

Winton Shire Council

Local Monsoon Trough Recovery Plan



North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January - 14 February 2019

CEO Approved 22 May 2019

Recovery narrative

Recovery narrative

Council overview

The Shire of Winton is a local government area in Central West Queensland. It covers an area of 53,000 square kilometres and has existed as a local government entity since 1887. Winton is a diverse shire, rich in history, natural beauty and culture. Major industries for Winton are beef, opals and tourism.

Council values

- **Accountability** – The ethical concept associated with responsibility, enforcement, blameworthiness, transparent process, liability and other terms associated with being answerable for the trust that is bestowed by those whom we serve.
- **Effectiveness** – The idea of carrying out a program or process that is entirely adequate to accomplish the purpose that has been identified as a goal or aspiration.
- **Efficiency** – The concept that in the process of pursuing or effecting any program, procedure or task where all wastage is minimised.
- **Sustainability** – Is the capacity to maintain a certain process or state indefinitely. When applied in an economic context, a business is sustainable if it has adapted its practices for the use of renewable resources and is accountable for the environmental impacts of its activities.
- **Meaningful Community Engagement** – Encompasses the principle of seeking the views and opinions of the community. This is to be through an effective committee system and public consultation process as part of Council's decision making methodology.
- **Good Governance** – This describes the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Hereby, public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and guarantee the realisation of human rights. Good governance accomplishes this in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law.
- **Ethical and Legal Behaviour** – Ethical behaviour is characterised by honesty, fairness and equity in all interpersonal relationships. Ethical behaviour respects the dignity, diversity and rights of individuals and groups of people. When coupled with legal behaviour there is an expectation that there will be a penalty for conduct that breaches any law, statute or regulation.

Recovery Arrangements

Winton Shire Council implemented a locally-led, coordinated multi-agency approach to recovery.

Local Disaster Management Group

Chair: Cr Gavin Baskett (Mayor)
 Deputy Chair: Cr Shane Mann (Deputy Mayor)
 Local Disaster Coordinator: Ricki Bruhn (CEO)

Overview of the event

The flooding event in Winton impacted the North East and North West of the Shire and isolated the township of Winton. The majority of people directly impacted by this event were those employed in the agricultural sector. Additionally, there have been indirect impacts to small businesses and contractors that support the agricultural sector. It is anticipated recovery for this event will take 5-10 years. The flooding was made worse due to it occurring on the back of a severe extended drought (over 7 years). The event resulted in unprecedented stock losses (cattle and sheep) across the shire. It is important to recognise that despite any advance warning, there is nothing the primary producers could have done to protect their stock.

Key stakeholders

Winton Shire Council, Winton Shire Residents, QCWA, Dept. Communities, Disability Services & Seniors, Drought Angels, The Salvation Army, Qld Health, Local Helicopter Pilots, Volunteers, Sisters of the North, RFDS, CQPHN, LLW, Outback Futures, Rural financial counsellors, AgForce Queensland, QRIDA, RIC, Dept. Agriculture and Fisheries, Morten Bay Regional Council, Queensland Police, SES, Queensland Ambulance Services, TMR, RoadTek, LGAQ, QRA, Department of Defence – ARMY.

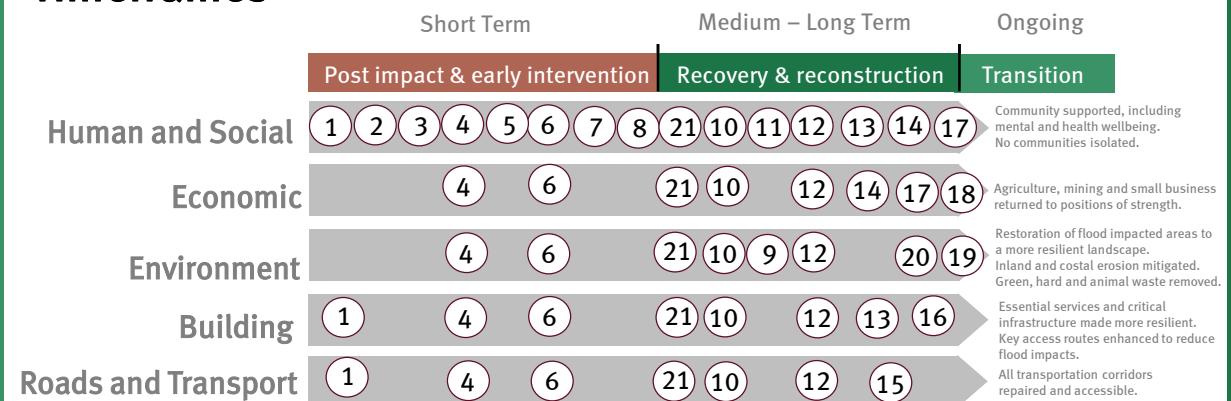
Recovery objectives

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- ① Essential services – power, water and waste repaired and restored.
- ② Emergency funding granted/approved – see activations.
- ③ Telecommunications restored.
- ④ Impact assessments completed.
- ⑤ Rural First Aid support provided to isolated members of the community.
- ⑥ Funding secured to develop a multi-purpose community facility to provide a disaster management and recovery coordination centre, film production/creative hub and multi-agency co-working space.
- ⑦ Wellbeing services delivered.
- ⑧ Community connectedness enhanced.
- ⑨ Vector Control implemented (flies and mosquitos).
- ⑩ Support for rural properties including:
 - Access
 - Bio-security considerations
 - Restocking assistance and priority to stock routes as required
 - Replacement of infrastructure (water)
 - Carcass disposal.
- ⑪ Environmental restoration and protection (prevention of weeds, clean-up of silt).
- ⑫ Rural and Small Business Financial Counselling Support.
- ⑬ Restoration of community facilities.
- ⑭ Support for small business.
- ⑮ Community engagement practices adhered to.
- ⑯ Implementation of Exclusion Fencing.
- ⑰ Support and continuation of key community events.
- ⑱ Discover Winton Tourism campaign.
- ⑲ Shire-wide review of biosecurity plans for rural properties.
- ⑳ Management of Stock Routes to support recovery.
- ㉑ Develop principles for internal management of Offers of assistance.

