇ an AUS-1 DART leader travelled to South Korea during October 2022 to lead the delivery of the Korean USAR Coordination Cell course. The QFES participant provided and delivered an updated USAR Coordination Cell course to the Korean USAR team to assist in developing and maintaining their international classification
- ◇ an FRS officer undertook the role of INSARAG Classification Team Leader for the INSARAG external Classification of the United Kingdom Light USAR Team in England during September 2022. This leadership role is a key acknowledgement of the skills and capability of the AUS-1 DART team and its standing in the global network.

## Exercises

Exercises are integral to training, developing and preparing QFES personnel to carry out functions during an emergency, recognising that exercising is a valuable learning tool and opportunity to practice interoperability and evaluate equipment, techniques and processes.

QFES personnel participate in a variety of exercise types to increase their competency levels—multi-agency exercises, multi-jurisdictional exercises, functional exercises and small discussion style exercises.

Exercises enable the development, practising, assessment, review, validation and demonstration of factors including:

- ◇ interoperability across QFES services
- ◇ liaison and engagement with external agencies
- ◇ appropriate response and operational procedures
- ◇ communication plans
- ◇ response times
- ◇ suitability and effectiveness of equipment and personal protective equipment
- ◇ operational preparedness.

During the reporting period, QFES developed and planned for Exercise Ignis, a bushfire exercise to be conducted under the auspice of the Queensland Bushfire Plan, scheduled for 27 July 2023. The exercise is based on several significant bushfires impacting different areas of Queensland triggering requests for local, district and state support, involving a multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional response. The exercise will include more than 200 representatives from state, local and Australian governments and the private sector. The aim of the exercise is to consider the impacts from a number of concurrent large-scale bushfires on the relationship and communication pathways between stakeholders and the escalation of response arrangements.

In addition, QFES contributed to the development of the 2023 Asia-Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise to be held in Brisbane from 20 to 25 August 2023. The exercise is part of Australia's commitment to host an International Earthquake Response Exercise as a member of INSARAG. QFES and Fire and Rescue NSW partnered with the National Emergency Management Agency and DFAT to develop, facilitate, conduct, and report on the international exercise. INSARAG and domestic partners across each state and territory emergency management agency are invited to participate, along with relevant Australian Government agencies involved in disaster management response. Approximately 290 registered attendees from over 30 countries are participating in the exercise. The aim of the exercise is to strengthen the preparedness and response to a catastrophic earthquake, including concurrent and compounding events, in accordance with local, state, and national plans. It will assess Australia's processes and ability to work with international partners and agencies during the initial response phase of an emergency.

Exercises that QFES led, conducted or participated in include:

- ◇ Exercise Fisherman23—a joint multi-agency exercise held on 6 June 2023 to satisfy the requirements of the *Defence Operations Manual (OPSMAN 1) Visits to Australia by Nuclear-Powered Warships* regarding the need to exercise Port Safety Organisations and to verify the

preparedness and response processes in the Port Safety Plan—Brisbane. The exercise consisted of two components—the validation of agency specific activities under the Port Safety Plan—Brisbane and a deployment exercise at the Port of Brisbane

- ◇ Exercise Luxton—held in Charters Towers in May 2023, this exercise showcased the abilities of the RFS volunteer cohort and recognised the contribution that QFES’ partner agencies make to the department’s ongoing efforts to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from bushfire events. The exercise demonstrated QFES’ ability to provide welfare and support for RFS members in a simulated deployment scenario. Approximately 100 participants attended the exercise which encompassed nine in-field workshops across two days led by RFS staff, volunteers and guest presenters from RFS partner agencies
- ◇ a multi-agency exercise at the Origin LPG depot in Gympie in December 2022. The exercise simulated a spill of a large volume of flammable gas with participants from QFES, QAS, QPS and Gympie Regional Council testing their emergency response procedures in real-time. Skill development included pre-incident planning, implementation of large-scale evacuations and exclusion zones, and site safety
- ◇ a joint exercise between Mackay Whitsunday Zone firefighters and the Hamilton Island Fire Department held in August 2022 that simulated a large fire at a resort. The exercise consisted of two multi-level structure fire drills, testing participants in fire behaviour, search and rescue, hostile door entries and tactical management. The exercise enhanced understanding of how QFES supports the Hamilton Island Fire Department operationally and identified potential areas for improvement related to communication equipment and operational procedures and practices
- ◇ Exercise Bombora—a joint multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional tsunami desktop exercise held on 31 August 2022 in Brisbane. QFES led the exercise which simulated a catastrophic east coast tsunami, triggering requests for state, national and international support. The exercise was attended by 153 participants from 50 agencies, including representatives from NSW government agencies, the Australian Government, non-government organisations, utility providers and state emergency services and police agencies from all states and territories. The exercise was an invaluable learning opportunity for all agencies to test systems and procedures for a reliable tsunami response. The exercise enabled agencies to examine the impact of a tsunami along the east coast of Australia and explore the processes and

challenges associated with this type of event during the response phase

- ◇ Exercise Talisman Sabre—a multinational and multi-military service annual exercise held across Australia in July and August 2022. Over 30,000 military personnel from 13 nations participated in or observed this exercise. FRS partnered with the Australian Defence Force in its safety management activities to plan, prepare and respond to fire and emergencies during the exercise including familiarisation training for new vehicles and aircraft.

In addition, the annual AUS-1 DART exercise was held from 25 to 29 July 2022 at QCESA. This full-field deployment exercise included participants from FRS and QAS, and volunteers including engineers, doctors and canine handlers (and canines) that make up AUS-1 DART. The field exercise involved mobilisation, set up of the Base of Operations, a 36-hour continuous earthquake rescue exercise and team demobilisation to international standards.

The development of the AUS-1 DART capability was further enhanced with a 48-hour full-field exercise delivered as a part of the QFES USAR Level 2 training course. This was a four-week intensive training course, with 24 participants, held between 22 August and 15 September 2022, with the exercise component held at QCESA from 13 to 15 September 2022. The training course included search and rescue in collapsed buildings, cribbing, shoring and tunnelling, concrete cutting and breaching, and the use of search cameras and various battery-operated power tools. The participants' skills were tested during the 48-hour exercise which involved a simulated earthquake. The participants lived in the field as a self-sustained DART. The delivery of the training course and exercise enabled QFES to maintain the number of personnel qualified in USAR across the state.

## Community safety advertising campaigns

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

These campaigns included:

- ◇ ***If It's Flooded, Forget It:*** this campaign targeted drivers who could be tempted to drive on flooded roads, putting themselves and potentially their rescuers at risk. The campaign was launched in late October 2022 and ran throughout the summer wet season, ending in mid-April 2023. The campaign featured the *Back it Up* tagline and used

television, radio, social and digital advertising. Following the campaign, research showed the campaign was successful in reducing the number of Queensland motorists who would potentially drive through floodwater based on self-assessment from 23 per cent in 2022 to 19 per cent in 2023 ([www.qld.gov.au/floodwatersafety](http://www.qld.gov.au/floodwatersafety))

- ◇ **Bushfire Safety** campaign: this campaign ran from late June 2022 to the end of August 2022 and began again in June 2023. The campaign educates Queenslanders about bushfire safety and encourages people, particularly those living close to bushland, to prepare themselves and their properties and complete a bushfire survival plan. The tagline was *What have you got to lose?* and the call-to-action directed viewers to the QFES website where they could access information on how to prepare their household and property, and complete a bushfire survival plan. Research shows those exposed to the campaign were more likely to feel very knowledgeable about what to do in the event of a bushfire emergency and were more likely to feel prepared for a bushfire ([bushfire-survival-plan.qfes.qld.gov.au/](http://bushfire-survival-plan.qfes.qld.gov.au/))
- ◇ **Home Fire Safety**: The 2023 Home Fire Safety Campaign ran from April to June, expanding the target audience to young families with children aged up to 10 years of age and the top 11 CALD audiences across Queensland. The campaign aimed to reduce loss of life in structural fires by encouraging households to discuss, plan and practise their home fire escape plan. The 2023 campaign ran on social media, shopping centre digital display boards, podcasts and online digital and video channels. Campaign advertising linked to the QFES website for tips on how to check, plan and practise home fire safety. The campaign successfully reached CALD communities across Queensland using translated social media videos linked to translated online fact sheets in 11 languages ([www.qfes.qld.gov.au/Fire-Escape](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/Fire-Escape)).
- ◇ **Smoke Alarms**: this campaign ran from 1 February to 30 April 2023 on billboards, radio, YouTube, podcasts, Meta and Google Search. The campaign encouraged all Queensland residential property owners, particularly owner occupiers, to be aware of and comply with legislation mandating the installation of interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms. The legislated deadline for owner-occupiers is 1 January 2027. Research following the campaign indicated an increase in the number of owner-occupiers who have reached full compliance with the legislation from 27 per cent to 33 per cent.

In addition, in support of QFES functions to educate the public:

- ◇ social media and traditional media content was developed and published highlighting:
  - the training and capabilities of swiftwater rescue and SES flood boat teams and to promote community safety during heavy rain and flooding events
  - mitigation and cultural burning practices
  - the introduction of the AWS and AFDRS including internal communications and explainer video content relating to the implementation of AWS in Queensland.
- ◇ a suite of products was created for social media to support Home Fire Safety in late 2022 and early 2023 called *Check. Plan. Practise*. These products documented a Queensland family experiencing the conditions of a house fire at QCESA Live Fire to promote the need for interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms. It also explored what happens when you do not have a practised fire escape plan, and the steps to plan and practise for a house fire. The content was released on Facebook and YouTube and achieved a combined reach of more than 280,000 people.

## Social media

QFES disseminates important safety messaging to the Queensland community through its social media channels.

During 2022–23, the QFES Facebook page reached more than 6.4 million people. The Facebook page also received more than 1.2 million visits, a 12 per cent increase on 2021–22, and gained 17,600 new followers to reach a total of 511,500 followers.

Posts from QFES' Twitter page reached more than 3.4 million people and its follower count rose to 87,800 people.

The QFES Instagram page reached more than two million people, more than double the figure from the previous financial year. The total number of visits (39,000) to the Instagram page rose 18 per cent on 2021–22 and gained 2,000 new followers to reach a total of 45,200 followers.

QFES also engages with traditional media outlets (television, newspaper, online and radio) to promote messaging for key safety campaigns including severe weather season, bushfire season and winter fire safety.

During 2022–23, bushfire season messaging received coverage across more than 1,300 print, television, radio and online media items between July and October 2022 and May and June 2023. During these same periods, there were more than 125 proactive social media posts in support of this campaign on

QFES social media channels, which reached more than 3.1 million people and had more than 116,000 engagements.

Between September 2022 and April 2023, storm and cyclone messaging received coverage of more than 2,100 items in traditional media outlets. There were also more than 200 proactive social media posts in support of this campaign on QFES social media channels, which reached more than 7.1 million people and had more than 247,000 engagements.

For the winter home fire safety campaign during July and August 2022, there were 53 media items related to the campaign in traditional media outlets. There were more than 35 proactive social media posts on QFES channels to support this campaign, which reached more than 720,000 people and had more than 4,100 engagements.

## Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum

The Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum met on four occasions during 2022–23. 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.

In 2022–23, a volunteer training subgroup was established to share and explore best practice in the emergency services volunteer sector. The inaugural meeting was held in March 2023 to discuss the Terms of Reference and agreed outcomes for the group.

Topics explored by the Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum during the reporting period included:

- ✦ the National Strategy for Volunteering (2023–2033) project
- ✦ the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Brisbane in September 2022
- ✦ climate change in the Asia-Pacific
- ✦ the Emergency Services Reform and potential impacts on member volunteering organisations
- ✦ empowerment of under-represented groups in emergency volunteering
- ✦ the assessment criteria to determine the feasibility of establishing new PCYC Queensland Emergency Services Cadet Units.

## Grants—SES

QFES continued to provide support to SES groups and units to identify, plan, apply for and complete grant applications.

During the reporting period, QFES sponsored 13 successful external grant applications for SES groups and units with successful applicants jointly awarded more than \$429,000. Grants projects include facility upgrades, computer equipment, vehicles, trailers, vehicle shelters, air conditioners, whitegoods, generators and equipment for training and emergency activations.

Refer to Local governments and the SES (below) for information regarding the SES Support Grant Program.

## 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 IGEM, 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.

The SES Support Grant Program is an annual QFES funded program offered to local governments to receive grant funding towards SES facilities and vehicles. Facility grants are 75 per cent of the total project cost and up to \$75,000, with vehicle grants offered at a dollar-for-dollar basis up to \$30,000.

During the reporting period:

- ✦ thirty local government applications, including the additional eight applications supported through the SES Uplift (refer page 57), were successful under the 2022–23 round of the SES Support Grant Program which contributed more than \$1.01 million towards local government projects in support of SES facility upgrades and vehicles
- ✦ sixty-five local government applications were awarded grants under the subsequent 2023–24 round of the SES Support Grant Program. This funding will provide more than \$2.96 million towards future local government projects for SES facility upgrades and vehicles. Projects for the 2023–24 round will commence from 1 July 2023

- ❖ QFES distributed \$1.65 million across 75 local governments with active SES units or groups as part of the SES annual Local Government Subsidy Program. Funding is provided to assist local governments in defraying administrative and operational costs as a result of supporting their local SES.

Severe weather experienced in Queensland during February 2022 resulted in a significant increase in donations to the SES Gift Fund with more than \$1.3 million received from community members, small businesses and corporate organisations. A total of \$500,000 from flood donations will provide first-aid resources and an all-terrain vehicle for regional use with the balance directed to a program that enables SES groups to apply for communications and technology equipment to improve their training and communications capabilities.

The SES Volunteer Bursary scheme, which supports professional development opportunities for volunteers, was launched in September 2022 with an initial budget of \$327,000 comprised of funding received through two bequests totalling approximately \$227,000 and \$100,000 from the SES Gift Fund flood donations. In 2022–23, 12 bursary applications were approved totalling nearly \$28,000.

In addition, QFES provided one flood boat and five trailers to support six SES groups across Queensland. SES flood boats are purchased and registered by QFES and owned by local governments. SES trailers are purchased and registered by QFES and owned by local governments.

## State disaster risk assessments

The *Queensland 2021/22 State Disaster Risk Report* and *Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland* (SWHA-Q) were published in August 2022. The report and assessment are accessible at [www.disaster.qld.gov.au](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au)

The State Disaster Risk Report updated the *QUEENSLAND State Natural Hazard Risk Assessment 2017* and assessed a broader range of natural and human-induced hazards at the state and regional planning levels. The report also 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 *South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding February to March 2022 Review Report 1: 2022–2023* (refer External Scrutiny page 73) recommended that QFES review and update the State Disaster Risk Report, including re-evaluating the risk

of flooding by all types and that the updated State Disaster Risk Report should be published by 1 November 2023.

The SWHA-Q 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.

A collaborative follow-on project to the SWHA-Q, the Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for South East Queensland, was completed in partnership with six local governments in South East Queensland, other Queensland Government departments and the insurance and research sector, to build on the findings from the SWHA-Q and better understand and address the risks from severe wind, including severe thunderstorms and tropical cyclones for South East Queensland. A technical report detailing the wind risk from thunderstorms and tropical cyclones was delivered in December 2022 by a technical team led by Geoscience Australia with the James Cook University Cyclone Testing Station and the University of Queensland.

QFES supported the planning of desktop exercises for the Redland City Council and the Council of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Groups using one of the five scenarios developed in this project. QFES also delivered presentations at these exercises held on 8 November 2022 and 24 January 2023 respectively.

QFES is undertaking a Critical Infrastructure Disaster Risk Assessment to review and identify the key climate and disaster risks to critical infrastructure in Queensland. As well as identifying risks to critical infrastructure at a state level, the project will analyse the interconnectedness and interdependencies between different types of critical infrastructure through scenario analysis. The assessment is expected to be finalised in 2023–24.

## Partnerships

Queensland's emergency services are supported by corporate, community and government stakeholders to establish and strengthen partnerships that deliver valued and sustainable benefit to QFES' workforce and foster community resilience. These stakeholders continued generosity helps to make Queensland a safer place.

