



WHAT WE DO:

QRA is charged with managing and coordinating the Government’s program of **recovery and reconstruction** works within disaster-affected communities, with a focus on working with our state and local government partners to deliver best practice administration of public reconstruction and resilience funds. QRA is also the state’s lead agency responsible for **disaster recovery and resilience policy**, working collaboratively with agencies and stakeholders to improve risk reduction and disaster preparedness.

OUR VISION:

Make Queensland the most disaster resilient state in Australia.

OUR PURPOSE:

Enable recovery and build resilience to disaster events within our communities.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

NDRRA/DRFA Grants Program

Since establishment, QRA has administered a recovery and reconstruction program through the joint State-Commonwealth Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth more than \$16.4 billion.

Status of NDRRA/DRFA Delivery Program

	2018 Events	2019 Events	2020 Events
NUMBER OF EVENTS	6	12	5
\$2,489M Delivery Program	\$269M Program	\$1,547M Program	\$673M Program
\$1.020M Current Spend	\$258M Spend to date	\$612M Spend to date	\$150M Spend to date
Deadline for Delivery	30 June 2020	30 June 2021	30 June 2022
Time Elapsed			
% Completion			

Acquittal:

The state, through QRA, is up to date with the lodgement and acquittal of NDRRA/DRFA claims to the Commonwealth. The next claim, which will relate to the 2019-20 financial year is due for lodgement to the Commonwealth in March 2021.

In October

The focus in the disaster assistance grants program has been to finalise approval of submissions for reconstruction works arising from the 2019 events, including updates to tendered market prices, which must be finalised under DRFA requirements by 31 December 2020. The process has also commenced to ‘close out’ all expenditure incurred and works completed in 2019-20. These close outs must be completed by 31 December 2020, ahead of audit review and claim preparation and lodgement in Q1 2021.

Impact of COVID-19 on NDRRA/DRFA Programs

QRA has approval from the Commonwealth to grant extensions of time for delivery and approvals across the active program from delays due to COVID-19 impacts including community lockdowns, loss of access to sites, supply chain issues and restrictions on consultants’ and contractors’ capacity to undertake works or prepare tenders. These extensions are being managed by QRA on an individual project basis in order to minimise delays where possible.

To date, 25 delivery agents have sought extensions for COVID-related impacts on their 2018 NDRRA program and 19 delivery agents for their 2019 DRFA programs.

Works for
23
events
from 2018 | 2019 | 2020
disaster seasons

are currently in delivery with an estimated value in excess of
\$2.49B

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

FURTHER MT SPEC ROAD SLOPE REPAIRS UNDERWAY

Further slope repairs are underway at Mt Spec Road, the main access route to the community of Paluma, northwest of Townsville.

As a result of significant heavy rainfall caused by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough in early 2019, Mt Spec Road experienced multiple landslips and significant slope damage.

Landslip repairs were completed at nine sites in late July 2019 to return Mt Spec Road to a safe and trafficable condition. However, further reconstruction works were required at three of the damaged slopes between Little Crystal Creek Bridge and McClellands Lookout: Culvert 161, Twin Falls, and Windy Corner.

Slope stabilisation works commenced in mid-September 2020 at the three severely damaged sites along Mt Spec Road.

At Culvert 161, works involve removing the temporary sprayed concrete to allow soil nails and strip drainage to be installed. The sprayed concrete slope protection will then be reinstated. The damaged guardrail will also be removed and new guardrail installed.

At Twin Falls, reconstruction works involve repairing the damaged culvert and heritage-listed headwalls, repairing the heritage-listed stone retaining wall and installing a new guardrail. The drystone wall will be partially dismantled and stored for later reconstruction. Soil nails will be installed and a concrete retaining wall constructed.

To preserve local cultural heritage, the original stone will then be hand placed by a stonemason as a facing to the concrete retaining wall. All repair works are being undertaken with the advice, guidance and approval of the Department of Environment and Science’s Principal Heritage Officer.

At Windy Corner, the top of the landslip will be trimmed, soil nails installed and concrete sprayed on the upper portion of the slip to stabilise the slope. Hydromulch and erosion control matting will be installed on the lower portion of the slip.

