

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Ensuring better disaster recovery and resilience outcomes for Queenslanders

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) is committed to advancing diversity and inclusion through all aspects of its work. By embedding equity, diversity and inclusion principles into disaster recovery and resilience efforts, QRA aims to ensure that all Queenslanders are supported and empowered to recover after disaster events.

QRA recognises diversity and inclusion efforts in focus areas such as:

- Gender equality – promotes equal rights and opportunities for all genders, including individuals of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and sex characteristics.

- Disability equity – ensures people with disabilities have equal access to opportunities, services and participation in society.
- Social inclusion – fosters an inclusive society where all individuals can participate fully in social, economic and political life. For example, this may be influenced by geographic remoteness of a community, socio-economic status or cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD).

QRA recognises individuals may have multiple, intersecting identities that create unique experiences of inequality and disadvantage.

Approach

Learn about Queensland's approach to diversity and inclusion and how understanding diversity informs our strategic approach to disaster resilience and recovery to ensure better outcomes for Queensland.

Queensland – a state of diversity

Queensland's population has diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences. The 2021 Census¹ revealed:

- 1 in 5 Queenslanders were born overseas, representing over 220 countries.
- 12.5% of Queenslanders speak a language other than English at home.
- 4.6% of Queensland residents identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, representing nearly 30% of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- Almost 27,000 Queenslanders who speak a language other than English at home have a need for assistance with core activities, with nearly 63% of this group, aged 65 years or over.

Understanding these diverse characteristics is essential for developing resilience, and successful disaster recovery.

Some groups are disproportionately impacted by disaster events. For example, seniors and people with disability are twice as likely to be injured and experience social isolation due to a disaster.² In Queensland, disaster events can affect rural, remote, coastal, urban and Indigenous communities in different ways. In some areas, the increasing severity and frequency of events may also compound existing vulnerabilities.

By incorporating diversity and inclusion principles into recovery and resilience planning and activities, QRA can address specific needs and provide inclusive support, ensuring no one gets left behind. This is particularly important to ensure administration of state laws and programs are undertaken in line with the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991³.

Information sources:

- 1 *Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury, Diversity Figures, 2021.*
- 2 *Queensland Reconstruction Authority, Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience.*
- 3 *Queensland Human Rights Commission, Discrimination*

Understanding resilience and recovery needs of Queenslanders

To build stronger, safer and more resilient Queensland communities, QRA must consider the potential vulnerabilities of Queenslanders. This is particularly important to strengthening resilience through preparedness, a principle of the QRA [Strategic Plan 2025-29](#).

Supporting the vulnerable is recognised as one of Queensland's resilience priorities identified by the State Recovery and Resilience Group (SRRG).⁴ This priority aims to strengthen disaster management systems to provide timely response and recovery support for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, seniors, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and individuals experiencing homelessness and/or domestic violence.

Every two years, QRA commissions the [Queensland State of Preparedness Report](#) to better understand how Queenslanders' lives are impacted by extreme weather, what they're doing to get ready and what barriers they experience in getting started.

The 2024 report showed that people who feel least prepared for a disaster event generally:

- speak English as a second language
- are aged 18–29
- are renters
- do not have building and/or contents insurance
- have an annual household income of \$50,000 or less
- are living with a disability.⁵

This information helps QRA design for inclusive recovery and resilience activities, ensuring all Queenslanders are effectively supported.

Information sources:

- 4 *2023-2024 State Recovery and Resilience Plan*
- 5 *Get Ready Queensland, Queensland State of Preparedness Report*

A strategic approach to diversity and inclusion

The *Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022-2027* (QSDR) promotes a systems approach to resilience that connects with a range of agencies and sectors to deliver improved outcomes for Queensland.

The QSDR⁶ recognises that people with disabilities and seniors and their carers, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who have no or low proficiency in English, are particularly vulnerable to disasters. Key actions include:

- distributing disaster information in accessible formats and languages other than English.
- partnering with community groups to support vulnerable members.
- supporting organisations assisting people at risk of homelessness and poverty.

- empowering individuals, households, and businesses to build resilience, focusing on those disproportionately affected by disasters.

The QSDR also emphasises listening to and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Actions include:

- supporting environmental stewardship programs that incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge
- assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils with climate adaptation planning
- developing regional waste management plans to reduce disaster risks.

Information sources:

6 Queensland Reconstruction Authority, [Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience](#).

Case studies showing diversity and inclusion in action

CASE STUDY: Targeted funding to support recovery for a devastated First Nations community

Following Tropical Cyclone Jasper, QRA worked with the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council to ensure a tailored recovery package addressed community priorities.