During 2022–23, over \$1.4 million of incoming, outgoing, in-kind and non-financial partnerships were managed with a range of stakeholders including:

- ❖ National Australia Bank (NAB) (launched in October 2021) supports the wellbeing of RFS volunteers with practical personal resilience tools

and other supports. The partnership delivered two programs worth more than \$300,000 including the RFS Volunteer Wellbeing Project. This project provided online mindfulness and resilience tools to volunteers that increased the likelihood of early intervention and encouraged help-seeking initiatives. The partnership also continued to support the NAB Community Strategy Challenge with NAB employees working with the RFS to improve the onboarding process for new volunteers. The partnership concluded on 30 June 2023

- ✧ NAB and Suncorp, which resulted in the introduction of Mindarma (as in mind armour) in May 2022. Mindarma is an online learning program that supports the psychological wellbeing of volunteers from FRS, RFS and SES and PSOs. The Mindarma project concluded on 30 June 2023
- ✧ Suncorp, the Principal Community Partner of SES, continued to support a volunteer-led severe weather preparedness initiative—*Get your kit together*. The initiative provided community engagement resources such as household emergency plans, magnets and visual guides to support SES volunteers to engage with communities and deliver emergency preparedness. During SES Week volunteers were provided with waterproof notebooks and a supply of new deployment bags were delivered to volunteers who may be deployed to support communities throughout the state or interstate. Suncorp and SES continued to collaborate on a range of topics including Severe Wind Hazard Assessment and SES volunteers helped support Suncorp's *Resilience Road* campaign as an extension of their award winning *One House* project to increase community flood, storm and cyclone resilience and education
- ✧ Energy Queensland through the brands of Energex and Ergon Energy, renewed the partnership with RFS with research undertaken towards conversion of slip-on modules from fuel to battery power and the provision of an all-terrain vehicle for the service's Remote Area Firefighting Team. Energy Queensland also renewed the partnership with SES (which combines with Powerlink Queensland) to deliver a range of significant small equipment items to SES groups throughout the state
- ✧ Powerlink Queensland partnered with Energy Queensland to continue to sponsor the SES equipment program providing items to SES groups such as battery-powered lighting and chainsaws, rescue items, thermal imagers, and

CPR and water rescue training items, among a range of valuable equipment items. Supply of these items addresses local need and helps SES build capacity that has a direct and positive impact on communities across the state

- ✧ QSuper continued to sponsor the QFES Australia Day Achievement Awards which were delivered in each region throughout the state to recognise the outstanding achievements of QFES staff and volunteers
- ✧ Townsville's women's National Basketball League team, Townsville Fire. This partnership heightened community awareness of QFES and featured firefighting careers and emergency service volunteering in the community, with QFES involved in team games and a community parade when the team won the national season. Involvement in out-of-season events provided an additional opportunity for QFES to connect with the community, engaging with potential future staff and volunteers.

Also featuring firefighting careers and emergency service volunteering, sponsorships and engagement with UniQYou, Her Roar and Girl Guides Queensland (an SES partnership), profiled QFES well within the community.

In addition, an in-kind partnership with Bike4Burns Inc. (a ride from Gladstone to Brisbane over seven days) enabled QFES personnel to again take part in this significant event and raise valuable funds to support the Children's Hospital Foundation and the burns unit.

## Predictive services capabilities

The Predictive Services Unit continued the Fire Behaviour Analyst (FBAN) Capability Uplift project in 2022–23, with 36 staff and volunteers receiving initial FBAN training. At 30 June 2023, there are 48 personnel at various stages of development—a 300 per cent increase in staff actively engaged in training since June 2022. Full FBAN qualification takes one to two years.

In conjunction with the introduction of Predictive Services Intelligence Coordinators in each QFES region in 2021–22, the Regional FBAN service delivery model, which is focused on providing operational support at the three levels of operations (tactical, operations and strategic levels), will be activated for the 2023–24 bushfire season. This represents a significant gain in bushfire intelligence resourcing for operational decision makers.

## Bushfire Prone Area Mapping

Bushfire Prone Area Mapping is used to inform planning and building decisions across Queensland.

In 2022–23, QFES undertook a review of the methodology used to map bushfire prone areas via a pilot project for South East Queensland, in conjunction with CSIRO and the National Bushfire Intelligence Capability. The review identified new approaches to improve vegetation hazard mapping, which have been found to produce more reliable results than older methodologies. Field calibration for new vegetation hazard mapping was completed for the South East Queensland and the Wide Bay Burnett Planning Regions and the Gladstone Regional Council area in June 2023, with the support of operational staff from local governments, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, HQ Plantations, RFS and the QFES Predictive Services Unit.

## Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework

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 is designed to meet the functions of the Chief Executive under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (section 16A(c)) to ensure that those with a role in disaster operations are appropriately trained.

Demonstrating QFES' ongoing commitment to ensuring continuity in training delivery to disaster management stakeholders, a total of 12,622 units of QDMTF training were delivered across 2022–23. Reflective of their key role in disaster management, 55 per cent of the total training in 2022–23 was delivered to local government stakeholders.

The Operational Leadership and Crisis Management Masterclass series is a component of the QDMTF and forms a critical element of capability enhancement for key disaster management stakeholders. During 2022–23, two Masterclass sessions were offered:

- ❖ *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
- ❖ *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.

QFES presented the Masterclass sessions face-to-face with 391 participants across 20 sessions conducted in Beenleigh, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Longreach, Mackay, Rockhampton, Roma, Toowoomba and Townsville during August to September 2022 and April to May 2023.

## Other key achievements include:

- ❖ planning and preparations for hosting the AFAC annual conference (AFAC23), alongside the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, to be held in Brisbane from 22 to 25 August 2023. The theme for the conference is *Creating a sustainable future: the challenges and opportunities* and will feature presenters and displays from industry leaders. AFAC23 runs in collaboration with the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference, the Institution of Fire Engineers (Australia) National Conference and the Wafa Conference
- ❖ attendance and participation by QFES officers at the AFAC Conference in August 2022, which explored the theme *Connecting Communities. Creating Resilience*. The conference provided a professional development and networking opportunity for QFES staff from operational and corporate divisions. QFES presented on the emerging issue of lithium-ion battery fire safety and unintended consequences associated with the rapid adoption of alternative and distributed energy systems and storage. QFES also presented on Operation Paia Trucks which saw QFES donate five ex-service QFES fire appliances to PNGFS in 2020–21 providing a significant boost to the PNGFS
- ❖ responded to 75,503 incidents including FRS and RFS response (207 incidents per day on average):
  - 2,376 structure fires including 1,621 residential structure fires
  - 5,662 landscape fires
  - 15,698 mobile property crashes
  - 51,767 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 8.2 minutes at the 50th percentile and 12.5 minutes at the 90th percentile
- ❖ received 3,473 SES tasks and 1,191 Agency Support Requests
- ❖ SES volunteers performed approximately 92,600 operational hours and more than 330,600 hours in preparation and training

- ◇ implemented 11 recommendations from IGEM reviews and continued to make progress on all remaining recommendations
- ◇ continued to lead implementation of the Queensland Government's response to the RCNDA Report, including delivery of a further 15 recommendations related to the AFDRS, communication of natural hazard risks to communities, national exercising, vegetation management, downscaled climate projections, supply chains and critical infrastructure, mental health planning, air quality information, building back better, and nationally consistent climate change projections and environmental data. The Queensland Government's implementation progress reports are available at [www.disaster.qld.gov.au/publications](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/publications)
- ◇ continued delivery of the Fire Ed Program to year one students to develop an understanding of the dangers of fire, safety around fires and responding to fire emergencies. QFES also launched Fire Ed for Children with Neurodiversity as a statewide program (refer page 41). The Fire Ed program is delivered in the classroom by operational firefighters, supported by continued learning delivered by teachers
- ◇ continued to deliver the 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. The program teaches respectful fire behaviours and develops fire safety skills. During the reporting period, 77 FFF cases were received with 14 related to Restorative Justice Conferencing under a working arrangement with the Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training. At 30 June 2023, there are 47 trained FFF practitioners located throughout Queensland who receive ongoing, regular training and support to maintain effective education and engagement skills
- ◇ continued to deliver the RAAP program with the delivery of 389 program presentations to approximately 32,150 young persons across Queensland in mainstream and non-school settings including restorative justice programs, and in partnership with the PCYC and other community youth organisations. RAAP is a practical lifesaving road safety awareness program for young drivers facilitated by operational firefighters. As of 30 June 2023, there are 215 trained RAAP presenters located throughout Queensland. During 2021–22, a Community Road Safety Grant was received from the Department of Transport and Main Roads to create RAAP program content for a First Nations audience. The grant enabled commission of First Nations artwork, the production of a promotional video and the recruitment of more firefighters to become presenters. In addition, funding of \$2.6 million over four years (commencing 2023–24) has been approved to enhance delivery of the RAAP program with the expansion of the program into various youth settings in the community, as well as conducting regional tours to reach young drivers across the state
- ◇ continued to deliver the Safehome program with 245 Safehome visits conducted where firefighters visit households to assist in recognising and eliminating fire and safety hazards in and around the home and provide information and tools to support people in increasing home fire and emergency preparedness measures. QFES also collaborated with the former Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy to provide home fire safety information targeted towards Queensland social housing tenants
- ◇ produced a promotional video for the Safehome program to raise awareness of the service for Queensland homeowners and to help address a business requirement within Fire and Rescue Senior Officer accreditation
- ◇ prepared for and supported major outback Queensland events such as the Birdsville Races (September 2022) and the Big Red Bash (July 2022). To minimise risk to the community, QFES deployed personnel from FRS, RFS and SES to create a surge capacity to manage the increased number of visitors to the community. QFES crews ensure the safety of the community and its visitors and take the opportunity to engage with local stakeholders, conduct recruitment drives, undertake training and conduct building fire safety inspections
- ◇ continued the review of the *Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline* and Support Toolkit suite (the guideline) and updated the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan* (the plan) to reflect machinery-of-government changes. Further work on the guideline and plan is continuing taking into consideration review outcomes including the Independent Review of QFES and the IGEM's *Review of Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA)* (refer External Scrutiny on page 73). The guideline will be updated to reflect the changes to the disaster management arrangements

- ◇ continued to work with the QRA on the development and implementation of the *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022–2027* (the strategy). The strategy’s purpose is to provide an overarching framework to guide and coordinate the delivery of strategic commitments and actions to improve the resilience of Queensland communities across whole-of-government, with the support of key industry stakeholders. The strategy reflects Queensland’s significant progress in resilience initiatives, and provides strategic commitments and actions to strengthen disaster resilience. QFES continues to work with the QRA and partner agencies to implement the strategy’s actions
- ◇ a collaboration between QFES and Firetech Connect through the Noosa Shire Council’s Peregrin Digital Hub launched in July 2022. Firetech Connect conducted trials to enhance bushfire resilience in regional communities through bushfire prediction and detection, aerial operations and uncrewed firefighting solutions. Trial outcomes are pending
- ◇ a three-day vehicle fire investigation workshop at the SFEST—only the second time the course has been conducted outside of the United States of America. The course was run by the International Association of Arson Investigators in conjunction with the Queensland Association of Fire Investigators Inc. with 34 participants from most state fire services, QPS and private and insurance fire investigators. The course consisted of 24 hours of tested instruction in determining origin and cause of vehicle fires and culminated with a live burn, exposing the participants to the latest investigative techniques for modern vehicles
- ◇ hosted delegations from Laos, and Vietnam and Laos on 7 October 2022 and 16 June 2023 respectively in conjunction with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). The delegations consisted of senior leaders and executives from government and private sector with discussions relating to emergency response, leadership and social policy. The visits were part of the Leadership in Responsive Public Administration course at QUT. In panel sessions for the delegates, QFES leaders highlighted QFES capabilities and collaborative approaches to response
- ◇ delivered Geographic Information System (GIS) roadshows to local and district disaster management groups. The road show, supported by each regional QFES Emergency Management Coordinator, provided training for pre-season readiness in several intelligence products including the SDCC Situational Awareness Platform, Operation Sesbania Risk Assessment Methodology, and risk products from the QFES Hazard and Risk Unit
- ◇ developed a pilot heatwave impact forecasting capability in partnership with the Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Health, Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Bureau of Statistics and Geoscience Australia. The pilot capability estimates areas of vulnerability to heat based on the Bureau of Meteorology’s heatwave service
- ◇ facilitated the live streaming of press conferences for QFES, QPS and in support of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet across major flooding incidents to relay live public safety updates to Queenslanders and up-to-date disaster and recovery plans from a state level
- ◇ produced 35 livestreams across QFES, the Office of the IGEM and QPS to support internal and external communications relating to the Leading Women’s Network, official event coverage for QFES and QPS such as graduations and ceremonies in Brisbane and Townsville, and full-day livestreams of IGEM disaster management events and *Fire in the Mulga* (refer page 55)
- ◇ designed and delivered over 118 unique video projects to clients across QFES, Office of the IGEM and QPS. These consisted of campaign-oriented web series, social media content, breaking news, live news vision and live event coverage both external and internal
- ◇ produced the long-form documentary for QPS *Policing Youth Offenders*. This documentary explored the current state of play for youth offending in Queensland, highlighting the significant social issues underpinning the behaviour. It also detailed the QPS response to the issue since the creation of the Youth Justice Taskforce which included an interview with a past offender who has been helped by established programs. The production took over nine months to complete and constituted approximately 470 hours of work. The documentary was released at a cinema media event and through social and traditional media channels. The project achieved a total reach of 3.3 million people with an advertising space rate value of over \$1.3 million through organic distribution
- ◇ produced several recruitment videos for QPS social media to highlight the advantages of becoming a police officer including coverage of the QPS Open Day at Wacol and promotional videos for QPS public servants
- ◇ produced internal communications content promoting the Rural Fire Development Framework to RFS volunteers across Queensland as the training program continues to be developed

- ◇ migrated the Disaster Management website to the whole-of-government content management system known as Squiz Matrix. The new site ensures continued access to PPRR disaster management content and includes a more contemporary design and improved end-user experience ([www.disaster.qld.gov.au](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au))
- ◇ attended Strategic Planning for Cyclone Resilient Communities Executive Residential Program hosted by Griffith University and James Cook University. QFES representatives joined a group of 30 senior decision-makers to learn and discuss what has and can be done to enable communities to prepare for and withstand future events. Senior academic and industry experts delivered transformative and applicable learning outcomes within the program
- ◇ continued to work with stakeholders including state government agencies and local governments to provide information and education to ensure the highest level of fire safety is achieved in Queensland buildings and deliver targeted emergency preparedness, response and recovery information
- ◇ continued to educate the community to raise awareness about the services provided by QFES and promote action on improving home and personal safety. Methods of education included attendance at displays, schools, presentations and workshops at local community events. QFES personnel provided information to help residents better prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events, to help foster a more resilient community by discussing smoke alarm legislation, home fire safety, bushfire safety and severe weather safety
- ◇ 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
- ◇ continued a partnership, established in December 2021, between SES and Girl Guides Australia Queensland that supports the development of girls now and into the future. The SES is supporting a badge program with Girl Guides Australia Queensland that provides an opportunity for Girl Guides around the state to learn more about volunteering for the SES. The girls complete a skills education program and undertake age-appropriate tasks relevant to SES volunteers. The badge the girls receive is added to their 'blanket badge' collection
- ◇ continued to support whole-of-government disaster management data sharing through the 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 2023, there are more than 270 members from local, state and Australian Government bodies as well as non-government organisations, with more than 550 shared datasets. This data helps inform the SDCC Situational Awareness Platform which is made up of operational situational awareness web maps and dashboards across all hazards. Governance for the QDMA Data Sharing Group is continually managed through the QFES Disaster Management Data Coordination Initiative
- ◇ participated in the National Disaster Rescue Challenge, a biennial event bringing together SES volunteers from all over Australia to test their leadership, casualty care and rescue teamwork against each other and in challenging scenarios. This event, held in October 2022, was the first challenge since 2017 due to the 2019 bushfire season and impacts of COVID-19. More than 60 volunteers participated in the challenge held in Perth. The Queensland team of eight from Townsville/Thuringowa, won all categories including Best First-Aid, Best Team Leader and overall winner of the challenge.

## Indigenous land and fire management practices

QFES regionally based staff and volunteers participated in a number of burns with Traditional Owners during 2022–23 enabling increased engagement and learning about traditional fire management practices. This work is supported by broader training of RFS staff in a nationally accredited Cultural Awareness training program which includes competencies such as working with an Aboriginal community or organisation, following Aboriginal cultural protocols, and implementing land and sea management practices.

These activities are part of QFES' commitment to improved understanding of the First Nations fire management practices and knowledge. This aligns with the RFS Blueprint objectives of recognising the importance of traditional knowledge and ensuring the cultural values of the land are respected, and the key initiative of continuing to grow partnerships with Traditional Owners and Indigenous ranger groups.

A specific example of this engagement is the RFS Northern Region's partnership with NQ Dry Tropics (an independent, not-for-profit organisation that is committed to sustaining natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations) to engage Traditional Owners in local planning and burning activities as well as learning traditional burning techniques. These learned techniques were displayed at Northern Region's Exercise Luxton held in May 2023 (refer page 46).

A further example is the *Fire in the Mulga* forum. Upside-down country is becoming all too common across Southern Queensland. Upside-down being where trees with their dead upper branches appear like roots, and the thick scrub layer at the surface acts as the canopy of this upside-down landscape. First Nations people identify this inverted landscape as unhealthy country and is indicative that the country has not been subject to the appropriate fire regime.

The *Fire in the Mulga* forum was held in Charleville in July 2022 and was co-ordinated in partnership between RFS, Southern Queensland Landscapes and Murweh Shire Council. The key purpose was to share knowledge between First Nations custodians and long-term landholders to understand the relationship fire has with the landscape and how proactive fire management can benefit everyone.

