

# MARS

The disaster funding application portal for Queensland councils and state agencies

## What is MARS?

MARS is the Management and Reporting System built by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) to support councils and state agencies with disaster funding applications.

The system aims to improve efficiency in lodging and assessing disaster claims, and is used for events activated under the Australian Government's new Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

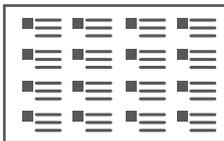
## What can MARS users do?

For events occurring after 1 November 2018, authorised users can log in to the MARS Portal to:

- request activation for disaster relief measures
- build and lodge submissions and supporting evidence
- prepare and lodge progress reports and close out documentation
- view information on trigger points, activation history and more.

## The three key focus areas to prepare for using MARS

1



DRFA  
submission  
forms

2



Bulk  
photo  
upload

3



Digital road  
network  
data

### 1 DRFA submission forms

MARS provides two options to build submissions, either directly in the MARS Portal or in an Excel submission form that can be imported into the MARS Portal. Import is currently available for the following submission types:

- Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets
- Immediate Reconstruction Works
- Emergency Works
- Counter Disaster Operations

Submission forms relating to the Australian Government's DRFA model are available on the QRA website.

### Checklist for DRFA submission forms

- Check you are accessing the latest version.
- Note the changes from the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) submission forms (outlined below).
- Provide the current forms to any individuals or third party responsible for software or programs that you want to automatically populate the forms.

## Key changes from NDRRA submission forms

- DRFA forms are generic for use by all organisations.

### Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA) submission form

*Changes include:*

- two photo evidence fields; 'pre-disaster evidence' to enable applicants to attach photos to support the condition of the asset prior to the event, and 'post disaster evidence'.
- 'estimates method' requiring an input of either 'benchmark rate' or 'market price'.
- additional fields for treatment dimensions. Dimensions are entered as required for lineal, area and volumetric treatments.
- exclusion of rates. The new form is designed to capture the accurate location, nature and scope of works. Agreed benchmark rates will auto-populate when the submission form data is uploaded into the MARS Portal.
- indirect costs will calculate automatically once uploaded in the MARS Portal.

### Immediate Reconstruction Works (IRW) form (formerly REPA actuals)

*Changes include:*

- three photo evidence fields:
  - 'pre-disaster evidence' to enable applicants to attach photos to support the condition of the asset prior to the event
  - 'post disaster evidence' (damage photos)
  - 'completion photos' to enable applicants to attach evidence of the completed works.
- additional fields for treatment dimensions. Dimensions are entered as required for lineal, area and volumetric treatments.
- fields to report on day labour and project management costs incurred when completing the works.

### Emergency Works submission form (formerly REPA emergent works)

*Changes include:*

- a drop down list of emergency works activities for selection, as well as an 'other' option
- two date fields to capture the start and end date range of the activity.

## 2 Bulk photo upload

All REPA, IRW and EW submissions require supporting photographic evidence in JPEG format with metadata embedded. The MARS Portal is designed to link photographic evidence to submission line item data. By uploading photos in the MARS Portal and assigning them to a line item in your submission you will get the full functionality of mapping integration and validation checks to help improve the quality of submissions and assessments.

The MARS Portal includes the capability to upload photos in bulk and auto assign them to the relevant line item. This capability requires that the submission is built in the new excel submission form prior to uploading into the MARS Portal. The bulk upload is then initiated from the MARS Portal, matching photos to the correct line item based on file names.

If bulk upload of photos is outside of your browser's capacity, consider compressing photos prior to upload.

Talk to your Regional Liaison Officer about preparing to use the bulk upload capability in MARS.

### Checklist for photos

- All photos are uniquely named.
- All photos are JPEG format with embedded metadata (minimum is 3 megapixels).
- File names are no more than 100 characters.
- Excel submission form photo fields need to have unique file names in the following format: `xxxx.jpg|yyyy.jpg|zzzz.jpg|`

There are two ways to populate the photo reference cell in the submission form:

1. **Software** – internal or third-party software, updated to insert the photo names in the required format outlined above.
2. **Manually** – QRA can provide an Excel plug-in to minimise manual effort by referencing a folder name. More information on this option can be found in the MARS photo name conversion plug-in user guide.

## 3 Digital Road Network (DRN) data

DRN data provided to QRA will be made available to the relevant organisation in the MARS Portal. Each organisation can view their road assets on a map and see submission and assessment information displayed geographically. This integration with mapping means MARS can offer validation messages based on the data provided. This allows an organisation to address errors prior to lodgement e.g. a damage photo provided for a particular asset may be located several kilometres away.

### Checklist for DRN data

- Refer to the DRN data tip sheet for full details. We strongly recommend you engage with your organisation's mapping team or personnel to ensure all requirements are understood.
- All organisations should prepare to confirm currency of DRN data to QRA annually as part of pre-season preparedness each year, ideally prior to 31 October, or prior to building a submission in MARS. This will ensure MARS features your current data set, ready to support a smooth assessment process.
- Ensure the most recent data set provided to QRA has also been used for damage data pick up.

### Browser

- MARS works best in Google Chrome, although it is also compatible with Internet Explorer.

### Transition period arrangements

- There will be a transition period in which QRA and organisations will operate using MARS and the existing arrangements. If an organisation is activated for an event under the NDRRA, the process will remain as per current arrangements. This includes:
  - NDRRA submission forms
  - lodgement and assessment process
  - the determination/arrangements in place at the time of activations.

