

## 4.6 – Queensland Privacy Principles - Privacy Policy

### 1. Purpose

The *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) (IP Act) and its Queensland Privacy Principles (QPPs) set the rules for how Queensland government agencies handle personal information. These rules include a requirement under QPP 1 that every agency have a QPP privacy policy.

This policy explains how the Queensland Fire Department (QFD) manage personal information including:

- the types of personal information collected and held by the department
- how the information is collected and held
- the purposes for which personal information is collected, held, used and disclosed
- the process for submitting complaints about the department's handling of personal information and how the department will deal with the complaint.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all QFD staff, volunteers and contractors; and to the personal information the department collects, stores, manages, uses and discloses in discharging its functions and responsibilities.

### 3. Collection of personal information

QFD is the primary provider of fire and rescue services throughout Queensland. QFD delivers this through Queensland Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service Queensland.

The definition of personal information is set out in [Appendix A – Definitions of this policy](#).

QFD collects personal information required to exercise its functions and responsibilities and to meet its legal obligations. This personal information may be collected in writing or by recording information provided verbally.

QFD collects personal information directly from individuals who access its services and indirectly from third parties as part of carrying out its functions. The functions of QFD are carried out by the following key areas:

#### Queensland Fire and Rescue (QFR)

- Responsible for providing fire prevention, preparedness and response services to fire in the built and landscape environments, as well as scientific and specialist rescue capabilities to Queensland communities. QFR provides a multi-hazard response which includes structural fires, road crash rescue, bushfires, hazardous materials, technical rescue including vertical and swiftwater/floodwater rescue, and disaster assistance response, and provides a number of functions supporting community safety outcomes.

#### Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ)

- A community-based, volunteer emergency service and the lead service for the control and prevention of bush and grass fire in Queensland. RFSQ operates in rural, semi-rural and urban fringe areas providing bush and grass fire prevention, mitigation and response capabilities and community engagement services, and assistance during other emergencies and disasters and in some instances road crash rescue.

#### State Operations Directorate

- Responsible for providing a diverse range of shared organisational capabilities and specialist functions across QFR, RFSQ, Fire Communications and corporate services. State Operations enhances cooperation and collaboration across the department's operations, with a particular focus on how QFR, RFSQ, Fire Communications and corporate services come together before, during and after an emergency.

#### Strategy and Corporate Services Division

- Responsible for leading the department's integrated framework and vision and driving performance and strategic capability of the department. This framework incorporates QFD's business functions such as human resources management, workplace health and safety, injury management, finance and procurement, asset services, internal audit, information technology, media, governance, legal services, strategic policy and Cabinet, Executive and Ministerial Services.

### 3.1. Sensitive information

QFD may also collect sensitive information. The definition of 'sensitive information' is set out in [Appendix A – Definitions of this policy](#).

QFD will generally only collect sensitive information directly from the individual it is about, or with their consent, or otherwise consistently with its obligations under the IP Act.

The kinds of personal information (including sensitive information) the department collects and holds are set out in the table below.

QFD Function	Kind of personal information, how and why QFD collect that personal information
<b>Queensland Fire and Rescue</b>	<p>QFR collects information as part of its functions of responding to emergent situations as legislated by the <i>Fire Services Act 1990</i>. QFR's primary response is to fire in the build environment, however, this has evolved over time to meet the changing needs of the community to become a multi-hazard response. QFR also encompasses focus on prevention and preparedness to avert emergency incidents as well as response and recovery. These activities include regional and community education, building fire safety, hazard and risk assessment and working with communities to plan and mitigate disasters.</p> <p>Examples of some of the information collected includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• names, address and contact details of individuals</li><li>• date of birth</li><li>• residential address and commercial property details</li><li>• sensitive information involving details of injuries</li><li>• vehicle registration numbers</li><li>• images and audio-visual taken at incidents</li><li>• financial information for payments of unwanted alarm attendance invoices.</li></ul>
<b>Rural Fire Service Queensland</b>	<p>RFSQ is responsible for bush fire prevention, preparation, and response and its functions and powers are legislated through Chapter 4 of the <i>Fire Services Act 1990</i>. RFSQ works with QFR and other emergency management agencies to protect communities from the threat of bush fire and other natural and man-made emergencies.</p> <p>Examples of some of the information collected includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• names, address and contact details of individuals (i.e. permit holders)</li><li>• date of birth</li><li>• residential address and commercial property details</li><li>• vehicle registration numbers</li><li>• sensitive information involving details of injuries</li><li>• images and audio-visual taken at incidents.</li></ul>
<b>State Operations Directorate</b>	<p>Examples of some of the information collected by the State Operations Directorate includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• names and contact details recording through the incident management capability function</li><li>• Audio recordings of triple zero calls and other radio communications recorded when responding to emergent situations.</li></ul>