A total of 88 people attended the forum including the Traditional Owners, graziers, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service representatives, carbon abatement businesses, tourism companies, local government, rural fire brigade volunteers and other partner agencies. Presenters from Bidjara country (Carnarvon Range), Mardigan/Budjiti country (Yowah Opal fields) and Kooma shared stories about the importance of reading and understanding the country to identify when conditions are most suitable for burning to ensure long-term sustainability.

Following the forum, a range of work continues to take place with traditional burning demonstrations occurring on Bidjara country and Mardigan/Budjiti country.

Applying fire to the ground has provided opportunities for people to reconnect with country and is improving relationships between the stakeholder groups. This ongoing collaboration continues to be pursued to enhance the country for future generations, because *none of us own the land but we all belong to the land*.

## Rural Fire Service capability enhancement and uplift

The 2022–23 RFS budget was \$72.4 million, comprising \$46.55 million operating budget and \$25.85 million capital budget. This included a \$10 million budget boost to complete new or upgraded RFS facilities including funding for a new facility for rural fire brigades in the Maryborough region. The uplift will enable a new operational facility in Maryborough which will include brigade facilities, training rooms, storage and an incident control centre.

In addition to the new Maryborough facility funding, the 2022–23 RFS capital budget included:

- ◇ \$16.1 million for replacement and new rural fire appliances
- ◇ \$240,000 for a rural fire brigade shelter and appliance
- ◇ \$1 million for the RFS facilities program
- ◇ \$600,000 for slip on units
- ◇ \$200,000 for land acquisitions for brigade stations.

The RFS facilities program provided funding toward improving existing rural fire stations across the state, including toilets and other hygiene facilities.

Funding delivered a number of new and upgraded rural fire stations to ensure RFS fleet and equipment can be safely stored and to provide facilities for brigade training activities.

A further commitment was made during 2022–23 to commence a \$3 million program to retrofit life-saving cabin deluge systems into existing rural fire appliances. These safety systems increase the chance of survival for crews seeking shelter in their vehicles to escape an oncoming bushfire.

The 2023–24 RFS capital budget totals more than \$35 million and includes a significant investment of \$16.16 million towards new and replacement appliances, in addition to \$2.6 million on new operational equipment, and \$1 million to continue the cabin deluge retrofit program. Further, the 2023–24 State Budget provides an additional \$20 million to continue uplift of the RFS.

As a result of the outcomes of the Independent Review of QFES, on 26 October 2022, it was announced that the RFS will become a separate entity with its own budget under a newly established Queensland Fire Department.

As part of this reform, the RFS will receive a resources enhancement of more than 100 extra positions and funding for new appliances, facilities and equipment.

## State Emergency Service Uplift

In 2022–23, the State Budget provided additional funding for the SES Uplift—the SES received a record budget of \$43.8 million including a \$20 million boost to enhance operational capability, risk management, and support frontline volunteers representing a 102 per cent increase on the 2021–22 budget.

The 2022–23 budget included a \$10 million boost to capital projects and initiatives such as:

- ❖ ICT hardware devices to support SES training and operations
- ❖ ICT system enhancements to support volunteer administration and SES tasking management, including the rollout of critical improvements to the dispatch system for the SES 132 500 requests for assistance along with enhanced risk assessments, field safety checklists and enhanced safety incident reporting
- ❖ readiness and response equipment to enhance volunteer and community health and safety such as storm damage tools, CPR manikins, vehicle awnings, communications boosters and thermal imaging cameras
- ❖ road crash rescue equipment to enable improved response to vehicle accidents in rural and remote areas.

The SES also received 40 temporary positions across the state which delivered priority uplift in areas such as local government engagement, training development and delivery, asset management, doctrine and risk management.

This funding also assisted volunteers in gaining formal training including 20 volunteers in the Far Northern Region who graduated in May 2023 with a Certificate II in Public Safety (SES). This recruit class was planned to assist young people aged 16 to 18 years who were considering a career in Emergency Services or Defence. The class, known as the 23 Yankee Recruit Class, was honoured with certificate presentations by the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner, SES during a graduation and at 30 June 2023, have taken up positions in seven SES groups within the Far Northern Region.

As a result of the outcomes of the Independent Review of QFES, on 26 October 2022, it was announced that the SES is to become a separate entity under the QPS with its own budget. The announced reforms enabled permanent appointment to 45 positions. Thirty of these positions will enhance SES capability in the regions, with five staff each to Far Northern, Northern, North Coast and South Western Regions; six staff for Brisbane Region; and two staff each to Central and South Eastern Regions. Fifteen staff in State Office will enhance the SES's capability in strategy, planning, risk, resourcing, readiness, assurance and corporate support functions.

The funding boost also increased the SES Support Grant program (refer page 48) with a further eight local government 2022–23 SES Support Grant applications awarded with grants totalling over \$173,000; an additional \$1.6 million was added to the 2023–24 SES Support Grant budget; and a \$1 million grant was awarded to the Somerset Regional Council towards facility upgrades and fleet including the Lowood SES Group.

During the reporting period, the SES Capability Assessment Tool was developed to help inform and assist in prioritisation of SES Uplift priorities and identification of risk. Understanding the specific capabilities the SES provides to their respective communities, provided an opportunity to gain a better appreciation and understanding of Queensland SES functions and operations as well as an opportunity to collaborate with SES senior directors and staff.

## Australian Warning System

The Australian Warning System (AWS) brings a nationally consistent approach to warnings, including warning levels, icons, colours and action statements, for every community for bushfire, flood, storm, cyclone and extreme heat. The new warnings will focus on clear actions people in the warning area should take to stay safe.

QFES, in partnership with other agencies, is leading the AWS roll-out in Queensland, with implementation, planned for 1 November 2023. The introduction of these new warnings in Queensland will be complemented by a community education campaign including community engagement activities.

Previously, different warning systems have been used for different hazard types across Australia.

QFES successfully implemented AWS bushfire warnings for Queensland in May 2021. During 2022–23, QFES piloted three different approaches to creating and publishing bushfire warnings, aligning with the QFES model of *state strategy, regional management, local delivery*. QFES regional and Public Information and Warnings Unit (PIWU) Warnings Officers issued 1,249 bushfire warnings between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023. The PIWU provided operational oversight and support including quality control, coaching and 24 hours, seven days a week state-based Warnings Officer capacity to action warnings when required. PIWU also provided direct assistance to regional Warnings Officers during training, exercising and operations.

Working within the AWS framework, changes to the Queensland bushfire warning calls-to-actions and templates have been implemented following regional feedback and broader AWS warning template development.

AWS flood warning templates were provided to Local Disaster Management Groups in November 2022 and QFES has worked with partner agencies and community members to develop storm and cyclone warning templates.

AWS warnings will not replace or duplicate weather warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology. The AWS implementation project is working closely with the Bureau to ensure the warning formats complement each other and provide a complete picture for communities to make informed decisions about how to stay safe.

With more severe weather and natural disasters predicated for the 2023–24 season, the implementation of the AWS is timely.

Further information is available at:  
[www.australianwarningsystem.com.au](http://www.australianwarningsystem.com.au)

## Bushfire mitigation and preparedness

Bushfire mitigation and preparedness continues to be a shared responsibility between many partners, especially land management agencies and local government. QFES continues to place a critical priority on maintaining and supporting these partnerships.

On 15 January 2022, QFES and its partners transitioned to a year-round mitigation program known as Operation Sesbania which replaced Operation Cool Burn (a period of heightened mitigation activity generally held from the beginning of April to the end of August each year). This recognises that mitigation activities can be undertaken throughout the year depending on local conditions enabling greater flexibility for land managers and owners to conduct mitigation activities in a changing climate with limited windows for key activities such as hazard reduction burning.

On 2 May 2022, the Operation Sesbania Dashboard went live and 2022–23 was the first full year of its operation. The dashboard is designed as a mitigation, planning and activity management tool to support the prevention and preparation of bushfire safety and the response and recovery phase of operations through real-time situation awareness and hazard identification. The dashboard synchronises and displays one visual platform and provides up-to-date reports.

Operation Sesbania will run for the duration of Program Grass Tree or until advised otherwise. Program Grass Tree is a three-year bushfire mitigation program focused on creating a workable balance between establishing and sustaining a safe living environment for Queensland communities.

During the reporting period, 1,042 mitigation activities were completed within Operation Sesbania. This recording of information helps drive identification of priorities for future mitigation and inform planning and preparedness should a bushfire arise. The information and tools used in Operation Sesbania also feedback to Area Fire Management Groups which fosters coordination and collaboration at key risk locations where multiple landowners may be involved in a mitigation activity. QFES continues to work with its bushfire management partners and continues to prioritise data sharing and collaboration.

## 2026 Objective

**3. Communities** are connected and capable in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters

### 2022–2026 Strategy

- ◇ Use place-based, decentralised service delivery to inform, empower and support our communities, people and partners before, during and after fires, emergencies and disasters.

## Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) will enhance public safety and reduce the impacts of bushfires by improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions and improving how fire danger is communicated. The AFDRS is a first of its kind nationally consistent system for communicating fire danger ratings to the community and forecasting fire behaviour for decision-makers.

The AFDRS has four warning levels:

- ◇ Moderate—plan and prepare
- ◇ High—be ready to action
- ◇ Extreme—take action now to protect life and property
- ◇ Catastrophic—for your survival, leave bushfire risk areas.

The AFDRS has delivered on recommendation 13.1 of the RCNDA Report, which called for state and territory governments to expedite the development and implementation of the AFDRS.

The AFDRS went live on 1 September 2022 and is the primary source of fire danger forecasting in use within Queensland. The AFDRS provided operational decision-making support to QFES staff during the January to March 2023 Western Downs bushfire event.

Community engagement resources including brochures, fact sheets, posters and fridge magnets were developed providing information about the AFDRS. In addition, QFES regions provided information to the community through engagement activities in the lead up to the bushfire season.

QFES commenced the installation of 130 new automatic electronic roadside signs in May 2023 providing timely and accurate information to high-risk bushfire locations. The removal and installation of fire danger ratings signs is being undertaken in line with permit requirements of local government and the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

QFES has worked closely with AFAC jurisdictional partners to continue to develop and improve the AFDRS system. New fuel mapping and data have been implemented for 2023–24. This represents the most significant improvement in system accuracy since the original inception of AFDRS as a prototype system. Fire practitioners throughout Queensland will benefit from more accurate fire danger ratings as a result of this work.

## PCYC Queensland Emergency Services Cadets

QFES continued to support the Emergency Services Cadets Program (ESCP) aimed at building community resilience through the fostering of the next generation of emergency services personnel. As of 30 June 2023, the program has 411 young Queenslanders (aged 12 to 17 years) supported by 166 adult leaders in 21 cadet units.

During the reporting period:

- ◇ one new cadet unit was established in Somerset and four units ceased operations—Bowen, Cook Shire, Cooroora and South Burnett. Feasibility assessments are underway for Edmonton, Roma and Townsville to establish new units, and Cook Shire to relocate the unit to a different host service (from SES to RFS)
- ◇ the Logan City SES Unit in collaboration with the Wolffdene Emergency Services Cadet Unit and Cedar Creek Wolffdene Rural Fire Brigade hosted the South Eastern Region Cadet Rescue Challenge. The challenge, held in April 2023, consisted of seven cadet teams and one mixed adult emergency services team (comprised of adult SES and RFS members and Cadet Leaders) putting themselves through several emergency related scenarios. Activities included fire break, land search and casualty recovery, staging, communications and team/welfare management
- ◇ the annual Adult Leader Conference was held 9 to 11 December 2022 in Brisbane with a focus on Back to Basics. Sessions were held on PCYC's

Data Management Tools, Incident Reporting and Risk Assessment Processes. Leaders also attended presentations on Youth Mental Health, and the RAAP and FFF programs

- ✦ ESCape Week was held in September 2022 bringing together the top cadets from ESCP across Queensland, with RFS cadets and surf lifesaving cadets, to further develop their leadership skills and learn to work with other cadets
- ✦ the annual PCYC Cadet Games were held in Townsville in August 2022 with 126 cadets in 21 teams including Emergency Services cadets, SLSQ, Australian Navy cadets, Australian Army cadets and Australia Air Force cadets. The games strengthened the relationship between emergency services and defence agencies and was an opportunity for young people to meet mentors and role models across the sector.

A three-year Service Agreement between QFES and PCYC Queensland for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 remains in place to continue delivery of the ESCP totalling \$1,869,300 (GST exclusive). For 2022–23, a total of \$623,100 (GST exclusive) was provided to PCYC under the agreement.

## Community Insights Survey

Each year, QFES surveys Queensland residents to measure the level of their preparedness for fire and emergency events. The QFES Community Insights Survey explores a range of emergency and disaster events, preparedness activities and service expectations of QFES. The survey helps the department develop community education strategies including smoke alarm testing and legislation awareness, risk awareness and communication preferences.

In September/October 2022, a total of 2,099 Queenslanders were surveyed across the seven QFES regions.

Similar to previous years, survey results indicate that most Queenslanders consider themselves responsible for preparing their household for emergency and disaster events (85 per cent mostly or completely).

For the first time, warnings and alerts were considered the most important service, overtaking fire and hazard response in the top spot compared to 2021.

The number of Queenslanders testing and maintaining their smoke alarms in the past 12 months is significantly higher than 2021, and 46 per cent of Queenslanders have interconnected smoke alarms, significantly up from 2021. Sixty-two per cent of those who do not have them installed say they are likely to install them in the next 12 months.

Fifteen per cent of respondents had experienced a disaster or emergency event in the past year—a significant increase from 2022, and about two-thirds of respondents felt prepared for the events.

Seven in 10 people who had experienced an event felt the experience had improved their preparedness for future events.

For further information refer to [www.data.qld.gov.au/dataset/qfes-community-insights-survey](http://www.data.qld.gov.au/dataset/qfes-community-insights-survey)

## Service Agreements

QFES supports other volunteer groups that provide emergency response to Queenslanders through Service Agreements including:

- ✦ the provision of \$30 million (GST exclusive) over four years through a Service Agreement with SLSQ commencing 2020–21 under a 2020 Government Commitment. A further Service Agreement was entered into with SLSQ for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024, aligned to the 2020 Government Commitment. Funding supports the operations of 57 surf lifesaving clubs, six branches and the state headquarters for the provision of beach safety services, white water safety programs and community education, and the SLSQ helicopter and RPAS (drones) capabilities
- ✦ the provision of \$425,140 (GST exclusive) in 2022–23 as part of RLSSQ Service Agreement 2022–2024 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
- ✦ a three-year Service Agreement between QFES and PCYC Queensland for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 to continue delivery of the ESCP (refer to pages 60–61 for further information)
- ✦ Marine Rescue Service Agreements with AVCGA and VMRAQ (including Direct Relief Support Grants) directly supporting over 3,000 volunteers from 47 units (21 flotillas from AVCGA and 26 squadrons from VMRAQ) to conduct over 4,000 activations, serving the Queensland boating public across 11,000 kilometres of coastline and ocean waters.

In addition, QFES has a Service Agreement with the Retired Firefighters Association of Queensland Inc. (RFAQ), a non-profit association that provides wellbeing and related services to retired firefighters. The department provides an in-kind contribution to the RFAQ which supports the publication of its quarterly magazine *The Afterburners*. The RFAQ and QFES partnership provides retired QFES staff an avenue for social connectedness after their career with QFES.

## Lessons management

Lessons management plays an important role as part of the overall organisational development process to support continuous improvement.

An internal review of the Rainfall and Flood event of February – March 2022 was conducted leading to a small number of findings where lessons identified have been actioned to support improved delivery of the department's capability.

Additionally, a number of event de-briefs were undertaken with a case study into the bushfires in the South West region of the state. The bushfires ran from early January to mid-March 2023 and work is progressing to identify areas for improvement, as well as areas where good practice was identified.

## Other key achievements include:

- ✧ continued to maintain oversight of the phased implementation of the domestic smoke alarm requirements contained in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*, which will make Queensland households the safest in Australia
- ✧ continued to promote the critical role that smoke alarms play in alerting dwelling occupants of the presence of smoke and the smoke alarm legislative changes introduced on 1 January 2017 that require dwellings to have interconnected, photoelectric smoke alarms installed in a phased implementation process, with all homes to comply by 1 January 2027. Activities included a targeted community education advertising campaign that shifted focus from the 1 January 2022 second implementation stage for rentals and dwellings being sold, to the final implementation phase that captures all other dwellings which is predominantly owner/occupiers
- ✧ created a decentralised content collateral process designed to be easily adapted across all QFES regions that includes a suite of design templates that enable the development of recruitment material for publication through local channels by local operators using local content.

# Governance

## Executive management

As at 30 June 2023

### Board of Management profiles

#### **Greg Leach**

**AFSM MBA MEmergMgt MIFireE GAICD**

#### **Commissioner**

The Commissioner is responsible for leading and managing the efficient and effective functioning of the 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 more than 35 years' experience in the emergency services, Greg is a highly regarded emergency services executive with both country and metropolitan fire and ambulance services.