19 December 2025

Wujal Wujal in Far North Queensland is home of the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Jalunji clans – the 'rainforest people', the traditional owners and custodians of the area. Located in a World Heritage site abundant with sacred waterfalls in the Bloomfield Valley, Wujal Wujal means 'many falls' in the local language.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper crossed the Queensland coast as a category 2 system in the vicinity of Wujal Wujal at around 8 pm AEST on the evening of 13 December 2023. TC Jasper was associated with an extraordinary flooding event causing large-scale and causing the Bloomfield River to reach its highest levels in living memory. Wujal Wujal was completely inundated, leading to the evacuation of all residents to Cooktown and Cairns. Many were displaced and off Country for more than six months.

The flooding caused extensive damage to homes, roads, and community infrastructure, with most council buildings, equipment, and vehicles destroyed. Recognising the community's

unique needs, QRA developed a \$13.93 million Wujal Wujal Targeted Assistance Package, jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). This was the first targeted recovery package for a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and focused on repairing and improving the resilience of key community and recreational assets, including the art and cultural centre, community garden, recreation hall, sports grounds, and walking tracks.

QRA worked closely with the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council to ensure the package addressed community priorities. Additional funding supported repairs to critical services and infrastructure. On 7 June 2024, the Bloomfield Valley held a Community Healing Ceremony to mark a significant step towards recovery and the return of residents to Wujal Wujal. Recovery efforts for Wujal Wujal are ongoing.

CASE STUDY: Delivering accessible and inclusive resources

QRA is working with communities to deliver culturally responsive services to create disaster preparedness resources tailored to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

19 December 2025

The *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* requires that Queensland's multicultural action plans outline the actions required by government entities to ensure services are accessible to individuals who face challenges in understanding or communicating in English.

Under the *Fourth Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2024-25 to 2026-27*, QRA is tasked with two actions under Focus Area 1: Deliver Culturally Responsive Services to create disaster preparedness resources tailored to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Through a \$1.5 million project funded through the National Disaster Risk Reduction Package, QRA's Get Ready Queensland team is delivering these CALD resources to ensure all Queenslanders, regardless of language or communication barriers, have access to critical disaster preparedness information, including:

- videos, fact sheets and plain language translated into eight languages including Thai, Korean, Cantonese, Arabic, Dari, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Punjabi
- a resource guide to help organisations and other jurisdictions adapt the content for their local communities.

In addition, the Get Ready Queensland website has been designed and developed to ensure content is available to as many users as possible, including:

- people with disabilities who may use assistive technologies
- people with slower internet connections (including some rural and regional users) or less than state-of-the-art equipment
- people with non-PC internet devices including handheld devices, game consoles and mobile phones.

These resources aim to ensure all Queenslanders have access to critical disaster preparedness information.

CASE STUDY: Informing flood risk for remote communities

Learn how QRA's role in flood risk coordination includes engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils to meet their specific needs.

19 December 2025

In December 2023, Tropical Cyclone Jasper caused record breaking flooding in three rural and remote communities in Far North Queensland, devastating Cook Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council.

These communities were impacted again by the North Queensland flooding event in 2025, highlighting the need for improved flood intelligence and risk management.

To address this, QRA developed the \$7.73 million Far North Queensland Flood Risk Management Package to help these areas undertake flood risk management activities in the Bloomfield River catchment.

Key activities under the Far North Queensland Flood Risk Management Program include:

- increased flood intelligence to be better prepare for, and respond to, flooding events

- up-to-date data to support flood studies and risk assessments
- relevant data to support councils' local planning schemes and disaster management
- increased capacity and capability within councils and state agencies around flood risk management
- enhanced community awareness, understanding and management of their flood risk.

By providing critical data and resources, the program is helping these remote communities build resilience and better prepare for future disasters through embracing local leadership in decision making. This program is in line with Queensland's Flood Risk Management Framework which recognises that QRA's role in flood risk coordination includes engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils to meet their specific needs.

CASE STUDY: Learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Learn how QRA is collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure knowledge is integrated into decision-making for stronger, more resilient communities and environments.

19 December 2025

QRA seeks to continuously improve disaster preparedness, recovery and resilience by identifying strengths, best practices, and areas for improvement. To achieve this, QRA partners with and learns from groups and sectors that have a role in creating disaster-resilient communities.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with 65,000 years of environmental stewardship and disaster management expertise, offer invaluable knowledge for building resilience.

Collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is critical to ensure their knowledge is integrated into decision-making and to provide opportunities to create stronger, more resilient communities and environments.

For example, with QRA support, the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation partnered with stakeholders on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) to develop

bushfire management plans for Mooloomba, Goompi, and Pulan Pulan (Point Lookout, Dunwich and Amity Point). Incorporating traditional burning techniques on Minjerribah continues to make a real difference in the local community and environment.

In 2023, QRA officers met with Elders and members of the Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation in Bloomfield, North Queensland, to help create a cyclone preparedness community plan. This work included:

- collaborating with the community
- documenting the Dabu Jajikal people's oral histories, language and knowledge
- providing educational workshops on Country
- producing a co-designed plan.