Works are being undertaken in line with a Wet Tropics Management Authority-granted permit and site-specific Environmental Management Plan, with ongoing communication with the authority to ensure works have the least environmental impact.

Works will be completed at night to minimise traffic disruption and the impact on local businesses and residents. The project is expected to be completed by late December 2020, weather and site conditions permitting.

Eligible reconstruction works are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

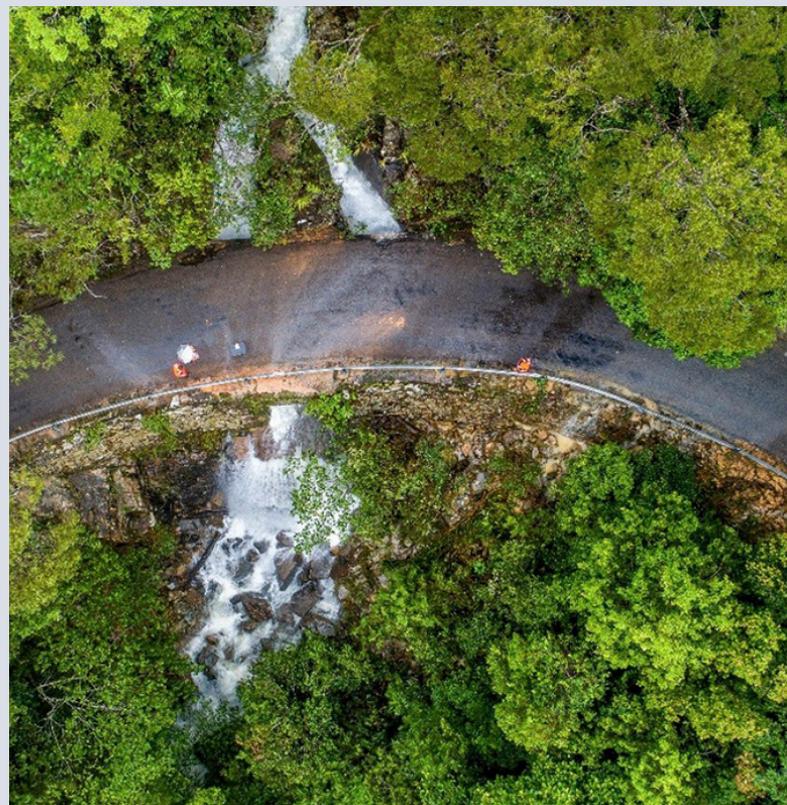


Image: Mt Spec Road – Twin Falls damage site



Image: Mt Spec Road reconstruction works site plan

RECOVERY

Disaster recovery provides a unique opportunity to rebuild, stronger more resilient communities. QRA continues to work extensively on recovery planning with councils impacted by major disasters through building capability and awareness and providing, support for local recovery programmes.

Queensland Bushfires (2019)

The Recovery Plan focuses on bushfires that occurred across the state during the period September to December 2019. The first quarterly progress report is under development.

North & FNQ Monsoon Trough (2019)

The Recovery Plan is the long-term plan guiding recovery of the 39 local councils impacted by the historic monsoon flooding event in 2019. The Plan underpins the Government’s commitment to helping communities recover, rebuild and reconnect from the unprecedented weather event. The fourth quarterly progress report is being progressed through Government for consideration.

Central Queensland Bushfires (2018)

Local Government and State agencies are continuing to support the recovery objectives outlined in the recovery plan. Flexible funding grants have enabled Council to use innovative approaches to recovery including the development of Rural Community Connect in the Central Highlands and an art education program in Mackay. The third progress report is currently progressing through Government for consideration.

Delivery underway on **20** completed Council event-specific recovery plans related to the Central Queensland Bushfires and the NFNQ Monsoon Trough

8 Councils have endorsed their Queensland Bushfires event-specific recovery plans.

14 Councils have endorsed their COVID-19 event-specific recovery plans.

Additional Recovery Measures
 QRA is administering a suite of exceptional DRFA, extra ordinary relief and recovery assistance measures for recent events.