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

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

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

As Commissioner, Greg is the Chair of the BoM.

The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums including as a member of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee and member of the AFAC Board. The Commissioner also represents Queensland at the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee and the AFAC National Council.

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

Greg was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) in June 2022 in recognition of his leadership and distinguished service across both Queensland and Victoria.

## Mike Wassing

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

### Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services

The Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services is responsible for providing strategic leadership and coordination of regional disaster management functions and regional operations for the FRS, RFS and SES across the state's seven regions.

Mike Wassing commenced in the role of Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services on 7 March 2022 from the former Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience Deputy Commissioner role.

Mike is a member of the BoM, the Chair of the QFES People Committee and a member of the Strategy and Budget Committee and the ARCC.

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

Mike has served in emergency services in Queensland and Victoria for more than 30 years and has extensive experience leading the management and coordination of PPRR for all hazards, as well as strategic control and coordination for major emergencies.

Mike's career with QFES began on 21 September 2015 as Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience where he was responsible for the accountabilities of EMCC, RFS and SES, including support to RFS and SES volunteers. Mike has strengthened climate adaptation and transition arrangements across the department by leading the development of climate action plans

including the *QFES Climate Action Plan 2022–26*, was instrumental in driving *Strategy 2030* and the Volunteerism Strategy and has championed many initiatives in the workplace to positively change organisational culture. His most notable achievement has been increasing women's equality within the workplace by providing support, coaching and mentoring to many officers to guide their progression.

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 a participant in the Executive Fellows Program of Australia and New Zealand School of Government in 2017 and is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Graduate Member of the Institution of Fire Engineers.

Mike was awarded the National Emergency Medal for the 2009 Black Saturday fires in Victoria, Tropical Cyclone Debbie in 2017 and the 2019 North Queensland monsoon event. In 2019, he was awarded the AFSM for consistently demonstrating exceptional leadership to enhance volunteerism in emergency services and driving organisational change.

# Joanne Greenfield

MSC, PGDiP, RN, GAICD

## **Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting)**

**Chief Officer, RFS**

**Chief Officer, SES**

The Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services is responsible for the EMCC, RFS and SES Directorates within the department, including supporting approximately 31,700 RFS and SES volunteers.

The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for providing overall strategic leadership and coordination for the development and maintenance of state capability, strategy and policy for the service streams of QFES. The Deputy Commissioner has oversight of disaster and emergency management including the QERMF, operational response and emergency management planning before and after disasters, volunteerism, and strengthening community partnerships to build safe, healthy, confident and connected communities across Queensland.

Joanne Greenfield commenced as Acting Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services on 1 September 2022.

As Acting Deputy Commissioner, Joanne is a member of the BoM, the Chair of the Capability and Service Delivery Committee, and a member of the Strategy and Budget Committee and the ARCC.

Joanne's career with QFES began in July 2019 as Assistant Commissioner, EMCC where she was responsible for providing strategic oversight across all aspects of disaster management, incident management and community engagement.

Joanne has over 25 years of senior executive leadership experience commencing in the United Kingdom's National Health Service, where she worked across emergency service departments, intensive care units and helicopter emergency services. Joanne also led disaster preparedness response and recovery operations in Afghanistan and Zimbabwe and has been part of national recovery operations in Kosovo and Pakistan. In addition to this, Joanne also worked for Australian Aid (DFAT) and Queensland Health.

In 2022, Joanne undertook the role of Commissioner, Quarantine Taskforce, overseeing a network of quarantine venues for up to 5,000 people at any one time, during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Joanne is a Registered Nurse with a Master of Science majoring in infection disease, epidemiology, policy, planning and economics. Joanne is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## Stephen Smith

AFSM EMPA MLshipMgt GAICD

### Deputy Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Service (Acting)

The Deputy Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Service is responsible for the FRS directorate within the department, including supporting approximately 75 Research and Scientific and AUS-1 DART volunteers as well as leading the QFES RIT Support Directorate to support the Emergency Services Reform.

The Deputy Commissioner provides policy and direction to frontline officers working in regions to maintain fire safety for buildings in Queensland; providing research to maximise the safety and effectiveness of chemical emergency management throughout Queensland for the protection of people, property and the environment; and the development of strategy and standards for the FRS; and the specialist and technical response units.

Stephen Smith commenced as Acting Deputy Commissioner, FRS on 27 February 2023.

As Acting Deputy Commissioner, Stephen is a member of the BoM and the Strategy and Budget Committee.

Stephen began his career in 1994 progressing through to the rank of Assistant Commissioner in late 2015 and has served in various regional and

state roles in a variety of specialist areas. Stephen has extensive knowledge, skills and experience in emergency and crisis management, both domestically and internationally, with a particular interest in leadership and capability development.

Stephen was awarded the AFSM in 2011 for distinguished service and success in technical rescue with outstanding commitment and drive in improving the profile and capability of the Queensland USAR Taskforce. Stephen has completed an Executive Masters of Public Administration, a Masters of Leadership and Management, and is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. His current area of particular interest is organisational level change, leadership influence, and the human factors that influence organisational behaviour.

## Adam Stevenson

BEC, EMPA

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

The Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services 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 directorates of Finance, Procurement and Levy; Strategy; Assurance; Asset Services; Information and Technology; and QFES People (including supporting 210 Auxiliary Support Officer and Peer Support Officer volunteers), and Internal Audit. The division works closely with the public safety agencies including the Office of the IGEM and QPS.

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 is a member of the BoM and the Chair of the Strategy and Budget Committee.

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

## Jennifer Robertson

LLB GradCertBus FAICD FGIA

### Independent member

Ms Jennifer Robertson was appointed to the BoM in December 2018 and is QFES' first independent member.

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 for more than 18 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 sits on the Board of Queensland Independent Schools Block Grant Authority (and chairs its Audit and Compliance Committee) and the Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies Advisory Board, and the Utilitas Advisory Board. Her previous roles have included the first non-pilot director on the Board of Brisbane Marine Pilots in its 31-year history, Chair of the Defence Reserves Support Council Queensland and Deputy Chair of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

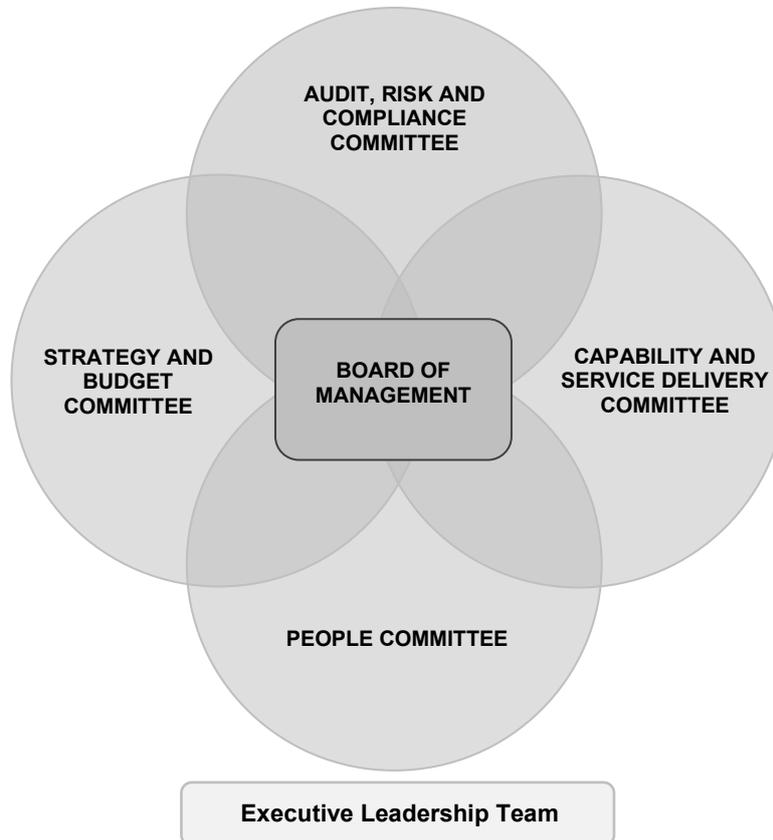
Jennifer has a Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Certificate in Business from the Queensland University of Technology. She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Governance Institute of Australia. Jennifer also holds a Certificate in Foundations of Neuroscience with Distinction 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 2023 is as follows:



The department's 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 the department.

During the reporting period, the governance committees underwent continuous improvement processes. The identified areas for improvement focus on the committees assisting the BoM to achieve the department's 2026 objectives as outlined in the strategic plan.

The governance committee structure is underpinned by the executive leadership influence, the capability and investment framework, strategic and organisational 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' objectives including the vision and purpose, and direction setting to ensure compliance and to improve performance. The Board provides direction and guidance along with oversight of the department's governance committees.

**Membership**

- ✧ Greg Leach, Commissioner (Chair)
- ✧ Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services
- ✧ Adam Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Corporate Services (Acting)
- ✧ Joanne Greenfield, Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting)
- ✧ Stephen Smith, Deputy Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Service (Acting)
- ✧ Jennifer Robertson, independent member.

*Joanne Greenfield was appointed Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting) and member of BOM on 1 September 2022.*

*Stephen Smith was a member of BoM as Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting) for the period 5 March 2022 to 7 September 2022 and as Deputy Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Service (Acting) commencing 27 February 2023.*

*Acting Deputy Commissioner Smith provided a handover to Acting Deputy Commissioner Greenfield from 1 to 7 September 2022.*

**Remuneration** The independent member, Jennifer Robertson, was paid \$6,900 (excluding GST) in remuneration for BoM member services provided in 2022–23.

**Meetings** The BoM meets every six weeks with additional meetings convened as required. During 2022–23, the BoM met on 12 occasions, including extra-ordinary meetings and workshops.

## Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

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

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

**Membership**

- ✧ Sue Ryan, independent Chair
- ✧ Debbie Best, independent member (appointed 24 August 2022)
- ✧ Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Readiness and Response Services
- ✧ Joanne Greenfield, Deputy Commissioner, Capability and State Services (Acting) (appointed 2 September 2022)
- ✧ David Hermann, Assistant Commissioner, South Western Region.

*Glenn Poole was an independent member for the period July 2017 to 31 August 2022.*

*John Bolger, former Assistant Commissioner, RFS was a member for the period 1 July 2019 to 2 September 2022.*

## Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (cont'd)

### Remuneration

The independent Chair, Sue Ryan, was paid \$13,062 (excluding GST) in remuneration for services provided in 2022–23 and independent members Glenn Poole and Debbie Best were paid \$2,800 and \$3,150 (excluding GST) in remuneration respectively for services provided in 2022–23.

### Meetings

In 2022–23, the committee met on five occasions with an additional meeting in August 2022 regarding the 2021–22 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.

### Key achievements

In 2022–23, the committee's key achievements include:

- ◇ overseeing the internal audit program including endorsing and monitoring delivery of the internal audit plan and reviewing the findings and recommendations of internal audits and assessing the adequacy of QFES' management response
- ◇ monitoring the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) audit plan including oversight of the findings and recommendations
- ◇ overseeing the implementation of agreed recommendations from internal and external audit activities with a continued focus on the implementation of overdue and ageing recommendations
- ◇ overseeing the implementation of recommendations made by regulatory authorities such as the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC), Coroner and the Office of the IGEM
- ◇ overseeing the implementation of recommendations from the RCNDA Report
- ◇ overseeing the implementation of relevant PSBA audit recommendations (following the disestablishment of PSBA)
- ◇ reviewing and endorsing the 2021–22 Financial Statements and Chief Finance Officer Assurance Statement and providing recommendations to improve clarity and transparency
- ◇ noting and monitoring the 2022–23 Financial Statements project plan and preparation
- ◇ noting current and future accounting standard changes, impacts and disclosure enhancements relating to Queensland Treasury's *Financial Reporting Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*
- ◇ monitoring and reviewing financial controls and accounting matters
- ◇ undertaking a program of deep dives into enterprise risks including Supply Chain; Sustainability and Suitability; and Workforce Wellbeing
- ◇ reviewing and endorsing the QFES 2021–22 ISMS attestation for Commissioner approval (*Information security policy (IS18:2018)*: Policy requirement 5)
- ◇ overseeing key areas of compliance such as business continuity management and risk management and providing recommendations to ensure departmental officers are aware of their responsibilities under relevant legislation
- ◇ considering the appropriateness of the department's performance management and reporting systems and measures and provided recommendations to enhance metrics and insights enabling informed decision-making
- ◇ endorsing the *QFES Protective Security Strategy and Strategic Security Plan 2022/2023* with ongoing oversight of security risk assessments of QFES' critical assets and operations as part of QFES' security governance requirements under the *Queensland Protective Security Framework*.

## **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 objectives in the department's 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 department. 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

The *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* (1 January 2011) (Code of Conduct) 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.

The QFES *Think. Say. Do.* awareness package 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. All staff and volunteers are required to complete the package every three years to maintain currency. 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.

Relevant topics from the *Think. Say. Do.* awareness package are presented at the department's Induction Forum.

Staff from the Relations and Standards Branch within QFES People will undertake training in early 2023–24, delivered by the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, relating to Complaints management, Ethical decision-making in complaints, Complaints management—Internal review and Managing unreasonable complainant conduct.

QFES recognises the importance of transparency of decision-making influenced by effective governance practices and is developing the Fraud and Corruption Mitigation Program. The program will support the department's *Fraud and Corruption Control Plan* and aligns with the principles of the *Public Sector Act 2022*. The program is focussed on:

- ✦ enhancing procurement and project management activities
- ✦ developing, training and sustaining a minimum level of competency in relation to procurement, probity principles, conflict of interest and associated Queensland Government frameworks
- ✦ enhancing the governance, understanding and oversight of the management of QFES procurement activities, high value investments and strategic projects.

The outcomes of the program will provide a safer environment for QFES staff and volunteers ensuring they are conversant with conflict of interest and procurement requirements, minimising risks and maintaining the department's and its people's ethical obligations.

The Public Sector Act Implementation Team, within QFES People, is working with the Relations and Standards Branch subject matter experts, to ensure that all departmental policies and procedures relating to Management of complaints and Individual Employee Grievances, align with the new Public Sector Commission Directives.

# 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 2022–23, the following state bodies examined the operations of QFES or other agencies with findings or issues requiring consideration by, or impacting on, QFES—Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM), Queensland Audit Office (QAO) and Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC).

### Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management

The Office of the IGEM provides assurance and advice to enhance Queensland's emergency management arrangements. The IGEM plays a key role in reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of QDMA, building emergency management capability and collaborative partnerships.

IGEM reports and the Queensland Government responses are accessible at [www.igem.qld.gov.au](http://www.igem.qld.gov.au)

Information on IGEM reviews with recommendations requiring action by QFES released prior to 2022–23 is provided on page 52.

#### **Review of Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) Report 2: 2022–2023**

On 26 October 2022, the Government released *Good Jobs and Better Fire and Emergency Services to Support Queensland's Great Lifestyle* in response to the *Independent Review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services* (2 November 2021). On 14 December 2022, consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Review, the Government requested the IGEM conduct a review of QDMA to inform any changes to the arrangements, legislative reforms, or any updates to the State Disaster Management Plan.

The Review of QDMA was delivered to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services on 28 April 2023. The review report makes 10 recommendations that draw together the components of PPRR as well as resilience under the QDMA. The Queensland Government accepted in principle all 10 review recommendations.

As at 30 June 2023, the RIT is considering the recommendations in detail and is working with relevant agencies including QFES to develop an implementation plan for reform activities consistent with the Emergency Services Reform.

#### **South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding February to March 2022 Review Report 1: 2022–2023**

On 31 August 2022, the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding February to March 2022 Review was delivered to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. The review assessed the effectiveness of preparedness activities and the response to the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding Event of February to March 2022 by the Queensland Government, relevant local government agencies and other agencies engaged in response operations in the 23 Local Government Areas activated for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. The review also addressed the timing and effectiveness of Emergency Alerts that were issued to warn the general community of the flooding event and the effectiveness of cooperation between all agencies engaged in response operations.

The review report contains 19 recommendations directed at the state and local government levels.

QFES is identified as the lead agency for 13 recommendations and a support agency for one local government recommendation. As at 30 June 2023, QFES has implemented four recommendations and is working to a series of action plans to support implementation of the remaining recommendations.

## Crime and Corruption Commission

The CCC is an independent statutory body set up to combat and reduce the incidence of major crime and corruption in the public sector in Queensland. The CCC conducts audits to examine how agencies have responded to particular types of complaints about corruption 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](http://www.ccc.qld.gov.au)

### ***Influence and transparency in Queensland's public sector: Minimising the corruption risks associated with improper influence on government decisions January 2023***

In this review, the CCC considered examples and patterns of lobbying influence, decision-making and transparency across both state and local government with a focus on identifying the corruption risks posed by certain influencing practices.

The CCC proposed seven reforms (recommendations) with one applicable to all public sector agencies including QFES relating to lobbying control frameworks.

QFES is considering the recommendation for implementation.