Timeframes

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Damage and impacts

Human and Social

- 160 rural properties in Winton Shire of which 137 (85.6%) were impacted or badly damaged and experienced devastating numbers of livestock losses.
- Community wellbeing and connectedness.
- Isolation – children in boarding schools and families separated from each other.
- Collective trauma (those directly impacted and those indirectly impacted).
- Biosecurity – Potential Threat of Q Fever.
- Community wellbeing – perception the drought is broken.

Economic

- Agriculture industry – Multi-million dollar losses of livestock including genetics and bloodlines.
- Agriculture industry – Multi-million dollar losses in damaged fencing, cattle, yards, machinery, fodder and equipment.
- Agriculture industry – Multi-million dollar losses in immediate and future income due to death of livestock.
- Animal wellbeing and welfare.
- Sole traders and small businesses – income loss for livestock transport businesses, rural contractors, roo shooters, shearers, dog trappers, contract musterers and pilots.
- Loss of income to small businesses – retail operators and tourism due to closed roads.

Building

- Infrastructure damage including dams, troughs, boundary fences, windmills, solar panels, grids, gates, tanks and bores.
- Power disconnected to caravan park.
- Communication networks impacted.
- Race course impacted by silt.

Building (cont.)

- Construction of geothermal plant delayed.
- Sewerage pump station – pump to be replaced.
- Inundation of the rubbish dump.

Environment

- Biosecurity concerns with double handling of rubbish.
- Biosecurity concerns with increase in mosquitoes and flies.
- Biosecurity concerns in relation to donated fodder.
- Biosecurity concerns due to exposed carcasses relating to Botulism and 3 day sickness.
- Impact on Mitchell Grass's ability to reseed.
- Public health concerns, including septic tank contamination on properties.
- Loss and disposal of livestock.
- Concerns with increase in wild dogs, pests and weeds.
- Wind erosion, scouring, and erosion of top soil.
- \$65,000 in damages to roads and fences in Bladensburg National Park.
- \$45,000 in damages to fences, toilet pump outs, carpark and track repairs at Combo Waterhole.
- Loss of native animals.

Roads and Transport

All townships, outlying areas and key transport routes were isolated for varying lengths of time due to flooding, bridge floodway damage including, but not limited to:

- Diamantina River Road flooded
- Landsborough highway between Winton and Cloncurry closed (26 Days)
- Redevelopment of main street delayed
- Road and pot hole repairs required for local streets.

Activations for Disaster Recovery Funding Assistance

For details of activations and assistance measures visit www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations

Disaster relief measure

- Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme *
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) *
- Counter Disaster Operations
- Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets
- Disaster Assistance (Small Business) Loans
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Small Business
- Disaster Assistance (Primary Producer Loans)
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Primary Producers
- Freight Subsidies for Primary Producers
- Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Primary Producers

Activation date

- 12/02/2019
- 12/02/2019
- 06/02/2019
- 05/02/2019
- 20/02/2019
- 20/02/2019
- 08/02/2019
- 08/02/2019
- 08/02/2019
- 08/02/2019

*The Emergency Hardship Assistance component of the Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) and Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme activation for Winton in areas outside Winton Township commences on 12 February 2019 and in Winton Township as of 21 February 2019.

Recovery tasks

- Establishment of a multi-agency locally-led recovery centre including Department of Agricultural and Fisheries, Rural Aid, Mental Health Agencies, Bio-Security Queensland, Department of Communities, and Winton Shire Council.
- Administration of Financial Assistance to stranded individuals including itinerant workers, grey nomads, travellers and truck drivers (72).
- Basic needs provision to support stranded individuals including itinerant workers, grey nomads, travellers and truck drivers.
- Q Fever Clinic.
- Effective management of donations.
- Effective management of volunteers.
- Provision of Personal Protective Equipment.
- Administration of Country Women's Association Grants.
- Wellbeing support phone calls to isolated community members (over 2000 calls).
- Provision of medical drops, food drops and fodder drops (25,000 head in one weekend) to isolated community members.
- Small business community information nights.
- Small business survey completed.
- Development of a stakeholder engagement plan.
- Inspections on impacted roads and infrastructure.
- Increased wild dog and weed control.
- Updating reports on road closure status.
- Providing signage for impacted roads.
- Providing access to rural properties.
- Implementation of the Carcass Disposal Plan.
- Repair of key community facilities including the showgrounds and camp sites.
- Cleaning the debris from streets.
- Cleaning out of gully pits and storm water pits.
- Community get together/wellbeing events.
- Create individual household, small business, agribusiness and community emergency plans and kits.

Measures of success

Human and Social

- Successful implementation of financial support into the community.
- Employment of CDO to assist with Human & Social and Economic Recovery Process.
- Increased connectedness in the community.
- Welfare checks performed and required support provided.
- Continuation of education for children in the community.

Economic

- Increased visitation by tourists to Winton, characterised by longer stays.
- Festivals and events including Way out West Festival, Vision Splendid Film Festival and Outback festival to proceed.
- Rural properties re-stocked.
- Rural contractors returned to working to capacity.

Environment

- Biosecurity plans are in place.

Building

- Funding sourced to develop a multipurpose community facility.
- Community assets and infrastructure prepared.

Roads and Transport

- Roads repaired.