North & FNQ Monsoon Trough (2019) - \$242M

Infrastructure \$124M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$116.6M allocated to 166 projects, to restore and improve the disaster resilience of flood damaged essential public, community and water assets.
Economic \$34M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Industry Recovery Officers (IRO) and 3 Rural Financial Counsellors in operation. • 295 small business grants approved with payments to date of \$2.83M. • Over 245 business owners accessed free mentoring under the Mentoring for Growth program. • 12 scholarships awarded for Event Management and Tourism Programs. • 41 Travel bursaries provided for delegates to attend the Destination Q Events Conference. • \$1.93M provided to councils and Rural Aid for fodder supply costs.
Environment \$46M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62 projects worth \$30.02M have been contracted for Riparian Recovery. • 16 riparian reconnaissance projects are complete. • 17 projects worth \$2.4M have been contracted for Coastal Recovery. • 22 weeds and pest management projects worth \$3.0M have been contracted. A further \$1M has been allocated to enhance existing projects. • A further 14 riparian projects have been recommended to a value of \$8.51M • \$100,000 Emergency Response Program for Parthenium Weed is being delivered through Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.
Human & Social \$12.25M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Community Development Officers in place. • 16 Mental Health clinicians, social and health workers and one Child and Youth Mental Health service delivering services through Townsville, North West and Central West HHSs.
Resilience \$25.75M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$13.13M Flexible Funding Grants approved across 187 projects. • Townsville Flood Mapping project initiated.
Monitoring & Evaluation \$500k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IRO program has been evaluated for the Coastal IROs. • Interim reviews have been completed on the Mental Health, Small Business Recovery and Community Development Officer programs.

Additional Recovery Measures Continued

Central Queensland Bushfires (2018) - \$66.975M

TOURISM RECOVERY PACKAGE \$6.0M	
Marketing Campaign \$1.5M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Events Qld has delivered two regional marketing campaigns working with Scenic Rim, Southern Downs, Sunshine Coast and Noosa LGAs. Go Local campaign is being finalised and will support Scenic Rim, Southern Downs, Sunshine Coast and Noosa LGAs.
Tourism Recovery Officers (TRO's) \$0.5M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Tourism Recovery Officers have been appointed for Scenic Rim, Southern Downs and the wine industry who will work across the region. A Wine Industry Tourism Officer was appointed in August 2020.
Tourism Recovery Fund for Local Government \$3.0M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Rim Regional Council has developed six activities/initiatives and Southern Downs Regional Council has developed 12 initiatives for funding.
Walking Trail Restoration and Resilience \$1.0M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessments completed, scope of works identified and the repair of 35 kilometres of walking tracks damaged in the Lamington National Park has commenced. Specialist arborist contractors engaged to remove numerous fallen trees, overhead hazards and debris in Illinbah Circuit, Gwongoorool Pool Track and Caves Circuit.
Binna Burra Recovery Package \$1.775M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean-up and recovery works, including restoration of road to Binna Burra completed.
COMMUNITY RECOVERY FUND \$14.0M	
Mental Health & Wellbeing \$4.7M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.25 clinical staff of the 10.25 funded positions are providing mental health support to the communities in the Hospital and Health Service districts of Central Queensland, Sunshine Coast, West Moreton, Darling Downs and Metro South.
Community Development Officers \$3.0M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Community Development Offices (CDO) have been appointed out of the 6 LGAs allocated CDOs.
Flexible Funding Grants \$6.0M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37 Flexible Funding Grant Projects approved in Round 1 to a value of \$1.799M. Round 2 for \$4.2m planned to occur in 2021.
Monitoring & Evaluation \$300K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and Evaluation framework and resources under development.
Local Economic Recovery Program \$36.8M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressions of interest closed 7 September 2020. Approval of Tranche 1 projects expected early October 2020.
Exceptional Assistance Immediate Support Package \$8.4M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% funding distributed to 13 impacted councils identified by the Commonwealth Councils are progressively submitting project plans to QRA for using this funding.

National Bushfire Recovery Plan

- COAG tasked the National Bushfire Recovery Agency (NBRA) to work with states, territories, local governments and other stakeholders to develop a National Bushfire Recovery Plan (the Plan).
- NBRA has provided QRA with a number of draft plans for jurisdictional feedback, prior to finalisation.
- QRA consulted with key state agency stakeholders to inform our feedback, which was submitted to NBRA on 4 September 2020.
- At the 11 September 2020 meeting of the State and Federal Bushfire Recovery Coordinators' Forum NBRA advised the Plan would be released prior to the upcoming bushfire season.