## 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.

QAO reports are accessible at: [www.qao.qld.gov.au](http://www.qao.qld.gov.au)

### ***Implementing machinery of government changes Report 17: 2022–23***

This report provides insights into central agency leadership during machinery of government changes, analyses the change management practices of four departments that were significantly affected by machinery of government changes announced in November 2020, and assesses the effect that restructures have on departments' internal controls—their people, systems and processes.

QFES was not an audited entity.

The report provides seven recommendations with four recommendations applicable to QFES with the implementation of the Emergency Services Reform.

QFES is considering the recommendations for implementation.

## State entities 2022 Report 11: 2022–23

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 for 2021–22.

QFES received an unmodified audit opinion with the legislative deadline achieved.

### ***Managing workforce agility in the Queensland public sector Report 6: 2022–23***

The audit examines the effectiveness of the Queensland public sector's workforce planning to support an agile and flexible workforce that can meet changing needs and government priorities.

QFES was an audited entity.

The report provides seven recommendations. Three recommendations are directed at all Queensland Government departments relating to ensuring strategic workforce planning is driven by leaders and integrated into organisational planning, the implementation of better strategies to address challenges and create a skilled workforce, and the move from traditional recruitment practices to contemporary talent acquisition approaches.

QFES has addressed the three recommendations.

### ***Improving grants management Report 2: 2022–23***

The report analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the internal controls (people, systems, and processes) used by a number of departments in managing their grant programs.

QFES was not an audited entity.

Four recommendations directed at all departments relating to enhancing grants management processes are being implemented by QFES.

## Risk management

Risk management is an essential component in achieving QFES' vision and purpose as outlined in the department's strategic plan. QFES' risk management approach is in accordance with the obligations outlined in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The QFES Risk Management Framework is based on the international standard ISO 31000:2018 *Risk management – Guidelines* and ensures that risk management is integrated with all management responsibilities, such as strategic and operational planning, decision-making processes, the management of fraud and corruption, and workplace health and safety. The framework also outlines the department's requirements and approach to managing risk to position QFES to achieve better outcomes for its staff, volunteers, partners and the community and to ensure the sustainability of the department.

Risk management continues to be embedded throughout QFES through regular risk discussions at

meetings of QFES' governance committees. This provides a heightened level of accountability and assurance that the risks are being managed with oversight by the department's ARCC. Additionally, risk-based decision-making discussions are aligned with the QFES risk appetite. QFES' executive involvement and assessment of the enterprise risks are achieved through quarterly risk reporting with an aim to conduct one enterprise risk deep dive at each ARCC meeting. The QFES enterprise risks are reviewed by the ELT every 12 months for consideration by ARCC and approval by the BoM.

QFES has an established Risk Management System to collate controls and report on risk at both an enterprise and operational level.

## Internal Audit

In January 2023, QFES established its in-house internal audit function—an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity that will value and improve QFES operations. This function was previously provided by the QPS Internal Audit Unit under a portfolio service delivery model.

The QFES Internal Audit function works closely with business units to promote efficiency, operational quality, internal control enhancement and regulatory compliance, and help understand and manage current and emerging risks.

Internal Audit assists the BoM to achieve its goals and objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to improve risk management, controls and governance processes.

The department's Internal Audit Unit operates in accordance with an approved Internal Audit Charter as required under the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, which is reviewed and endorsed by ARCC annually. The Charter authorises appropriate access to all functions, records, property and personnel within the department as well as direct access to the Chair and independent members of the ARCC. All members of Internal Audit are obliged to apply and uphold the principles of integrity, objectivity, confidentiality and competency under The Institute of Internal Auditors' *Code of Ethics*.

Under its approved Charter, the Internal Audit function can undertake a series of review types including compliance, performance, 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. The Internal Audit Unit had due regard to the

Queensland Treasury *Audit Committee Guidelines Improving Accountability and Performance* (July 2020).

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 QFES *Annual Internal Audit Plan 2022–23 and Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2023–26* was endorsed by the QFES ARCC and approved by the Commissioner in July 2022.

During 2022–23, seven internal audit reviews were finalised.

Other achievements for 2022–23 include:

- ✦ successfully reprioritised and executed the annual internal audit plan to ensure alignment with key and emerging risks and provided audit reports to the ARCC and BoM
- ✦ monitored and reported on the status of the implementation of internal and external (QAO and CCC) audit recommendations and business improvement opportunities to the ARCC and BoM
- ✦ supported management by providing advice on corporate governance and related issues including fraud and corruption prevention programs and risk management.

## Information systems and recordkeeping

The QPS Information Management Unit operates and manages Information and recordkeeping systems to support a number of public safety agencies including QFES.

During the reporting period, the QPS Information Management Unit records management team:

- ◇ provided advice on recordkeeping and training in the use of the RecFind records management system, ensuring new users were made aware of, and understood, their broader recordkeeping responsibilities
- ◇ promoted effective digital recordkeeping governance including the provision of advice on technologies and concepts, and development of suitable approaches to facilitate continued progression to more efficient electronic information management practices
- ◇ provided ongoing digitisation of QFES Brisbane Region microfiche building fire safety plans and transition of these records to secure cloud-hosted storage, enabling QFES Community Safety, Building Fire Safety Officers to access these records remotely
- ◇ provided advice on approach and methodology, including technologies and concepts, for the digitisation of SES member files, to maximise efficiencies and enhance alignment with recordkeeping methodologies and compliance in line with policies and procedures set out within the whole-of-government recordkeeping governance framework
- ◇ provided ongoing disposal of records that have reached the required retention timeframe and are approved for destruction by the authorised QFES delegate, stored within commercial secondary storage facility, reducing overheads and meeting recordkeeping requirements
- ◇ created more than 1,000 electronic and hardcopy files and approximately 1,600 new archive boxes using the RecFind records management system for QFES business units.

Public records are kept for the periods specified in the general and core retention schedules and only destroyed once the owner agrees and approval is received from the authorised QFES nominee.

There were no known breaches of information security with respect to records managed within the RecFind records management system during the reporting period.

No transfers of public records to Queensland State Archives were made during the reporting period.

In addition, the QFES Information and Technology Directorate is undertaking the following initiatives to support improved information and records management:

- ◇ the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Initiative which supports protective controls for managing PII across core QFES structured and unstructured systems. The initiative will reduce the risk profile associated with the capture, use, disclosure, storage and retention of PII
- ◇ development of an electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS) Business Case. An eDRMS will support the department's goal of building organisational information management capabilities and enable QFES to maximise the value of documents and records with consistent and timely capture and compliance management. The department anticipates a number of benefits from the new system, including improved accessibility, a reduction in duplication and information-sharing across the department. The eDRMS will also enhance life-cycle management of records by automating controls governing information security and disposal.

In 2022–23, the department completed a review and update of the policies that comprise the QFES Information Management Policy Framework. The policies define staff roles and responsibilities and are available on the QFES Gateway and communicated to new staff at the department's Corporate Induction Forum.

## Information security attestation statement

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 ISMS based on ISO 27001 Information security management systems. The function of an ISMS is to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information.

Throughout 2022–23, QFES focused on maturing its ISMS and building on the progress achieved in previous years. Furthermore, the QFES ISMS was independently audited against the requirements of ISO 27001 Information security management systems. The findings provide the basis for the department to further mature the operation of the ISMS and enhance QFES information security practices. The audit findings will be addressed through the QFES ISMS Corrective Action and Improvements Register.

Additionally, the QFES ISMS complements the Frontline and Digital Division, QPS ISMS. ICT and cyber security services are provided to QFES by the QPS Frontline and Digital Division under a shared

services arrangement. The Frontline and Digital Division is operating a certified ISMS and the scope includes critical assets both physical, information and data.

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. Formal notification will be provided to the Queensland Government Chief Information Security Officer by 30 September 2023 in accordance with IS18:2018, noting that appropriate assurance activities have been undertaken to inform this opinion and the department's information security risk position.

# Human resources

## Strategic workforce planning and performance

### Workforce profile

	FTE	Headcount
Total paid staffing for QFES as at 2 July 2023	3,825.92	5,559

The increase of 160.24 FTE from 17 June 2022 (3,665.68) to 2 July 2023 was mainly attributed to the 2020 Government Commitment to recruit additional paid firefighters to strengthen Queensland's frontline emergency response for fire and emergency services and operational staff attrition. There has also been an uplift of staff to address critical gaps in support for operational service delivery initiatives.

Occupation Types by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Corporate	10.52
Frontline and Frontline Support	89.48
Appointment Type by FTE	Percentage of total workforce based on FTE
Permanent	89.54
Temporary	4.63
Casual	5.39
Contract	0.44
Employment status by Headcount	Percentage of total workforce based on Headcount
Full-time	64.54
Part-time	1.64
Casual	33.82

#### Notes:

1. The FTE figure is calculated using the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) aligned methodology.
2. FTE and headcount data is as at fortnight ending 2 July 2023 as per MOHRI reporting.
3. FTE and headcount includes active, paid employees only.
4. Due to the on-call nature of auxiliary firefighters they are represented as 0.1 of an FTE.

## Target group data

Workforce profile data	Number (headcount)	Target 2023–2026 (percentage)	Percentage of total workforce based on headcount unless otherwise indicated
<b>Gender</b>			
Woman	1,127	N/A	20.27
Man	4,429	N/A	79.67
Non-binary	3	N/A	0.05
<b>Diversity groups</b>			
Women	1,127	N/A	20.27
Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples	129	4.0	2.32
People with disability	80	12.0	1.44
CALD—Speak a language at home other than English including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Australian South Sea Islander languages	166	12.0	2.99
<b>Women in leadership roles</b>			
Senior Officers (Classified and s155 equivalent combined)	14	50.0	45.16 <i>Women as percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives (Classified and s155 equivalent combined)	3	50.0	10.71 <i>Women as percentage of the total leadership cohort</i>

### Notes:

1. Headcount and percentage data is as at fortnight ending 2 July 2023 as per MOHRI reporting.
2. Headcount, percentage of total workforce and percentage of the leadership cohort is calculated on active, paid employees only.
3. Women in leadership roles are considered those positions that are Senior Officer and equivalent, and above. For QFES this includes Chief Executive Officer, Senior Executive Service, Senior Officer, Section 155 *Public Sector Act 2022* Senior Executive Service/Senior Officer equivalent, and Chief Superintendent classifications.
4. Target percentages are Public Sector Governance Council approved as at 17 April 2023.
5. N/A – not applicable.

## Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment

During the period, one employee received a redundancy package at a cost of \$57,627.18.

## Workforce planning and performance

### Strategic Workforce Planning Framework

The *QFES Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–2025*, approved by the BoM in August 2022, supports the Queensland Government’s *10-year human capital outlook*, the department’s strategic plan and *Strategy 2030*. The plan is the department’s commitment to addressing current and future workforce risks to ensure QFES people are best supported to deliver a connected and capable Queensland in the face of emergencies and disasters. The plan details the department’s:

- ✦ workforce future outlook
- ✦ workforce profile
- ✦ workforce challenges
- ✦ values
- ✦ strategic workforce activities.

The department utilises its Strategic Workforce Planning Framework to match its service delivery with organisational strategy. The framework outlines a number of objectives, steps and activities to improve planning, increase collaboration, better understand workforce reporting and invest in human resource data and analytics from a strategic workforce approach.

The department’s strategic workforce plan is reviewed annually to reflect the changing workforce environment and its impact on QFES’ strategic workforce demands and opportunities.

### Equity and diversity

During 2022–23, QFES undertook an equity and diversity audit to fulfil the Commissioner’s obligations to progress equity, diversity, respect and inclusion in accordance with the *Public Sector Act 2022*. The audit utilised analysis of the September 2022 MOHRI data and QFES’ WfQ results that identified several areas for improvement.

The data and information contained in the audit will be used to inform further analysis, inquiry and empirical research to inform the annual review of the strategic workforce plan and develop a QFES Equity and Diversity Plan.

The Gender Equity Advisory Group, established in 2021–22, supports the empowerment, development and retention of women and others within the paid and volunteer workforce who are from under-represented groups. The advisory group, which meets every two months, achieves this by:

- ✦ encouraging and connecting the QFES workforce to support women
- ✦ providing training and development in relation to gender equity
- ✦ advocating and advising on issues affecting women and gender equity

- ✦ promoting initiatives that support diversity and inclusion.

During the reporting period, following a suggestion by the advisory group, a one-stop-shop page was released on the QFES Gateway providing information about pregnancy, birth, and babies in the workplace. The page is a resource for pregnant people and supervisors to access information about entitlements and obligations.

### QFES resourcing

The QFES Establishment, Resource and Vacancy Management Committee continues to provide enhanced governance of vacancy and position management for the department’s resource allocations to meet whole-of-government requirements. The committee ensures there is a strategic and evidence-based view across the department, so that resources are directed to priority areas. The committee processes are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure enhanced alignment with the Strategy and Budget Committee, with the committee providing the resourcing requirements to implement the Strategy and Budget Committee’s 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, information and technology, 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 continued its partnership with *Job Access*—a disability employment service provider—to work with QFES to ensure all recruitment processes are

being driven through a disability employment lens. QFES aims to build a diverse workforce that is reflective of the community it serves, and increase capacity and capability for current and future workforce needs through contemporary and innovative recruitment practices and enterprise workforce planning. QFES engages with a variety of providers such as Work180 and UNIQ You, the Department of Veterans Affairs and RSL Queensland to promote careers in QFES.

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 suitability for the role. 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.

QFES' forthcoming Equity and Diversity Plan will outline key measures to further support candidates in a recruitment process who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, people with CALD backgrounds, or women applying for leadership positions.

ALL IN. ALL FRONTS. can be accessed at [www.qfes.qld.gov.au/join-our-team](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/join-our-team)

### **Employee performance management framework**

Personal achievement and development plans 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 QFES 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.

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

QFES appoints employees pursuant to either the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* or the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

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.

In compliance with IR Act provisions, 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 2022* 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 six unions, that are registered industrial organisations under the IR Act, representing the various employment streams within QFES are:

- ✦ Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union
- ✦ Queensland Fire and Rescue Senior Officers' Union of Employees
- ✦ Rural Fire Service Branch of Together Queensland
- ✦ Together Union
- ✦ United Firefighters Union Queensland
- ✦ United Workers Union.

Generally, agency 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 heard in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission may be accessed for other matters.

If internal resolution cannot be achieved, disputes can be referred to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission for conciliation and if necessary, arbitration.

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 underpins the Leadership Foundation Programs. The Leading Self and Leading Others programs are fully implemented and continue to be delivered across the state. The Leading Leaders program is continuing to be developed, informed by contemporary leadership development methodology and trials of program components with the workforce.

The framework and foundation programs align to the themes of the Queensland Government *3-year Human Capital Strategic Roadmap 2022*. Through the utilisation of internal resources and existing whole-of-government programs, such as those provided by the Public Sector Commission through the Queensland University of Technology and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, current and emerging leaders have access to leading practice content and concepts.

### **Health, safety and wellbeing**

The department continues to treat the health, safety and wellbeing of its workforce as a high priority with this commitment articulated in the *QFES Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2024* and department's strategic plan which aligns with *Strategy 2030*.

The department has dedicated resources (state based and in each QFES region) to support the health, safety and wellbeing of its workforce 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 investigations, 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 WHS and wellbeing issues or concerns.

Achievements during the reporting period include:

- ✧ access to and communication of vaccination programs related to influenza and COVID-19 for staff and volunteers and hepatitis B for relevant staff
- ✧ increased focus on managing the plant and equipment lifecycle to ensure that risks are managed appropriately and effectively and embedded into all business processes consistent with legislated requirements
- ✧ progressed the development of the contemporary medical standards project for safety critical roles. SES standards are complete and RFS standards are in development. This project will ensure that QFES meets its legislative obligations to identify, assess and manage the risks associated with certain medical conditions related to QFES operational roles
- ✧ developed and implemented Hydration Safe Work Guidelines and Oral Hydration Solutions providing contemporary evidence-based hydration solutions for emergency workers.

### **Supporting mental health and wellbeing**

QFES is committed to providing a broad range of support services for its workforce (paid staff and volunteers) to promote mental health and wellbeing.

The FESSN delivers support services to assist with personal or work-related challenges including:

- ✧ confidential professional counselling is available to all QFES staff and volunteers 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 staff and volunteers and their immediate families. This is a pager service with calls returned within two hours
- ✧ Peer Support Program—a network of specially trained QFES PSOs who assist colleagues with personal or work-related difficulties

- ❖ critical incident and disaster support services promoting psychological first-aid for staff and volunteers 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.

In addition, FESSN manages the Chaplaincy Service Support Network. The network provides personal support services to the department's staff and volunteers, current serving and retired, and their families on religious, spiritual, moral, ethical, cultural and welfare matters. The network provides pastoral care to staff and their communities and the Senior Chaplains provide supervision and advice to regional Chaplains and assist with the coordination of regional chaplaincy activities. QFES contracts chaplaincy services through The Salvation Army.

