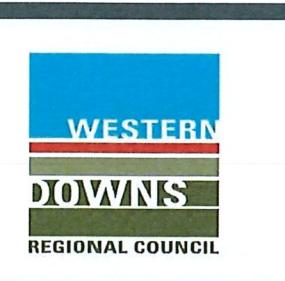


Western Downs Regional Council

2021-22 Rainfall and Flooding Events Local Recovery and Resilience Plan (November 2021 – April 2022)

Approved by LDC and A/CEO Daniel Fletcher on 12/7/22 . Signed: 



Recovery narrative

About our community

Located 208 kilometres north-west of Brisbane, the Region of Western Downs in south-west Queensland, covers an area of 38,000 square kilometres, has an estimated resident population of 34,585 and over 10,000km of roads. The Western Downs Region is traditionally home to the Barunggam and Bigambul peoples.

The Western Downs local government area is bordered by Banana Shire in the north, the South Burnett Regional local government area in the north-east, the Toowoomba local government area in the south-east, Balonne Shire and the Goondiwindi Regional Council area in the south-west, and the Maranoa local government area in the west.

Our major towns are Dalby, Chinchilla, Miles, Tara, Wandoan and Jandowae and we have many villages across the region.

We are a regional powerhouse. We are the energy capital of Queensland and arguably Australia. We are leading the way with clean, green progressive energy with 23 solar farms approved, 6 operating or under construction; 1 wind farm operating and another commencing construction; the largest battery facility in Queensland and an approved hydrogen plant which will commence construction in the second half of 2022.

Our agriculture and intensive agriculture sectors are highly productive and produce food and product to the nation as well as overseas. In fact, 42% of the national feedlot occupancy is located within a 200km radius of Dalby.

The Western Downs Region is also recognised as a leader in manufacturing, producing some world-renowned products including machinery, header fronts, seeders, turbo chargers and a host of high-grade products for national and international markets.

About the disaster event

Several Severe Weather Events have impacted the Western Downs Region from November 2021 to April 2022 with recovery activities ongoing.

1. November - December 2021: Flooding event impacting large parts of the region with the majority of impacts to the Western parts of the region. Significant Flooding of the Myall Creek, Charleys Creek and Condamine River. Resupply operations and swift water rescues
2. February 2021: Severe Thunderstorms and Flooding event impacting large parts of the region with majority of impacts to the Southern parts of the region. Significant Flooding of the Myall Creek, Condamine River, Moonie River and Charleys Creek. Some residents of Dalby moved to place of refuge.
3. March 2022: Flooding event impacting large parts of the region with majority of impacts to the South Eastern parts of the region. Inundated houses and businesses in Dalby.

Local Recovery Group

Chaired by: Peter Greet, A/Corporate Services GM and Local Recovery Coordinator.

Key stakeholders

Western Downs Regional Council, Western Downs community members, Australian Red Cross, Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE), Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), Queensland Police Service (QPS), Rural Fire Services Queensland (RFS), State Emergency Services (SES), Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR), Department of Education (DoE), Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), Queensland Health, Meals on Wheels, Services Australia, NBN Co, Telstra, Red Cross, Shell QGC, Origin Energy, Arrow Energy, QLD Reconstruction Authority (QRA), Blue Care, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Rural Aid Ltd, QLD Corrective Services, GE renewable Energy ANZ, Chamber of Commerce, Agforce, Sunwater and Ergon Energy.