Additional Recovery Measures Continued

COVID-19 RECOVERY PLANNING

COVID-19 Regional Recovery Plans

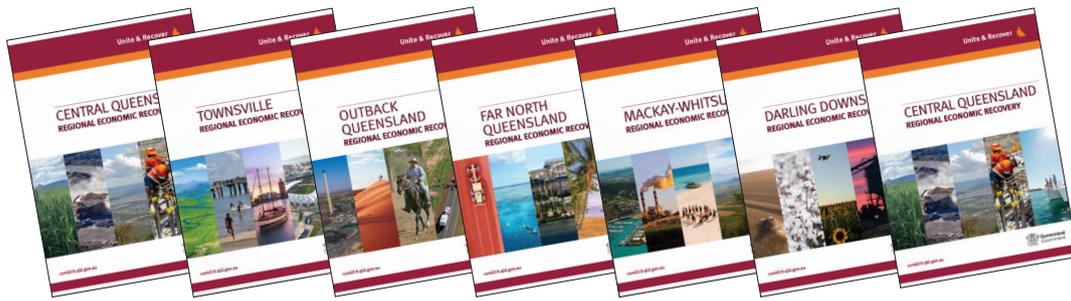
QRA is working with 29 local governments across the state to develop COVID-19 local recovery plans. 15 local recovery plans are under development and two are planned. Aurukun, Barcaldine, Cairns, City of Gold Coast, Gladstone, Goondiwindi, Hinchinbrook, Livingstone, Logan City, Maranoa, Noosa, Toowoomba and Yarrabah Local Governments have endorsed their local recovery plans.

QRA will continue to support local government with their recovery planning in relation to COVID-19, and is taking into consideration the concurrent natural disasters that many are also recovering from.

COVID-19 Regional Recovery Strategies

Extensive engagement undertaken by QRA, along with the Economic Functional Recovery Group industry and agency blueprints, informed Queensland’s Economic Recovery Plan, which was launched by the Treasurer on 20 August 2020.

This engagement has also informed the development of the Central Queensland, Darling Downs, Far North Queensland, Mackay-Whitsunday, Outback Queensland, Townsville and Wide Bay regional economic recovery plans.



53 Council recovery sub-plans are underway or endorsed

Recovery Planning and Governance Project

The Recovery Planning and Governance project is continuing to be rolled out across the state. During this reporting period Western Downs Regional Council completed a Recovery Planning and Governance workshop and Cairns, Gympie, McKinlay and Woorabinda local governments confirmed workshop dates

The project has resulted in the endorsement of 12 recovery sub-plans by local government (of which six were assisted by QRA), and feedback has been provided to seven local governments to enhance existing recovery sub plans.

13 local recovery sub-plans are currently in development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Community Development Officers (CDO) Program – North and FNQ Monsoon Trough

An interim program survey was conducted with 17 stakeholders (nine CDOs, four Council CDO managers and four QRA Recovery Officers) to ascertain if the funding objectives were being met, identify what was working well and to highlight any areas of improvement required to ensure long term program outcomes are met.

86% of respondents indicated that the CDO role was either ‘very important’ or ‘extremely important’ to community recovery progress and that they would recommend the CDO program to other Councils if considering participating again. Other observations included: a shortage of local based skills and knowledge and a high turnover of CDO’s in some local government areas.

Industry Recovery Officers (IRO) Program – North and FNQ Monsoon Trough

The IRO evaluation report has been drafted. The Western IRO program with an experienced DAF Manager and DAF-appointed IROs was successful. The IROs worked with producers to gain accurate damage assessments, promote the financial grants and services that were available and to empathetically support impacted producers. The coastal IROs assisted producers’ access available grants.

Key recommendations included the development of an induction plan for IROs which included mental health first aid training and increased communication between all recovery officers working in a particular event.

RESILIENCE

QRA is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for managing flood risks and improving the resilience of communities, and facilitating mitigation against potential disasters.