During 2022–23, five mental health professionals were appointed—Brisbane (two positions), Northern and South Eastern Regions along with a Manager, Disaster Response appointed to state office. Recruitment will continue in 2023–24 for a further five equipping each region with their own dedicated Manager, Mental Health Services.

The inaugural QFES Mental Health Strategy captures the risk and resilience profile of the department, providing a whole-of-career life approach and systems focus to ensure risk mitigation and long-term improved outcomes for QFES members' mental health. The strategy's objective is to improve the mental wellbeing of all QFES personnel (paid and volunteer). The strategy's four key principles are Prevent, Prepare, Respond and Recover. The strategy will be implemented in 2023–24.

During 2022–23, QFES continued 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. R U OK? Day events included a livestream discussion on the importance of mental health for QFES members and how QFES can take further steps to encourage open conversations. In addition, more than \$67,000 was raised in support of Movember—QFES finished in first place amongst National First Responder agencies—raising funds and awareness for men's mental and physical health.

## Proactive Resilience Services

QFES Active Resilience Engagement (QARE) is an individual wellbeing check-in with a QFES counsellor that can be provisioned preventatively, and is routinely scheduled for high-risk teams, or reactively (targeted for teams with recent high exposure). This program broadens the network of support and reduces stigma by providing check-ins to all teams identifying as needing support, rather than individuals. QARE sessions are particularly beneficial for providing escalated support options during significant operational events.

In 2022–23, FESSN provided more than 280 QARE sessions over 67 sites across the state. QARE sessions have resulted in an increase in uptake of counselling services and a breakdown of stigma associated with help seeking by those members receiving check-ins.

## Peer Support Services

The Peer Support program consists of 180 active PSOs, at 30 June 2023, from a range of roles across the state, who volunteer to assist their colleagues with work or personal challenges. PSOs play a crucial role in practical and emotional support such as follow-up after critical incidents, providing information sessions on mental health and assisting colleagues with work or personal challenges.

During 2022–23, PSOs provided more than 5,200 hours of support to approximately 4,300 members.

## Critical Incident Services

FESSN responds on average to 59 new critical incidents each month across Queensland. FESSN has been involved in reviewing the process and resources available to support continuous improvement of the department's support response.

To improve the way QFES manages incidents, during the reporting period, a live critical incident dashboard was piloted. The dashboard is designed to assist with monitoring cumulative exposure to incidents and implementation of localised proactive prevention and preparation strategies.

At 30 June 2023, there are 110 PSOs trained and approved for Peer Support Response activation following a critical incident including 18 who completed the additional training in 2022–23.

## Training Services

FESSN provides tailored training services to meet the unique challenges experienced by QFES personnel.

FESSN Training Services provided in excess of 360 hours of training in 2022–23 through presentation of the following products:

- ✦ PSO Foundations Training and Upskilling
- ✦ Critical Incident Management Training
- ✦ Mental Health Awareness
- ✦ FESSN Services Awareness
- ✦ DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness and conscientiousness) Personality Profiling
- ✦ Suicide Awareness
- ✦ Resilience
- ✦ Mental Health Leadership.

Mental health awareness and trauma preparedness training was also provided to all permanent and auxiliary FRS recruits (12 intakes) and Fire Communications recruits (three intakes) during the reporting period.

Focused Mental Health Leadership training through the CarefulLeaders program resulted in the education of 659 leaders through 55 sessions conducted statewide. The CarefulLeaders program is a QFES designed program which develops mental health literacy including stigma reduction, and provides leaders with strategies, skills and tools for leading positive mental health culture in the workplace, leading effective mental health conversations, leading in times of crisis (including suicidality), and leading recovery.

FESSN training services also targeted recruit training sessions, role focused training sessions, inductions, conferences, summits and committees, to roll out mental health awareness in line with the QFES Mental Health Strategy.

## Not Now, Not Ever to domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence (DFV) can affect people of all cultures, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, education backgrounds and income levels. DFV is a workplace issue as it can affect the attendance, performance, productivity, wellbeing and safety of the person experiencing violence as well as their work colleagues. QFES is dedicated to raising awareness of this important issue across its workforce and the wider community.

During the reporting period, QFES:

- ✦ implemented a department-wide mobile phone-donation policy to support those who experience DFV—the first Queensland Government agency to do so. The Domestic Violence Safe Phone initiative collects unused and replacement mobile phones and gives them to people who experience DFV and are in need of a mobile phone
- ✦ provided new lunchboxes and school supplies for disadvantaged school children, with Zephyr Education, with collection points around the state
- ✦ participated in DFV Prevention Month during May 2023, with the theme *Love≠Control*, to raise awareness amongst the QFES workforce through a number of initiatives including:
  - hosted a panel discussion themed *DFV awareness: why is it important?* Panellists provided an insight into the signs and impact of DFV and explored the behaviours that contribute to DFV in communities
  - participated in the 2023 Darkness to Daylight challenge throughout the month of May, for the tenth year with the Darkness to Daylight live event held on 31 May 2023. QFES members from across the state supported bringing an end to DFV and raising awareness of DFV and coercive control through building awareness and fundraising.
- ✦ recognised White Ribbon Day on 18 November 2022. The day aims to end violence against women—while both men and women experience DFV, women are over-represented in the DFV statistics.

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**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of comprehensive income**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	Notes	2023 Actual \$'000	2023 Budget \$'000	2023 Budget Variance * \$'000	2022 Actual \$'000
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>					
Appropriation revenue	4	202,940	150,466	52,474	338,769
User charges and fees	5	60,504	55,523	4,981	58,898
Emergency management levies	6	625,202	623,736	1,466	604,403
Grants and other contributions	7	35,869	16,002	19,867	28,740
Other revenue		9,219	2,570	6,649	4,157
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>933,734</b>	<b>848,297</b>	<b>85,437</b>	<b>1,034,967</b>
Gains on disposal/remeasurement of assets	8	1,939	-	1,939	19,830
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>		<b>935,673</b>	<b>848,297</b>	<b>87,376</b>	<b>1,054,797</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>					
Employee expenses	9	572,823	520,410	52,413	509,307
Supplies and services	11	237,291	228,701	8,590	360,371
Grants and subsidies	12	23,043	26,746	(3,703)	23,047
Depreciation and amortisation	15-17	50,776	43,901	6,875	45,384
Impairment losses/(gains)		(116)	520	(636)	(498)
Interest on lease liability		476	78	398	119
Other expenses	13	13,779	12,332	1,447	12,319
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>		<b>898,072</b>	<b>832,688</b>	<b>65,384</b>	<b>950,049</b>
<b>Operating result for the year</b>		<b>37,601</b>	<b>15,609</b>	<b>21,992</b>	<b>104,748</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income not reclassified subsequently to operating result</b>					
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus	16	43,311	-	43,311	22,684
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>43,311</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43,311</b>	<b>22,684</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<b>80,912</b>	<b>15,609</b>	<b>65,303</b>	<b>127,432</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 28.

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of financial position**  
**As at 30 June 2023**

	Notes	2023 Actual \$'000	2023 Budget \$'000	2023 Budget Variance * \$'000	2022 Actual \$'000
<b>Assets</b>					
<b>Current assets</b>					
Cash		150,239	72,070	78,169	112,490
Receivables	14	106,553	67,194	39,359	86,762
Inventories		6,961	8,324	(1,363)	8,065
Prepayments		6,925	6,079	846	6,069
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>270,678</b>	<b>153,667</b>	<b>117,011</b>	<b>213,386</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>					
Intangible assets	15	377	376	1	1,254
Property, plant and equipment	16	956,600	859,981	96,619	884,031
Right-of-use assets	17	29,530	6,482	23,048	8,951
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>986,507</b>	<b>866,839</b>	<b>119,668</b>	<b>894,236</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>1,257,185</b>	<b>1,020,506</b>	<b>236,679</b>	<b>1,107,622</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>					
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Payables	18	48,174	37,471	10,703	24,985
Lease liabilities	17	3,014	1,992	1,022	2,507
Accrued employee benefits	19	39,965	17,640	22,325	19,145
Other current liabilities	20	351	2,000	(1,649)	2,117
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>91,504</b>	<b>59,103</b>	<b>32,401</b>	<b>48,754</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>					
Lease liabilities	17	26,800	4,820	21,980	6,675
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>26,800</b>	<b>4,820</b>	<b>21,980</b>	<b>6,675</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>118,304</b>	<b>63,923</b>	<b>54,381</b>	<b>55,429</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,138,881</b>	<b>956,583</b>	<b>182,298</b>	<b>1,052,193</b>
<b>Equity</b>					
Contributed equity		839,199			833,423
Accumulated surplus		217,144			179,543
Asset revaluation surplus		82,538			39,227
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,138,881</b>			<b>1,052,193</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 28.

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of changes in equity**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
<b>Contributed equity</b>			
Opening balance		833,423	719,232
Transactions with owners as owners:			
Appropriated equity adjustments	4	7,472	5,394
Net transfers to the QPS - 1 May 2023	3	(1,696)	-
Net transfers from the PSBA - 1 July 2021	3	-	108,797
Closing balance		<b>839,199</b>	<b>833,423</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus/(deficit)</b>			
Opening balance		179,543	74,795
Operating result		37,601	104,748
Closing balance		<b>217,144</b>	<b>179,543</b>
<b>Asset revaluation surplus</b>			
Opening balance		39,227	16,543
Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus		43,311	22,684
Closing balance *		<b>82,538</b>	<b>39,227</b>
<b>Total equity</b>			
		<b>1,138,881</b>	<b>1,052,193</b>

\* Asset revaluation surplus is comprised of: Land \$24.776m (2021-22: \$nil), Buildings \$57.240m (2021-22: \$38.759m) and Heritage and cultural \$0.522m (2021-22: \$0.468m).

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	2023 Actual \$'000	2023 Budget \$'000	2023 Budget Variance * \$'000	2022 Actual \$'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Service appropriation receipts	166,658	150,466	16,192	356,209
User charges and fees	59,636	55,003	4,633	62,228
Emergency management levies	648,562	623,736	24,826	586,079
Grants and other contributions	20,714	5,786	14,928	11,671
GST input tax credits from ATO	30,675	24,572	6,103	44,606
GST collected from customers	5,095	6,545	(1,450)	4,017
Other	4,268	2,570	1,698	4,159
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Employee expenses	(557,207)	(520,410)	(36,797)	(510,576)
Supplies and services	(218,165)	(228,701)	10,536	(368,524)
Grants and subsidies	(23,043)	(26,746)	3,703	(23,049)
GST paid to suppliers	(31,176)	(24,572)	(6,604)	(43,523)
GST remitted to ATO	(5,095)	(6,545)	1,450	(4,017)
Other	(1,931)	(2,116)	185	(2,906)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>98,991</b>	<b>59,588</b>	<b>39,403</b>	<b>116,374</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Sales of property, plant and equipment	8,322	500	7,822	1,986
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(72,533)	(67,460)	(5,073)	(54,897)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(64,211)</b>	<b>(66,960)</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>(52,911)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
<i>Inflows:</i>				
Equity injections	9,181	6,434	2,747	9,032
<i>Outflows:</i>				
Equity withdrawals	(3,138)	(3,138)	-	(3,638)
Lease payments	(3,074)	(1,231)	(1,843)	(2,174)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>	<b>2,969</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>3,220</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	37,749	(5,307)	43,056	66,683
Increase/(decrease) in cash from transfers between Government entities	-	-	-	11,312
Cash at beginning of financial year	112,490	77,377	35,113	34,495
<b>Cash at end of financial year</b>	<b>150,239</b>	<b>72,070</b>	<b>78,169</b>	<b>112,490</b>

\* An explanation of major variances is included at Note 28.

**Accounting Policy - Cash**

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

The department has an overdraft facility with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) with an approved limit of \$180m. This facility is utilised periodically and is available for use in the next reporting period. As at the reporting date the facility remains unutilised.

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
<b>Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities</b>		
Operating result	37,601	104,748
<b>Non-cash items included in operating result:</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	50,776	45,384
Contributed assets received	(4,843)	(6,895)
Assets written on	(1,935)	(17)
Net losses on disposal of property, plant and equipment	509	100
Net gains on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(1,549)	(819)
Revaluation decrement reversal	(390)	(19,011)
Impairment losses	(116)	(498)
Lease interest expense	476	119
<b>Change in assets and liabilities:</b>		
(Increase)/decrease in emergency management levies	22,643	(18,324)
(Increase)/decrease in trade debtors	1,095	(73)
(Increase)/decrease in net GST receivable	(501)	1,083
(Increase)/decrease in annual leave receivables	(4,692)	(3,256)
(Increase)/decrease in long service leave receivables	(150)	(609)
(Increase)/decrease in appropriation revenue receivable	(36,282)	17,440
(Increase)/decrease in accrued debtors	(342)	2,538
(Increase)/decrease in other receivables	(134)	(384)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	1,103	261
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(856)	(113)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	17,521	(7,103)
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	20,822	1,503
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	(1,765)	300
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<b>98,991</b>	<b>116,374</b>
<b>Reconciliation of liabilities arising from financing activities</b>		
Opening balance as at 1 July	9,182	6,344
New leases acquired	23,231	4,893
<b>Non-cash changes:</b>		
Interest	476	119
<b>Cash flows:</b>		
Lease liability repayments	(3,074)	(2,174)
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>29,815</b>	<b>9,182</b>

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

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

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

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is a Queensland Government public sector department under the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) 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 reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2022.

### **(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 15, 16 and 17
- Revaluation of property, plant and equipment - Note 16

### **(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**

AASB 2022-10 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities*, which is applicable from 1 January 2024 has been assessed as having no material impact to the department due to its alignment with existing departmental policies.

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

## **2 Principal activities of the department**

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 deliver contemporary and effective fire, emergency and disaster management services that meet Queensland communities' needs.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

**3 Machinery-of-Government changes**

Following the announcement made on 26 October 2022 by the Queensland Government in response to the outcomes of an independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services titled "Good Jobs and Better Fire and Emergency Services to Support Queensland's Great Lifestyle", the following reform implementation was recommended:

- the establishment of a dedicated fire services department
- transitioning the SES and Marine Rescue Queensland (MRQ) to the QPS and Queensland's disaster management functions to the QPS and Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

A Reform Implementation Taskforce has been established and is coordinating the implementation of the reforms over a two-year period.

The Marine Rescue Implementation Program responsible for establishing the new MRQ entity transferred from QFES to the QPS effective 1 May 2023. Accordingly, work-in-progress assets to the value of \$1.696m transferred from QFES to the QPS as at 1 May 2023. 2022-23 appropriation of \$2.339m also transferred to the QPS.

The transfer of remaining services will occur in 2023-24 with a date of transfer yet to be confirmed.

**2021-22 Machinery-of-Government changes**

Net assets of \$108.797m were transferred to the department on 1 July 2021 as a result of the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) disestablishment and was accounted for as an increase in contributed equity as disclosed in the statement of changes in equity.

**4 Appropriation revenue**

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

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Original budgeted appropriation revenue	150,466	135,298
Unforeseen expenditure	16,192	220,911
<b>Total appropriation receipts (cash)</b>	<b>166,658</b>	<b>356,209</b>
Less: Opening balance of appropriation revenue receivable	(523)	(17,963)
Plus: closing balance of appropriation receivable	36,805	523
<b>Net appropriation revenue</b>	<b>202,940</b>	<b>338,769</b>
<b>Appropriation revenue recognised in Statement of comprehensive income</b>	<b>202,940</b>	<b>338,769</b>
Variance between original budgeted and actual appropriation revenue	<b>52,474</b>	<b>203,471</b>

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

Original budgeted equity adjustment appropriation	3,296	1,990
Unforeseen expenditure	2,747	3,404
Expected equity adjustment receipts	6,043	5,394
Plus: Closing balance of equity adjustment receivable	1,429	-
<b>Equity adjustment recognised in contributed equity</b>	<b>7,472</b>	<b>5,394</b>
Variance between original budgeted and actual equity adjustment appropriation	<b>4,176</b>	<b>3,404</b>

**Accounting Policy - Appropriation revenue**

Appropriations provided under the *Appropriation Act 2022* are recognised as revenue when received or receivable. Where appropriation revenue has been approved but not yet received, it is recorded as appropriation revenue receivable at the end of the reporting period.

**5 User charges and fees**

Alarm maintenance and monitoring	23,976	23,089
Attendance charges	14,295	13,924
Building and infrastructure fire safety	20,155	18,837
Sale of goods and services	2,078	3,048
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,504</b>	<b>58,898</b>

**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 sufficient degree of certainty. This occurs upon delivery of 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.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
<b>6 Emergency management levies</b>		
Gross emergency management levies	636,186	615,130
Less: pensioner discount	(10,984)	(10,727)
<b>Total</b>	<b>625,202</b>	<b>604,403</b>

**Accounting Policy - Emergency management levies**

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

**7 Grants and other contributions**

Commonwealth contributions	2,298	1,963
Contributed assets *	4,843	6,943
Grants from other Queensland Government entities **	13,178	4,352
Motor Accident Insurance Commission	2,482	2,785
Services received below fair value ***	10,499	10,126
Other	2,569	2,571
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,869</b>	<b>28,740</b>

\* Contributed assets comprise Land of \$2.076m (2021-22: \$nil), Buildings of \$2.134m (2021-22: \$4.037m) and Plant and equipment of \$0.633m (2021-22: \$2.906m).