QRA looks forward to more opportunities to learn from and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and councils on disaster recovery and resilience.

CASE STUDY: Enabling more communities to apply for resilience project funding

Learn how QRA successfully advocated to amend guidelines for disaster resilience funding to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, low rate-based councils, not-for-profits and other smaller organisations.

19 December 2025

The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is the Australian Government's flagship disaster risk reduction initiative, investing up to \$1 billion over five years from 1 July 2023. For Rounds 1 and 2 of the DRF, a mandatory co-contribution of 50 per cent was required for each project application, which left many agencies and organisations unable to apply.

This was particularly problematic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, low rate-based councils, not-for-profits and other smaller organisations that perform vital functions in their communities.

In Queensland, QRA is responsible for coordinating DRF proposals and submitting applications to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on behalf of the state. For Round 3, QRA, in consultation with other States and Territories,

successfully advocated to NEMA to amend the DRF guidelines⁷, leading to a tiered structure of co-contributions:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and local councils located in very remote and remote locations – minimum co-contribution requirement of 10 per cent of eligible project costs (up to 90 per cent funded)
- other low rate-based councils and not-for-profit organisations – minimum co-contribution requirement of 20 per cent of eligible project costs (up to 80 per cent funded)
- all other applications – mandatory 50 per cent co-contribution.

After this change, more eligible groups and agencies could apply and have a greater chance at receiving funding for vital projects to help their communities.

Information sources:

⁷ National Emergency Management Agency

CASE STUDY: Measuring intangible benefits of infrastructure investment

Learn about QRA's work to recognise indirect and intangible benefits of resilient infrastructure including continuity and connectedness of disaster affected communities, and other social, economic and environmental benefits.

19 December 2025

Investment in more disaster-resilient infrastructure provides a range of benefits, including creating stronger and more resilient communities and reducing future recovery cost. While cost-benefit analysis can ensure value for money, indirect and intangible benefits are often hard to measure and can be overlooked when considering the costs and benefits of an investment, particularly in ways that reflect the diverse needs of Queensland's communities. Examples of indirect and intangible benefits of resilient infrastructure include continuity and connectedness of disaster affected communities, and other social, economic and environmental benefits.

The Queensland Betterment Fund has proven s upfront investment in stronger, more disaster resilient infrastructure creates stronger and more resilient communities. The 'avoided reconstruction costs' had been calculated for betterment projects re-impacted by disasters, to demonstrate that Betterment investment saves money for all levels of government in future disasters. However, the full cost to communities that we begin to consider through recognition of the intangible benefits for these betterment projects, had not yet been captured or valued, and there was no suitable tool available to complete this calculation.

Recognising this gap, QRA, as a member of the Resilient Futures Investment Roundtable, partnered with the International Institute for Sustainable Development to undertake a pilot project to customise their Sustainable Asset Valuation initiative (SAVi) Tool[1] and retrospectively test it against a range of infrastructure Betterment projects. The SAVi tool evaluates intangible benefits by using 15 indicators, such as road disruption, market access for crops, fruit and livestock, and mental health, to explore the full benefits of the investment (e.g. beyond avoided costs). This approach provides an evidence base to understand how infrastructure investments impact diverse communities, including those disproportionately affected by disasters.

QRA explored embedding SAVi within cost-benefit analyses for current betterment projects and conducted user testing with stakeholders to identify further applications and improvements. QRA found the tool has the potential to better quantify all benefits of investing in resilience to support decision-makers to prioritise future investments in road resilience projects. Measuring these benefits also supports diversity and inclusion by ensuring that infrastructure investments address the unique needs of communities to foster equitable recovery and resilience outcomes.

Noting the potential applications of the tool and acknowledging some of the tool's limitations, QRA is collaborating with [Partners for Infrastructure](#) (P4I), an Australian Government initiative, to extend the functionality and applicability of the tool and make this more user-friendly.

The enhancement includes incorporating more data and information to quantify additional benefits, including:

- transport benefits – such as the cost of fuel and operation and maintenance cost of vehicles and roads
- environmental benefits - such as the pollution of air, water, noise, greenhouse gasses, and nature and landscape
- economic benefits - such as the cost of travel time and lots agricultural production.
- human and social benefits - such as first responder access, mental health, urgent food supply and everyday benefits.

In 2025, through P4I, QRA worked with Thailand's Ministry of Transport and the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning to explore how to embed resilience into infrastructure decision-making as a measurable, fundable objective. As climate risks grow more severe, investing *before* disaster events occur will improve the resilience of Southeast Asia's transport systems.

QRA is proud to be able to assist with this work. QRA continues to work with stakeholders to further test and refine the SAVi tool and explore further uses for this tool. This approach reinforces QRA's commitment to diversity and inclusion, ensuring that no community is left behind in recovery and resilience efforts.