Resilience projects and activities



Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan (SFMP)

- QRA has oversight of 52 SFMP actions including 34 for State government, of which QRA is responsible for 12 actions.
- Work progresses on multiple actions and deliverables, many forecasting completion late 2020. There has been a focus recently in progress of the Disaster Management (DM) actions.
- A desktop flood preparedness exercise is being prepared for 19 November 2020, with the relevant catchment flood coordination agencies and disaster management stakeholders.
- QRA and the Brisbane River catchment councils have collaboratively produced a ‘Regional Guideline for Flood Awareness Mapping and Communication’ document which is in the final stages of approval and publishing and addresses action CAR2.3 of the SFMP. Final publication is expected in November 2020.
- The QRA project team is finalising feedback from stakeholders on the ‘Framework for the economic assessment of flood management projects’ which will address action FM7 of the SFMP. Final proof, design and publication is expected in December 2020.

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough Cat D - Flood Mapping and Flood Warning Programs

- The \$1 million Burdekin and Haughton Catchment Resilience Strategy Project will develop locally-led and regionally-coordinated resilience solutions to address recent and emerging disaster risks for councils in the catchment area including Townsville City Council. This project is currently underway and due for completion by April 2021.
- The \$8 million Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Project has progressed with QRA assisting the Far North and the North West areas of operation with their RFQ process to appoint a project manager (both due in November). The “FWIN Guidelines” have been re-drafted to reflect the revised budget of \$8 million and a revised end date of 30 June 2022, which allows an additional 12 months delivery timeframe.
- The Townsville Recalibrated Flood Modelling and Mapping Project, supporting Townsville City Council to update and recalibrate flood modelling and mapping across the council area including the Ross River, is underway.



Resilient Queensland 2018–2021: Delivering the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience

- *Resilient Queensland in Action* was released on 21 February 2020 as the progress update on delivering the first 18 months of Resilient Queensland, demonstrating how we are implementing the QSDR. It includes case studies and initiatives showcasing some of the great work happening throughout Queensland to improve disaster resilience.
- On 21 February 2020, three regional resilience pilot projects were released as part of Resilient Queensland:

- **Central West Regional Resilience Strategy**
- **Mary Regional Resilience Strategy**
- **Fitzroy Regional Resilience Strategy.**

- Phase 2 of the statewide rollout of regional resilience strategies commenced early October 2020 and the project team has begun the process to visit stakeholders in all state regions by end of 2020.

CSIRO Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Approach (RAPTA)

- QRA has worked with CSIRO to develop a tailored version of their Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Approach (RAPTA) for Queensland to support resilience building activities.
- QRA and CSIRO hosted a webinar with state agencies on 24 September 2020, to outline and discuss the findings of the completed work. QRAPTA materials have been shared with agencies involved in the project.



Resilience grant programs



National Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP)

Jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Queensland governments, the National Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) supports community groups, government and non-government agencies, as well as Queensland based not-for-profits, to build disaster resilience across the State. In the 2017-18 funding round a total of \$14.9 million of funds was allocated to 76 approved projects from 54 councils and 14 organisations and agencies. As at 1 September 2020, works were complete for 51 projects, a further 24 projects were in delivery and one project was yet to commence. Projects are due to be completed by 30 June 2021.

Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund (QDRF) and Prepared Communities Fund (PCF)

For 2018-19, \$10.65 million was allocated to 75 projects to strengthen the resilience of Queensland communities, including funding under the fully State-funded QDRF (\$9.5M, 65 projects) and State-Commonwealth funded PCF (\$1.15M, 10 projects). As at 1 September 2020, 26 projects were complete, 45 were in progress, and three were yet to commence with one project no longer proceeding.

Queensland Risk Reduction and Resilience Fund

Queensland’s commitments under the National Partnership on Disaster Risk Reduction are being delivered via the \$13.1 million Queensland Risk Reduction and Resilience Fund. The fund consists of \$8.3 million in State Government funds and \$4.8 million from the Australian government. 49 projects have been funded including 35 from councils, three from regional organisations of councils, two from state agencies, one from a non-profit community organisation and one from Energy Queensland. A list and interactive map of the successful projects is available on the QRA website.

A second round of funding is expected to be released in 2021.



Images above: Isaac Regional Council replaced timber bridges along Collaroy Road.