\*\* Grants from other Queensland Government entities include:

- Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements assistance from QRA of \$11.452m (2021-22: \$2.647m)
- Sponsorships and contributions for SES and RFS of \$1.179m (2021-22: \$1.311m)
- Sector Adaptation Plan funding from Department of Environment and Science (DES) of \$0.547m (2021-22: \$nil)

\*\*\* Services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR).

**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 RFS and SES, as the fair value of their services cannot be measured reliably.

**8 Gains on disposal and remeasurement of assets**

Gains from disposal of property, plant and equipment	1,549	819
Revaluation decrement reversals of property, plant and equipment	390	19,011
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>19,830</b>

**Accounting Policy - Revaluation decrement reversals**

Any revaluation increment arising on the revaluation of an asset is credited to the 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.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>9 Employee expenses</b>		
<b>Employee benefits</b>		
Wages and salaries - General	354,870	326,195
Wages and salaries - Overtime	38,981	36,469
Annual leave levy	62,872	54,776
Employer superannuation contributions	59,036	45,202
Long service leave levy	10,848	9,540
<b>Employee related expenses</b>		
Training expenses	5,154	2,658
Workers' compensation premiums	20,910	18,974
Other employee related expenses	20,152	15,493
<b>Total</b>	<b>572,823</b>	<b>509,307</b>

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

<b>Full-Time equivalent employees (number)</b>	3,825	3,672
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**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 Enterprise Bargain Agreement (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 staff, but is not included in an employee's total remuneration package.

The department pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland in respect of its obligations for current and former employees and volunteers in firefighting roles 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 2023**

**10 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 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 Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES), and emergency management and disaster mitigation programs and services throughout Queensland. The Commissioner represents the department at local, community, state, national and international forums.
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	Providing strategic leadership and coordination of regional disaster management functions and regional operations for the FRS, RFS and SES across the state's seven regions.
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services	Providing overall strategic leadership and coordination for the development and maintenance of state capability, strategy and policy for the RFS and SES service streams of QFES. The Deputy Commissioner has oversight of disaster and emergency management including the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework, operational response and emergency management planning 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 providing the tools and systems for frontline service delivery across QFES. The position has responsibility for corporate functions including Finance, Procurement and Levy; Strategy; Assurance; Asset Services; Information and Technology; and QFES People Directorates, and Internal Audit.
Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service (new position from 27/02/2023)	Providing overall strategic leadership and co-ordination for the development and maintenance of state capability, strategy and policy for the FRS. The capabilities are wide-ranging including building compliance, international deployment of Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams, state-wide aircraft capabilities, chemical emergency management and fire communications. The Deputy Commissioner is also responsible for the reform implementation project.

An independent external member is appointed to the QFES Board of Management. The independent external member received \$6,900 in remuneration (2021-22: \$16,500).

**(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 Sector Commission as provided for under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. 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.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

**10 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 applicable fringe benefits tax.
- 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 2022 – 30 June 2023**

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Post-Employment Expenses \$'000	Termination Benefits \$'000	Total Expenses \$'000
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Benefits \$'000				
	Commissioner	505				
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	264	26	7	33	-	330
A/Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services	245	-	6	24	-	275
	60	5	2	6	-	73
A/Deputy Commissioner - Strategy and Corporate Services	265	-	7	30	-	302
A/Deputy Commissioner - Fire and Rescue Service (from 27/02/2023)	121	6	2	9	-	138

**1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022**

Position	Short Term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses \$'000	Post-Employment Expenses \$'000	Termination Benefits \$'000	Total Expenses \$'000
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Benefits \$'000				
	Commissioner	462				
Deputy Commissioner - Readiness and Response Services	160	14	4	19	-	197
	93	7	2	11	-	113
Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services (Acting 07/03/2022 - 30/06/2022)	105	7	2	8	-	122
Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience *	154	14	4	18	-	190
A/Deputy Commissioner - Strategy and Corporate Services	263	-	6	29	-	298

\* Deputy Commissioner - Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience was renamed to Deputy Commissioner - Capability and State Services in March 2022.

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

There were no related party transactions associated with the department's KMP during 2022-23 (2021-22: nil).

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
<b>11 Supplies and services</b>		
Advertising expenses	5,373	2,919
Aircraft related costs	13,779	8,039
Communications	25,302	22,903
Computer expenses	11,142	9,441
Contractors and professional services	25,287	13,102
COVID-19 State hotel quarantine costs *	-	179,181
Emergency management levy administration fees	7,173	7,089
Lease expenses	5,865	5,134
Minor equipment purchases	15,382	13,943
Motor vehicle expenses	23,134	19,393
Property expenses	7,993	6,459
QPS - operating expense **	42,102	32,255
Repairs and maintenance	19,836	13,376
Travel and accommodation	12,311	8,027
Other	22,612	19,110
<b>Total</b>	<b>237,291</b>	<b>360,371</b>

\* Includes all costs associated with COVID-19 hotel quarantine provided by the State through the State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC). Effective 1 April 2022, responsibility for hotel quarantine arrangements transferred to the Quarantine Management Taskforce, Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP).

\*\* QPS operating expense represents the financial contribution made to the QPS for the provision of information and communication services and internal audit services.

**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 17 for breakdown of lease expenses and other lease disclosures.

**12 Grants and subsidies**

Air sea rescue, coast guard and life saving organisations	13,338	11,756
Local governments	3,404	3,799
QPS - capital grant	852	2,969
Rural fire brigades	717	1,250
State emergency service groups	2,321	1,343
Other	2,411	1,930
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,043</b>	<b>23,047</b>

**13 Other expenses**

Audit fees *	233	369
Insurance premiums - QGIF	1,457	1,332
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	509	100
Services received below fair value **	10,499	10,126
Special payments ***	130	142
Other	951	250
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,779</b>	<b>12,319</b>

\* Total audit fees quoted by Queensland Audit Office for the financial statements are \$312,500 (2021-22: \$305,000). The current year figure includes prior year expenses totalling \$99,848.

\*\* Services received below fair value represents an estimate of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) services received as managed by TMR.

\*\*\* Special payments in 2022-23 include:

- Ex-gratia payments made to operational staff for expenses not covered by WorkCover Queensland which includes payments to eleven (11) staff of amounts over \$5,000 (2021-22: fourteen (14) staff with payments over \$5,000);
- Early retirement of a staff member.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

**13 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 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.

**14 Receivables**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Emergency management levies	38,379	61,022
Trade debtors	5,492	6,704
Less: Allowance for impairment loss	(84)	(201)
	<u>43,787</u>	<u>67,525</u>
GST receivable	3,581	3,167
GST payable	-	(87)
	<u>3,581</u>	<u>3,080</u>
Accrued debtors	609	266
Annual leave reimbursements	17,134	12,442
Appropriation revenue receivable	38,234	523
Long service leave reimbursements	2,226	2,076
Other	982	850
	<u>59,185</u>	<u>16,157</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>106,553</u></b>	<b><u>86,762</u></b>

**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 are 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 on receivables 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**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
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**14 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 transactions during the last eight (8) years preceding 30 June 2023. 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. A change in the Government Indexation Rate (GIR) 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.

**15 Intangible assets**

	Software purchased	Software internally generated	Total
	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Gross value	317	24,846	25,163
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(317)	(24,469)	(24,786)
	<u>-</u>	<u>377</u>	<u>377</u>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	-	1,254	1,254
Amortisation	-	(877)	(877)
Closing balance	<u>-</u>	<u>377</u>	<u>377</u>
	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Gross value	317	24,846	25,163
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(317)	(23,592)	(23,909)
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,254</u>	<u>1,254</u>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	-	2,131	2,131
Amortisation	-	(877)	(877)
Closing balance	<u>-</u>	<u>1,254</u>	<u>1,254</u>

**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	20% to 25%
Software - Internally generated	10% to 16.7%

**Accounting Policy - Impairment of intangible assets**

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

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**For the year ended 30 June 2023**

**16 Property, plant and equipment**

	Land	Buildings	Heritage and cultural	Plant and equipment	Work in progress	Total
	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Gross value	232,810	704,668	2,224	532,702	54,038	1,526,442
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(270,829)	(1,588)	(297,425)	-	(569,842)
	<b>232,810</b>	<b>433,839</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>235,277</b>	<b>54,038</b>	<b>956,600</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>						
Opening balance	205,343	398,668	630	236,753	42,637	884,031
Acquisitions	292	866	-	6,894	70,262	78,314
Assets written on	-	1,935	-	-	-	1,935
Contributed assets	2,076	2,134	-	633	-	4,843
Transfers from/(to) other agencies	-	-	-	-	(1,696)	(1,696)
Transfers between asset classes	4,205	36,756	-	16,204	(57,165)	-
Disposals	(4,272)	(2,628)	-	(381)	-	(7,281)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	24,776	18,481	54	-	-	43,311
Revaluation decrement reversal recognised in operating surplus/(deficit)	390	-	-	-	-	390
Depreciation	-	(22,373)	(48)	(24,826)	-	(47,247)
Closing balance	<b>232,810</b>	<b>433,839</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>235,277</b>	<b>54,038</b>	<b>956,600</b>
	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Gross value	205,343	647,159	2,035	524,740	42,637	1,421,914
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(248,491)	(1,405)	(287,987)	-	(537,883)
	<b>205,343</b>	<b>398,668</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>236,753</b>	<b>42,637</b>	<b>884,031</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>						
Opening balance	156,247	299,391	190	234,498	41,065	731,391
Acquisitions	2,340	128	-	2,947	44,469	49,884
Assets written on	-	-	-	17	-	17
Contributed assets	-	4,037	-	2,858	-	6,895
Transfers from/(to) - PSBA 1 July 2021	26,961	65,890	-	4,315	520	97,686
Transfers between asset classes	1,865	26,144	-	15,408	(43,417)	-
Disposals	(1,081)	(70)	-	(107)	-	(1,258)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	-	22,227	457	-	-	22,684
Revaluation decrement reversal recognised in operating surplus/(deficit)	19,011	-	-	-	-	19,011
Depreciation	-	(19,079)	(17)	(23,183)	-	(42,279)
Closing balance	<b>205,343</b>	<b>398,668</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>236,753</b>	<b>42,637</b>	<b>884,031</b>

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

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.

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**16 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 2023. The fair value as at 30 June 2023 is materially the same as the valuation completed as at 31 March 2023.

**Land**

During 2022-23 independent revaluations were performed for land in the QFES Far Northern and Northern 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 2022-23 independent revaluations were performed for buildings in the QFES Far Northern and Northern 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 2023.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
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**16 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	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Land	232,810	205,343	-	-	232,810	205,343
Buildings	1,359	17,873	432,479	380,795	433,838	398,668
Heritage and cultural	-	-	636	630	636	630

**Level 3 fair value reconciliation**

	Buildings		Heritage and cultural		Total Level 3 assets	
	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Carrying amount as at 1 July	380,795	279,851	630	190	381,425	280,041
Acquisitions	867	38	-	-	867	38
Assets written on	1,935	-	-	-	1,935	-
Contributed assets	2,134	4,037	-	-	2,134	4,037
Transfers to/(from) level 3	17,101	-	-	-	17,101	-
Transfers from/(to) - PSBA 1 July 2021	-	65,819	-	-	-	65,819
Transfers between asset classes	36,093	26,145	-	-	36,093	26,145
Disposals	(2,628)	(70)	-	-	(2,628)	(70)
Net revaluation increments/(decrements) in revaluation surplus	18,487	22,776	54	457	18,541	23,233
Depreciation	(22,305)	(17,801)	(48)	(17)	(22,353)	(17,818)
<b>Carrying amount as at 30 June</b>	<b>432,479</b>	<b>380,795</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>433,115</b>	<b>381,425</b>

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**16 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 25%
Heritage and cultural	1%
Plant and equipment	1% to 50%

**17 Right-of-use assets and lease liabilities**

**Right-of-use assets**

	Land 2023 \$'000	Buildings 2023 \$'000	Total 2023 \$'000
Gross Value	209	36,599	36,808
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(27)	(7,251)	(7,278)
	<b>182</b>	<b>29,348</b>	<b>29,530</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	-	8,951	8,951
Acquisitions	209	23,022	23,231
Depreciation	(27)	(2,625)	(2,652)
Closing balance	<b>182</b>	<b>29,348</b>	<b>29,530</b>
	<b>2022 \$'000</b>	<b>2022 \$'000</b>	<b>2022 \$'000</b>
Gross Value	23	13,864	13,887
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(23)	(4,913)	(4,936)
	<b>(0)</b>	<b>8,951</b>	<b>8,951</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>			
Opening balance	11	6,275	6,286
Acquisitions	-	2,206	2,206
Transfers from/(to) - PSBA 1 July 2021	-	2,687	2,687
Depreciation	(11)	(2,217)	(2,228)
Closing balance	<b>-</b>	<b>8,951</b>	<b>8,951</b>
<b>Lease liabilities</b>		<b>2023 \$'000</b>	<b>2022 \$'000</b>
<b>Current</b>			
Lease liabilities		3,014	2,507
<b>Non-Current</b>			
Lease liabilities		26,800	6,675
<b>Total</b>		<b>29,814</b>	<b>9,182</b>

**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.

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**17 Right-of-use assets and lease liabilities (continued)**

**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.

**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 is 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
Land	The department has a 5-year lease with two further extension options of 5 years each, for land from Logan City Council for the Jimboomba Fire and Rescue Station.
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 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.

*(iii) Amounts recognised in profit or loss*

Interest expense on lease liabilities

Breakdown of 'Lease expenses' included in Note 11

- Expenses relating to short-term leases

- Expenses relating to leases of low value assets

- Expenses relating to office accommodation and employee housing provided by DEPW

*(iv) Total cash outflow for leases*

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
	<b>476</b>	<b>119</b>
	984	209
	28	22
	4,853	4,903
	<b>5,865</b>	<b>5,134</b>

**18 Payables**

Accrued creditors

Trade creditors

Other

Total

29,763	20,870
18,277	4,063
134	52
<b>48,174</b>	<b>24,985</b>

**Accounting Policy - Payables**

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the nominal amount i.e. agreed purchase/contract price, gross of applicable trade and other discounts. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

**19 Accrued employee benefits**

Annual leave levy payable

Long service leave levy payable

Salaries and wages outstanding

Other

Total

18,529	14,335
3,185	2,807
17,679	1,573
572	430
<b>39,965</b>	<b>19,145</b>

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**19 Accrued employee benefits (continued)**

**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*.

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
<b>20 Other current liabilities</b>			
Unearned revenue		351	2,090
Other		-	27
<b>Total</b>		<b>351</b>	<b>2,117</b>

**21 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 of which are provided in cash via the Consolidated Fund. Refer Note 4 and the Statement of changes in equity.

Services below fair value transactions with other departments are disclosed in Note 7 and Note 13.

Operating expense include fair value transactions with other departments disclosed in Note 11.

**22 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			
Land		-	39
Buildings		11,915	6,921
Plant and equipment		49,042	75,501
<b>Total</b>		<b>60,957</b>	<b>82,461</b>
Not later than one year		53,945	43,837
Later than one year and not later than five years		7,012	38,624
<b>Total</b>		<b>60,957</b>	<b>82,461</b>

Capital commitments reflect the implementation of a multi-year approach to fleet procurement enabling QFES to plan for, and the market to respond to, challenging lead times. Accordingly, QFES has awarded significant contracts for both RFS and FRS appliances.

**23 Financial instruments**

**Financial instruments categories**

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

**Financial assets**

Cash		150,239	112,490
Financial assets measured at amortised cost:			
Receivables	14	106,553	86,762
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>256,792</b>	<b>199,252</b>

**Financial liabilities**

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost:			
Payables	18	48,174	24,985
Lease Liabilities	17	29,814	9,182
<b>Total financial liabilities at amortised cost</b>		<b>77,988</b>	<b>34,167</b>

No financial assets and financial liabilities have been offset and presented net in the Statement of financial position.

**Accounting Policy - Financial instruments**

*Recognition*

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised in the Statement of financial position when the department becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

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**23 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 14).
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 18).
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.  The department is not exposed to material interest rate risk.

**(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 14).

**(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	2023 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	18	48,174	-	-	48,174
Lease liability	17	3,014	4,982	21,818	29,814
<b>Total</b>		<b>51,188</b>	<b>4,982</b>	<b>21,818</b>	<b>77,988</b>

Financial liabilities	Note	2022 Payable in			
		<1 year \$'000	1-5 years \$'000	>5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
Payables	18	24,985	-	-	24,985
Lease liability	17	2,507	5,472	1,203	9,182
<b>Total</b>		<b>27,492</b>	<b>5,472</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>34,167</b>

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**24 Contingencies**

**Litigation in progress**

As at 30 June 2023, there were eleven (11) litigation matters in progress which may result in a financial settlement. It is not possible to make a reliable estimate of the final amount payable, if any, in respect of the litigation at this time. However, in all cases the QFES liability is limited to the QGIF excess amount of \$10,000 (refer to Note 13).