- 1 Immediate response and recovery activities ensure community has access to essential services (power).
- 2 Immediate response and ongoing recovery activities ensure community has access to psychosocial support services.
- 3 Immediate response and recovery activities ensure community has access to financial support services.
- 4 Immediate response and recovery activities ensure primary producers have access to financial support services to restore/rebuild businesses.
- 5 Immediate response and recovery activities ensure road safety issues are addressed, damaged road furniture replaced, and roads and highways are re-opened.
- 6 Agreement and coordinated process between Council/DTMR regarding council closing DTMR roads on their behalf.
- 7 Implement effective and efficient process to enable community members to return home in line with protocols.
- 8 Implement effective and efficient process to enable council owned facilities and recreational areas to be cleaned, repaired, or replaced in line with protocols.
- 9 The community and visitors are participating in sports, community and/or recreation meetings and/or events.
- 10 The community has access to essential grocery supplies and medications during the response and recovery to flooding.
- 11 The community is aware of how to access accurate and up-to-date information regarding flood impacted areas across the region and road and bridge closures.
- 12 Implement effective and efficient process to enable human and animal welfare (Japanese Encephalitis) concerns are identified and addressed in line with protocols
- 13 Implement and progressively monitor environmental restoration and protection program (prevention of spread of weeds and pests (fogging)).
- 14 Implement effective and efficient processes to reduce barriers to logistical issues (including transportation).
- 15 Equitable access to residential insurance for all community members within the Westerns Down LGA
- 16 Identify and promote funding opportunities to strengthen region's recovery and resilience capability and mitigate future potential public safety risks for future disaster events.

Recovery timeframes	Short term	Medium/long term	Ongoing
Human and social	2 7 9 10 11 15 16		
Economic	3 4 7 8		
Environment	1 8 11 12 13		
Building	8 6 16		
Roads and transport	5 6 14		

Measures of success

Human and social

- Coordinated outreach calls and/or visits to isolated individuals/communities have been completed, human and social impacts have been identified and referrals were made to relevant local and/or state partner agencies where required.
- Children have returned to school.
- Community members have:
 - returned home;
 - returned to work;
 - accessed financial assistance where required;
 - accessed psychosocial support where required;
 - accessed equitable residential insurance where required; and
 - recommenced participating in health services, aged care and nursing home outings, programs and activities.
- Community and visitors support and participate in sporting, community and/or recreation meetings and/or events.
- Council and public facilities and venues have reopened and are being accessed by community and visitors.
- Essential supplies and medical supplies have been delivered to isolated community members, townships, and rural properties as required.
- Community has access to essential services (power).
- Recovery and resilience-building initiatives and projects have been identified, implemented and are being monitored.
- Debrief has been held and lessons identified incorporated into relevant policies and procedures in preparation for future events.

Economic

- Economic impact on businesses and agriculture have been ascertained and opportunities to promote/drive economic recovery have been implemented.
- Financial assistance has been secured through activation of extraordinary funding measures and is being accessed by primary producers as required.
- Industry has identified and accessed information on funds, grants, and loans available from government and other entities.
- Strategies implemented to reduce logistical barriers (including transportation) have been successful.

Building

- Local bridges and council owned public facilities have been repaired and re-opened and are operational.
- Damaged road furniture has been repaired and/or replaced.
- Damage assessment and reconstruction monitoring (DARM) program has been implemented and reconstruction progress has been monitored and reported on.

Roads and transport

- Roads are open and operational after emergent works and full repairs have been completed.
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets (REPA) submissions been submitted and are approved by QRA.
- Road furniture has been repaired or replaced and is fully operational.
- Railway lines have reopened and are fully operational.
- Work to increase disaster resilience of one highway has been completed and community and supply chain connectivity is maintained during disaster events.

Environment

- Reconnection of power to impacted residences has occurred.
- Damage assessments have been completed, environmental impacts have been identified and mitigation strategies developed and implemented.
- Recreational areas and camping grounds across impacted areas have reopened and are being accessed by community and visitors.
- Mosquito fogging program has been implemented, resulting in reduction of mosquitoes.
- Japanese Encephalitis monitoring and reporting process has been implemented, monitored and report on.
- Weeds and pests and green waste has been removed from riverine environment.
- Process to prevent of spread of weed sand pests from vehicles entering properties for recovery works has been implemented.
- Flood warning system across the region has been upgraded.