Image above: Habana Districts Progress Association Inc. received funding for a generator for emergency power supply.

we continually improve how we prepare, respond and recover from disasters

Resilient Building Guidance for Queensland Homes

Flood Resilient Building Guidance for Queensland Homes *launched 9 April 2019*

Cyclone Resilient Guidance for Queensland Homes *released 17 December 2019*

Storm Tide Resilient Guides for Queensland Homes *released 17 December 2019*

Bushfire Building Guideline for Queensland homes *due for imminent release.*



Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (RCNDA)

- The Royal Commission’s final report and recommendations were released in late October 2020. The report contains 80 recommendations across 20 themes focusing on improvements to national preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery arrangements, including clarification of roles and responsibilities of all levels of government, warning systems and community education, and improvements to firefighting capabilities and resource sharing.
- QRA will support the whole-of-government response to the report’s recommendations.

Review of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

- On 13 March 2020, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) tasked Emergency Management Australia (EMA) to lead a review of the DRFA in consultation with States and Territories.
- Following stakeholder consultation, EMA identified the following key areas for review:
 - national comparison of state and territory DRFA assistance measures;
 - streamlining the Category C activation process; and
 - reviewing the assurance arrangements for the DRFA.
- QRA is leading reform negotiations on behalf of Queensland Government agencies, and established a multi-agency DRFA Community Recovery reforms project board to ensure agency input is captured. QRA is actively consulting state agencies to understand the financial implications of EMA’s proposal to implement maximum ceilings on DRFA assistance measures.

- Key progress on each of the reform measures include:
 - **National comparison of state and territory DRFA assistance measures.** On 24 August, Minister Littleproud wrote to State Emergency Management Ministers to advise that the Commonwealth will seek to achieve consistency in recovery measures available between states. On 8 September 2020, ANZEMC noted the final COAG review: national comparison of DRFA assistance. Ministers will be provided with COAG’s National Comparison prior to meeting in November 2020.
 - **Streamlined Category C activation process.** An updated Category C activation process, has been developed by EMA in consultation with States and Territories, which removes the need for states to meet the strict criteria previously applied. The Commonwealth has advised that the new Category C activation process will be in place for the 2020-21 disaster season.
 - **Review of assurance arrangements for the DRFA.** EMA has advised that consultation will recommence with states following the ANZEMC meeting on 8 September 2020, and QRA will continue to participate in this process. QRA continues to draw on its experience to provide input into the review of assurance arrangements.

RESILIENCE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Get Ready Queensland (GRQ)

GRQ is a year-round, community resilience program that helps Queenslanders prepare for disasters. The program integrates a state-wide research driven awareness campaign led by the QRA, alongside a grass roots grants program implemented by providing \$2M across all 77 Queensland councils to tailor information most credible and relevant to their community.

The launch was attended by Bureau of Meteorology, Johnathan Thurston, QFES and Suncorp to announce the Seasonal Outlook and launch the annual Get Ready Queensland Campaign.

News about Get Ready Queensland Week reached more than 1.45 million people. Media coverage on Get Ready Queensland from 12 to 16 October is valued at over \$130,000.

During Get Ready Queensland Week, social media posts by the program reached over 6,600 people, attracted engagement by more than 500 people and drove 51 new page likes on Facebook. Throughout October, Get Ready Queensland’s Facebook page reached over one million people, received 22,800 engagements and 67 post shares.

During the week, the Get Ready Queensland website received 6,391 visitors. The most popular page was **Step one: Prepare a Plan** where visitors can create and download a personalised Household Emergency Plan.



The Get Ready 2020 State-wide advertising Campaign (12 October to 15 November 2020)

The focus of this year’s campaign is to promote three key steps to get ready and to encourage community members to play their part to take pressure off our frontline services. Advertising channels include television, Coles radio, social media and electronic retail panels.

The 2020 Get Ready Queensland Annual advertising campaign is currently in market and a full evaluation report will be available in late January 2021.

At 11 November, the Get Ready Queensland annual advertising campaign has reached more than 2.4 million impressions on social media and driven more than 21,400 clicks to the Get Ready Queensland website.