<b>Strategy and Corporate Services</b>	<p>Collects information to perform QFD's business functions such as human resources management, finance and procurement, asset services, internal audit, information technology, media, governance, legal services, strategic policy and Cabinet, Executive and Ministerial Services.</p> <p>Examples of some of the information collected includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human resources and employee relations</b> – names, contact details, date of birth, tax file number, qualifications, work history, required reasonable accommodations, entitlements, next of kin and/or emergency contacts, and conduct and performance information.</li> <li>• <b>Recruitment and contractors</b> - names, contact details, application documentation, identification information, assessments for suitability, referees and references.</li> <li>• <b>Complaints about QFD</b> - names, contact details, interactions with QFD, expressions of dissatisfaction, investigation into the complaint and the outcome of the complaint.</li> <li>• <b>Emergency Management Levy</b> - names, contact details, property details of properties subject to the levy.</li> <li>• <b>Right to information and QFD Administrative Access Scheme</b> - names, contact details, information about details of information requested through RTI and administrative access and financial information for payment of application fees.</li> <li>• <b>Information collected through QFD's website</b> - QFD's public website <a href="http://www.fire.qld.gov.au">www.fire.qld.gov.au</a> is hosted in Australia. QFD collects personal information through our website where it is provided by individuals who subscribe to QFD electronic mailing lists or use an online form (e.g. submitting an enquiry through the online General Enquiries form).</li> <li>• <b>Information collected through social media platforms</b> - QFD uses Facebook, Instagram, X.com and YouTube to communicate with the public about its work. The department may collect personal information provided by individuals when communicating with QFD via these social media platforms.</li> </ul>
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#### 4. Use and disclosure personal information

QFD uses and discloses personal information for the purpose for which the personal information was collected, including:

- (i) exercising our powers or performing our statutory functions and duties, such as the services administered through QFR, RFSQ and Strategy and Corporate Services
- (ii) managing associated business processes, such as recruitment and human resources administration.

QFD may also use or disclose personal information for secondary or alternative purposes as permitted under the IP Act. This may include where QFD is authorised or required under Australian law (including to meet the department's procedural fairness obligations), with an individual's consent, or where an individual would reasonably expect QFD to use or disclose for a related – or in the case of sensitive information, directly related – secondary purpose. This may include disclosure to a court or tribunal.

#### 5. Access and correction of personal information

Access and correction rights are contained in the *Right to Information Act 2009*. All QFD staff, volunteers and members of the public can apply to access or correct their own personal information held by QFD.

#### 6. Disclosure out of Australia

QFD would generally disclose personal information overseas only when necessary to exercise its powers or in performing its statutory functions and duties. For instance, where an individual engages with a QFD services and resides overseas.

However, when individuals communicate with QFD via a social media platform such as LinkedIn or Facebook, the social media provider and its partners may collect and hold personal information overseas. QFD may also use Survey Monkey to conduct voluntary surveys from time to time, which may involve the collection and disclosure of participant's personal information overseas.

Where QFD disclose personal information overseas, this will usually occur with agreement, where QFD is authorised or required by law, or otherwise consistently with the department's obligations under the IP Act.

## **7. Dealing with QFD anonymously or using a pseudonym**

People can deal with the QFD's General Enquiries form on the department's website anonymously or by using a pseudonym.