**Native title claims over departmental land**

As at 30 June 2023, there are three (3) native title claims relating to Rural Fire Service sites. Negotiations are currently underway to determine the impact of these claims on the sites. At reporting date it is not possible to make an estimate of any probable outcome of these claims, or any financial effects.

**Per-fluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)**

The department works with state authorities to ensure historical use of PFAS is appropriately managed. This includes testing of a number of QFES sites throughout Queensland, however, it is not practicable to measure the financial effect including any land remediation costs.

**25 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 the Consolidated Fund was \$0.112m (2022: \$0.112m).

**26 Trust transactions and balances**

QFES 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.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Opening balance as at 1 July	747	1,799
Donations received during the year	209	308
Donations paid during the year	(423)	(1,360)
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>747</b>

**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.

**27 Events occurring after balance date**

Details of Machinery-of-Government changes occurring after balance date are referred to in Note 3.

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

**28 Budgetary reporting disclosures**

**Explanation of major variances - Statement of comprehensive income**

*Appropriation Revenue:* Exceeded budget due to additional funding received for the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the '357 firefighter' government election commitment (\$23.315m), additional funding for the State Emergency Service (\$7.000m), Rural Fire Service (\$0.200m), and Marine Rescue (\$0.661m), public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining outcomes (\$14.505m), Defined Benefit Superannuation No Disadvantage Policy Payments (\$1.019m), increase to superannuation entitlements (\$7.920m), increase to Commonwealth contributions associated with the provision of fire services (\$0.669m), increase in the statutory contribution associated with the Emergency Management Levy due to an increased Government Indexation Rate (GIR) (\$1.518m), partly offset by deferral and return of funds for various projects due to labour market challenges and supply chain issues (\$4.333m).

*Grants and other contributions:* Exceeded budgeted revenue mainly due to contributed assets primarily associated with Rural Fire Brigades (\$4.843m), sponsorships and contributions primarily for the State Emergency Service (\$1.987m), a contribution from the National Emergency Management Agency towards the Disaster Risk Information Portal (\$0.395m), and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) reimbursements for disaster events (\$11.452m).

## **28 Budgetary reporting disclosures (continued)**

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of comprehensive income (continued)**

*Employee expenses:* Exceeded budget mainly due to the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the '357 firefighter' government election commitment (\$22.438m), additional overtime expenditure (\$11.038m) associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and staff absences, public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining related increases (\$14.505m), increases to superannuation entitlements (\$7.920m), partly offset by staff vacancies resulting from labour market challenges.

*Supplies and services:* Exceeded budget mainly due to expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments (\$8.048m) and increased supplies and services costs with the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the '357 firefighter' government election commitment (\$5.380m). This is partly offset by project and program underspends impacted by ongoing labour market constraints impacting on procurement activities and supply chain issues.

*Grants and subsidies:* The variance is predominantly due to lower than expected funding provided to the Queensland Police Service for information and communication technology programs and projects, with a greater portion of projects undertaken directly by QFES rather than outsourcing to the Queensland Police Service Frontline Digital Division.

*Depreciation and amortisation:* Exceeded budget mainly due to the accelerated depreciation of building assets following changes to the planned asset replacement program.

*Increase/(decrease) in asset revaluation surplus:* Exceeded budget due to an increase in land, buildings, and heritage and cultural asset values following the asset revaluations undertaken during the year.

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of financial position**

*Cash:* The higher than expected cash position is due to program and projects delays associated with the ongoing global supply chain challenges, and limited availability within the professional services labour market.

*Receivables:* Exceeded budget mainly related to the timing of receipt of appropriation revenues, with appropriation receivable recognised mainly for the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the '357 firefighter' government election commitment (\$23.315m) and public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining increases (\$6.874m).

*Property, plant and equipment:* The increase in value of property, plant and equipment is due to an increase to asset values associated with asset revaluation outcomes, as well as increased investment in capital works programs with accelerated strategic land acquisitions.

*Right-of-use assets:* The increase in 2023 is due to a new lease negotiated for twenty years for the northern region headquarters.

*Payables:* Exceeded budget due to the revised timing of payments to trade creditors and recognition of services received but not yet invoiced.

*Accrued employee benefits:* Accruals for both the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and additional superannuation entitlements, have resulted in increased accrued benefits in 2022-23, with payment of these amounts scheduled to be paid to employees in 2023-24.

### **Explanation of major variances - Statement of cash flows**

*Service appropriation receipts:* Exceeded budget mainly due to additional funding received for the State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service, and Marine Rescue, and funding for public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining outcomes.

*Emergency management levies:* The higher than expected levies is due to the timing of remittance of funds collected by Local Government, with a large portion of 2021-22 related payments occurring in 2022-23.

*Employee expenses:* The higher than expected employee expenses is mainly due to the onboarding of additional firefighters associated with the '357 firefighter' government election commitment, additional overtime expenditure associated with bushfire and severe weather deployments and staff absences, and public sector wages policy and enterprise bargaining related increases.

*Payments for property, plant and equipment:* Exceeded budget due to increased investment in capital works programs with accelerated strategic land acquisitions.

*Cash:* The higher than expected cash position is due to significant program and projects delays associated with the ongoing global supply chain challenges, and limited availability within the professional services labour market.

**Queensland Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Management Certificate for the year ended 30 June 2023**

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These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), section 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 2023 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

24 August 2023



S. Lowth  
B Commerce  
FCPA

Chief Finance Officer

23 August 2023

## 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 2023, 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 2023, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including material accounting policy 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 (\$433.839 million) and depreciation expense (\$22.373 million)**

Refer to note 16 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"> <li>• Gross replacement cost, less</li> <li>• Accumulated depreciation.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• buildings not specifically appraised in the current year, indexing unit rates for increases in input costs.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• Assessing management's controls over the valuation process.</li> <li>• Assessing the appropriateness of the process used for measuring gross replacement cost with reference to common industry practices.</li> <li>• For unit rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessing the competence, capability and objectivity of the experts used by QFES to develop the unit rate models.</li> <li>- Obtaining an understanding of the methodology used and assessing its appropriateness with reference to common industry practices.</li> <li>- 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"> <li>▪ modern substitute (including locality factors and on costs)</li> <li>▪ adjustment for excess quality or obsolescence.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- For buildings revalued through indexation, recalculating the index with reference to the current year's specific appraisal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reviewing management and the expert's assessment and application of asset componentisation and the consequential impact on depreciation expense.</li> <li>• Evaluating useful life estimates for reasonableness by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing management's annual assessment of useful lives.</li> <li>- Assessing whether assets still in use have reached or exceeded their useful life.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Where changes in useful lives were identified, evaluating whether the effective dates of the changes applied for depreciation expense were supported by appropriate evidence.</li> </ul>

### **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 forming an opinion on the effectiveness of the department's internal controls, but allows me to form an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of material accounting policy information 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 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 2023:

- 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.



24 August 2023

Michael Claydon  
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane

# Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

## *Human Rights Act 2019*

### Annual Performance Report 2022–23

On 1 January 2020, respecting human rights became the law for all Queensland Government departments under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act). 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.

In preparation for the commencement of the Act, QFES undertook significant work to progress compatibility with the Act including:

- ✧ QFES doctrine (i.e. policies and procedures) was 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
- ✧ the alignment of training material with the Act for the School of Fire and Emergency Services Training, including the QFES handbooks, implementation documents and course guides
- ✧ the requirements of the Act were incorporated into Service Level Agreements with volunteer groups that provide emergency response to Queenslanders, through variations or new agreements
- ✧ 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.

The department's strategic plan 2022–26 includes the department's commitment to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in decision-making and actions.

QFES conducts annual workforce experience surveys such as WfQ and VfQ surveys to measure and monitor staff and volunteer experiences. The annual surveys are a confidential forum enabling QFES to gauge its performance collectively and in each division, region and branch. The WfQ 2022 and VfQ 2022 results indicate 72 per cent of staff and 62 per cent of volunteers responded positively to the survey question '*I understand how the Human Rights Act 2019 applies to my work*'.

In addition, an e-learning product (launched March 2022) that explores human rights from the perspective of the responsibilities of staff and volunteers to respect, promote and protect the human rights of all Queenslanders is available on aXcelerate (the QFES Student Management System accessible to all QFES paid staff and volunteers).

The QFES Gateway (staff intranet) also includes easy-to-use resources for staff and volunteers such as a one-page quick reference guide, decision checklist and responsibilities posters. Resources have been developed and are available for each QFES service (FRS, RFS and SES) to ensure that information provided is targeted to individual service requirements. The Human Rights QFES Gateway content also includes links to training packages and interactive scenarios exploring human rights in operational and management situations familiar to staff and volunteers.

### **Details of actions taken to further the objects of the Act during the reporting period**

QFES continued to embed the objects of the Act as business-as-usual activities during the reporting period. Highlights include:

- ✧ continuing membership of the Human Rights Interdepartmental Committee. The committee was established in 2019 to provide central leadership of whole-of-government implementation of the Act and continues to play a whole-of-government leadership role in providing leadership, proactive support, and maintaining momentum for the development of a human rights culture across the Queensland Government
- ✧ continuing delivery of an *Introduction to the Human Rights Act* session in the quarterly QFES Corporate Induction Forum. Attendees are also provided with a one-page guide to the Act and directed to the resources available on the QFES Gateway for further information.

In addition, the QFES *Leading Others* leadership program (targeted at team leaders or aspiring program leaders) also raises awareness of the Act and directs participants to the available resources as part of their self-directed learning.

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

- ✧ Assessing QFES doctrine (policy, procedures, standards, role manuals and operations doctrine) against the human rights legislation is a business-as-usual activity within the department with key considerations relating to human rights embedded into doctrine assessment tools.
- ✧ Assessing QFES legislation and policy proposals to ensure compliance with the Act is a business-as-usual activity, including the preparation of human rights statements of compatibility for Bills and human rights certificates for subordinate legislation.
- ✧ Giving proper consideration to human rights before making decisions to ensure compatibility with human rights has been embedded in QFES briefing templates as a business-as-usual activity.

### **Details of human rights complaints received by the entity within the reporting period, including number and outcome of complaints and other information prescribed by regulation**

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 2022–23, QFES received nine human rights complaints. At 30 June 2023:

- ✧ three complaints had been lodged with the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC). One matter was referred to QFES by the QHRC and is in progress and two matters are under assessment by the QHRC
- ✧ three matters received by QFES were assessed as being suitable for management action and are in progress
- ✧ two matters received by QFES were not substantiated and the complainants were provided with outcome advice
- ✧ one matter received by QFES was discontinued as the complainant did not engage in the process. The complainant was advised the matter has been closed however, can be reopened should they wish to engage in the future.

In addition, during the reporting period, one matter lodged with the QHRC in 2021–22 was closed. The complainant then filed an application with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and subsequently withdrew it.

# Acronyms

<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	<b>FFF</b>	Fight Fire Fascination
<b>AFAC</b>	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	<b>FPCG</b>	First People's Consultative Group
<b>AFDRS</b>	Australian Fire Danger Rating System	<b>FRS</b>	Fire and Rescue Service
<b>AFFF</b>	Aqueous film forming foam	<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent
<b>AFSM</b>	Australian Fire Service Medal	<b>HVO</b>	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
<b>ARCC</b>	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology
<b>AVCGA</b>	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association	<b>IGEM</b>	Inspector-General Emergency Management
<b>AWS</b>	Australian Warning System	<b>INSARAG</b>	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
<b>BoM</b>	Board of Management	<b>ISMS</b>	Information Security Management System
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and linguistically diverse	<b>LAT</b>	Large Air Tanker
<b>CBRN</b>	Chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear	<b>LGBTIQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
<b>CCC</b>	Crime and Corruption Commission	<b>MOHRI</b>	Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information
<b>CPR</b>	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>CSIRO</b>	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	<b>MSRC</b>	Motorised Swiftwater Rescue Craft
<b>DART</b>	Disaster Assistance Response Team	<b>NAB</b>	National Australia Bank
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	<b>NAFC</b>	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
<b>DFV</b>	Domestic and family violence	<b>NAIDOC</b>	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
<b>eDRMS</b>	Electronic Document and Records Management System	<b>NSW</b>	New South Wales
<b>ELT</b>	Executive Leadership Team	<b>PCYC</b>	Police-Citizens Youth Club
<b>EMCC</b>	Emergency Management and Community Capability	<b>PFAS</b>	Perfluoro/polyfluoro alkyl sulfonates
<b>ESCP</b>	Emergency Services Cadets Program	<b>PII</b>	Personally Identifiable Information
<b>FBAN</b>	Fire Behaviour Analyst	<b>PIWU</b>	Public Information and Warnings Unit
<b>FESSN</b>	Fire and Emergency Services Support Network	<b>PNGFS</b>	Papua New Guinea Fire Service

## Acronyms (cont'd)

<b>PPRR</b>	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	<b>RIT</b>	Reform Implementation Taskforce
<b>PSBA</b>	Public Safety Business Agency	<b>RLSSQ</b>	Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Inc.
<b>PSO</b>	Peer Support Officer	<b>RoGS</b>	Report on Government Services
<b>QAO</b>	Queensland Audit Office	<b>RPAS</b>	Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems
<b>QARE</b>	QFES Active Resilience Engagement	<b>SAMP</b>	<i>Strategic Asset Management Plan 2022–26</i>
<b>QAS</b>	Queensland Ambulance Service	<b>SDCC</b>	State Disaster Coordination Centre
<b>QCAP</b>	<i>Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030</i>	<b>SDS</b>	Service Delivery Statement
<b>QCESA</b>	Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy	<b>SES</b>	State Emergency Service
<b>QDMA</b>	Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements	<b>SFEST</b>	School of Fire and Emergency Services Training
<b>QDMTF</b>	<i>Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework</i>	<b>SLSQ</b>	Surf Life Saving Queensland
<b>QERMF</b>	<i>Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework</i>	<b>SWHA-Q</b>	<i>Severe Wind Hazard Assessment for Queensland</i>
<b>QFES</b>	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	<b>USAR</b>	Urban search and rescue
<b>QPASTT</b>	Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma	<b>VfQ</b>	Volunteering for Queensland
<b>QPS</b>	Queensland Police Service	<b>VMRAQ</b>	Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland
<b>QRA</b>	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	<b>WAFA</b>	Women and Firefighting Australasia
<b>RAAP</b>	Road Attitudes and Action Planning	<b>WfQ</b>	Working for Queensland
<b>RCNDA</b>	Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements	<b>WHS</b>	Work health and safety
<b>RFAQ</b>	Retired Firefighters Association of Queensland	<b>WOW</b>	Wear Orange Wednesday
<b>RFS</b>	Rural Fire Service		

# Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Page reference
<b>Letter of compliance</b>	A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s	ARRs – section 7	iii
<b>Accessibility</b>	Table of contents	ARRs – section 9.1	1, 85, 86
	Acronyms		117–118
	Public availability	ARRs – section 9.2	ii
	Interpreter service statement	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 9.3	ii
	Copyright notice	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 9.4	ii
	Information licensing	<i>Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture – Information licensing</i> ARRs – section 9.5	ii
<b>General information</b>	Introductory information	ARRs – section 10	4–16
<b>Non-financial performance</b>	Government’s objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans and specific initiatives	ARRs – section 11.1	8
	Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs – section 11.2	7, 20–23
	Agency service area and service standards	ARRs – section 11.3	20–23
<b>Financial performance</b>	Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	17–19
<b>Governance – management and structure</b>	Organisational structure	ARRs – section 13.1	12–15
	Executive management	ARRs – section 13.2	63–67
	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	115–116
	Queensland public service values	ARRs – section 13.6	8

# Compliance checklist (cont'd)

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Page reference
<b>Governance – risk management and accountability</b>	Risk management	ARRs – section 14.1	69–70, 75
	Audit Committee	ARRs – section 14.2	69–70
	Internal Audit	ARRs – section 14.3	75
	External Scrutiny	ARRs – section 14.4	52, 73–74
	Information systems and recordkeeping	ARRs – section 14.5	76
	Information security attestation	ARRs – section 14.6	77
<b>Governance – human resources</b>	Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 15.1	78–84
	Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2	79
<b>Open Data</b>	Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 16	ii
	Consultancies	ARRs – section 31.1	<a href="http://www.data.qld.gov.au">www.data.qld.gov.au</a>
	Overseas travel	ARRs – section 31.2	<a href="http://www.data.qld.gov.au">www.data.qld.gov.au</a>
	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i>	ARRs – section 31.3	<a href="http://www.data.qld.gov.au">www.data.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Financial statements</b>	Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1	110
	Independent Auditor’s Report	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 46 ARRs – section 17.2	111–114

ARRs: Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies

FAA: Financial Accountability Act 2009

FPMS: Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019

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