This year’s television campaign was developed in partnership with Suncorp Insurance. In July this year, the Get Ready Queensland program joined forces with Suncorp under a two-year contract. The Suncorp sponsorship has allowed the program to extend its advertising reach through television advertising across Queensland.

get ready QUEENSLAND

**WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME SIDE
GET READY QUEENSLAND!**

getready.qld.gov.au

- 1** Check your local disaster risk
- 2** Have a household emergency plan
- 3** Pack an emergency kit

SUNCORP Prized partners of Get Ready Queensland

Resilient Australia Awards (Queensland)

GRQ hosted a virtual award ceremony on Wednesday 14 October as part of Get Ready Week. The following Queensland winners are currently being considered for the national awards to be held in Canberra in December 2020.

COMMUNITY AWARD - Queenslanders with Disability Network – Person-Centred Preparedness Planning for COVID-19 for people with disability.

BUSINESS AWARD - James Davidson Architect – flood resilience building projects.

SCHOOL AWARD – Thuringowa State High School – Disaster Resilience for a Changing Climate Grand Challenge.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD (joint winners)

Ipswich City Council – Emergency management animation series and **Scenic Rim Regional Council’s** Farm Box initiative.

GOVERNMENT AWARD – Department of Agriculture and Fisheries – Drought and Climate Adaptation Program.



Images: Resilient Australia Awards virtual presentation.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

GET READY QUEENSLAND WEEK GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

Get Ready Queensland Week 2020 was successfully held from 12-18 October starting with a media launch at Rocklea State School and the consistent message was for all Queenslanders to be prepared this storm and cyclone season.

Rocklea State School on Brisbane's south side was devastated by the 2011 floods so it was fitting that the school hosted the official launch.

Get Ready Queensland Ambassador and rugby league legend Johnathan Thurston kicked off Get Ready Queensland Week at Rocklea along with representatives from the Bureau of Meteorology, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Lifeline and Suncorp.

The Get Ready Queensland Week launch coincided with the release of the Bureau of Meteorology's Severe Weather Outlook.

Bureau Meteorologist Laura Boekel said Queensland could experience heavier than usual rainfall, widespread and prolonged flooding, and possibly more cyclones than average, with La Niña conditions active for the 2020-21 severe weather season.

"The Bureau's lifting in September of the La Niña alert to a current La Niña should have communities preparing for wetter and more cyclone-prone months ahead," Ms Boekel said.

Get Ready Queensland Week is all about making disaster preparedness front of mind before the next disaster, so that people have peace of mind that they have done all they can ahead of severe weather.

Get Ready Queensland Ambassador Johnathan Thurston said October was the perfect time for all Queenslanders to think about their disaster risk and take some simple steps to protect their loved ones.

"It's time for Queenslanders to prepare their homes, have an emergency kit and plan in place and check their insurance so they know they are covered," Mr Thurston said.

The Get Ready Queensland (GRQ) team hosted a range of activities for the Rocklea State School students at the launch including a 5 metre x 5 metre GRQ snakes and ladder game; GRQ household preparedness stand; GRQ colouring stand and GRQ school competition wall.

During the school visit, Mr Thurston took part in a 'virtual visit' to Pormpuraaw State School on the remote west coast of Cape York in the form of a video conference.

The video link with was made possible with support from the team at the National Broadband Network (NBN) who dispatched special 'Muster Trucks' to Rocklea and Pormpuraaw to establish a satellite connection allowing Mr Thurston and the students from both schools to talk about extreme weather and share tips on how stay safe during the cyclone season.

Other activities held during Get Ready Queensland Week included the program's very first virtual event for the 2020 Get Ready Queensland Resilient Australia Awards; a visit to Rainworth State School accompanied by Channel 7 weather presenter Tony Auden.

The team wrapped up the week at Atherton in Tablelands Regional Council to take part in council's Safety Squad Schools Program talking to students from Malanda State School.



Images: L-R: Johnathan Thurston gives students tips to Get Ready while playing a large-scale game of snakes and ladders.

Get Ready Queensland coordinator Mel Dixon and students from Rocklea State School speak with staff and students from Pormpuraaw State School.

Johnathan Thurston addresses media at the launch of Get Ready Queensland Week.

QRA CEO Brendan Moon spreading the Get Ready message urging Queenslanders to keep disaster preparedness front of mind.