Complaints about QFD can be made anonymously or by using a pseudonym but, depending on nature of the complaint, the department may not be able to action a complaint and/or provide a response without a person's identity (e.g. where a complaint relates to a particular individual's matter with QFD).

Anonymous or pseudonymous interaction is not possible for other QFD functions, such as applying for a fire permit, lodging building fire safety documents, or submitting a RTI application or privacy complaint. In this case, QFD is required to collect information such as names, contact details and details of the matter raised so the department can deal with the matter effectively and in accordance with its statutory duties.

## **8. Security of personal information**

QFD holds personal information securely and takes reasonable steps to protect it from misuse, interference, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. QFD complies with relevant Queensland Government Information Standards and security protocols to protect personal information and ensure it can be accessed by authorised staff members only.

Where permitted by the *Public Records Act 2023* (Qld), QFD will destroy or deidentify unsolicited personal information or personal information no longer required for any of its functions in accordance with our obligations under the QPPs if it is lawful and reasonable to do so.

## **9. Privacy complaints about QFD**

Where it is believed QFD has not handled personal information in accordance the IP Act, a privacy complaint can be made. Privacy complaints can be made on behalf of another person if that person has provided authorisation; they are a minor/child and the person submitting the complaint is their parent or guardian; they lack capacity and the person submitting the complaint is their guardian or has other legal authority to act on their behalf.

To make a privacy complaint about QFD, send the complaint to QFD in writing and include:

- an address for response (e.g. an email address)
- details about the matter or issues that form the basis of the complaint (e.g. what did QFD do, or not do, with the personal information that the complainant believes breached the QPPs and the IP Act).

A complaint must be submitted within 12 months of a person becoming aware of the act or practice that they believe constitutes a breach by QFD of the IP Act. If a privacy complaint is being submitted on behalf of another person, please include an authority from them, or other evidence (e.g. a birth certificate showing that they are a minor/child and the person submitting the complainant is their parent).

### **9.1. Contact address for privacy complaints**

Email: [QFD.RTI@qfes.qld.gov.au](mailto:QFD.RTI@qfes.qld.gov.au)  
Post: Right to Information and Privacy Unit  
Queensland Fire Department  
Mail Cluster 17.1  
GPO Box 1425  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

### **9.2. Timeframe for handling a privacy complaint**

QFD has 45 business days to resolve the privacy complaint to the complainant's satisfaction.

If this does not occur, the complaint can be escalated to the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland (OIC). Further information can be found at Office of the Information Commissioner Privacy Complaints webpage.

## **10. Appendices**

- [Appendix A – Definitions](#)

## 11. Related policy documents and supporting documents

- Legislation
  - *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*
  - *Queensland Fire Services Act 1990 (Qld)*
  - *Right to Information Act 2009(Qld)*
  - *Public Records Act 2023 (Qld)*

## 12. Contacts

- For further information regarding QFD's privacy requirements and obligations, contact the QFD Right to Information and Privacy Unit via [QFD.RTI@qfes.qld.gov.au](mailto:QFD.RTI@qfes.qld.gov.au)



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## Appendix A – Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Personal information	<p>Personal information means information or an opinion about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable from the information or opinion—</p> <p>(a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and</p> <p>(b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.</p> <p>(Section 12 of the IP Act)</p>
Sensitive information	<p>Sensitive information for an individual, means the following—</p> <p>(c) Information or an opinion, that is also personal information, about the individual's—</p> <p>(i.) Racial or ethnic origin; or</p> <p>(ii.) Political opinions; or</p> <p>(iii.) Membership of a political association; or</p> <p>(iv.) Religious beliefs or affiliations; or</p> <p>(v.) Philosophical beliefs; or</p> <p>(vi.) Membership of a professional or trade association; or</p> <p>(vii.) Membership of a trade union; or</p> <p>(viii.) Sexual orientation or practices; or</p> <p>(ix.) Criminal record;</p> <p>(d) Health information about the individual;</p> <p>(e) Genetic information about the individual;</p> <p>(f) Biometric information that is to be used for the purpose of automated biometric verification or biometric identification; or</p> <p>(g) Biometric templates.</p> <p>(Schedule 5 (Dictionary) of the IP Act)</p>