



Disaster recovery

Disaster and Recovery

From devastating bushfires, to unprecedented floods and unpredictable cyclones, a record 11 natural disasters caused widespread havoc across Queensland in the past year, damaging infrastructure and disrupting homes, schools and businesses.

These extreme weather events impacted 61 of the state's 77 local government areas, including Townsville which recorded an extraordinary amount of rain; in excess of 1,000mm over nine days.

We now hold the unenviable title of Australia's most disaster-impacted state, with 84 disaster events in the past decade causing more than \$15 billion in damage to public infrastructure.

Ongoing drought too is impacting on much of rural Queensland with more than two thirds of the state now drought declared.

Amid the devastation and destruction, the best qualities of Queenslanders shone through. Our renowned fighting spirit again saw communities deal with intense adversity with selfless acts of kindness and support.

Our emergency service agencies and tireless volunteers again showed why they are the world's best.

Rebuild and recovery work is in full swing under the guidance of Major General (retired) Stuart Smith and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) which are working closely with impacted councils, state agencies and the Australian Government.

The direct cost of recovery and damage to public assets from 2018–19 natural disasters is estimated at \$1.3 billion with the Insurance Council of Australia reporting insurance costs of more than \$1.2 billion.

This adds to the more than \$1 billion cost of disasters in 2017 and 2018.

While we are familiar with preparing and responding to these events, the impacts go far beyond the cost of bricks and mortar. The human and community costs have lasting long-term impacts including opportunities lost to regional economies, mental health issues and social impacts.

In addition to the more than \$100 million of direct assistance already provided to individuals and communities impacted by the 2018-19 disaster events, the Queensland Government has secured \$254 million in extraordinary assistance under the jointly funded Commonwealth-Queensland Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

Thousands of jobs are also being supported through recovery and rebuilding efforts. This work will ensure local enterprise and industry – the economic drivers of local communities – get back on track.

Of the more than 1,000 licenced builders and tradespeople active on our 'Tradies Register' for flood rebuild work, more than half of them are local. Of a further 221 contractors engaged, almost all are locally based.

The rebuild will take time but there has been outstanding progress to date thanks to the hard work of communities, our tradies, businesses and all levels of government.

As a result, Queensland will be an even better place.

QUEENSLAND'S DISASTER-AFFECTED REGIONS

\$1.3B
TOTAL DAMAGE BILL
OVER 2018-19

Central Queensland Bushfires

22 November – 6 December 2018

- + 8 councils activated for disaster assistance
- + 1,250 fires statewide
- + 1.4 million hectares burned
- + 89 properties and sheds damaged
- + More than 14,000 people notified for evacuation across impacted areas

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough

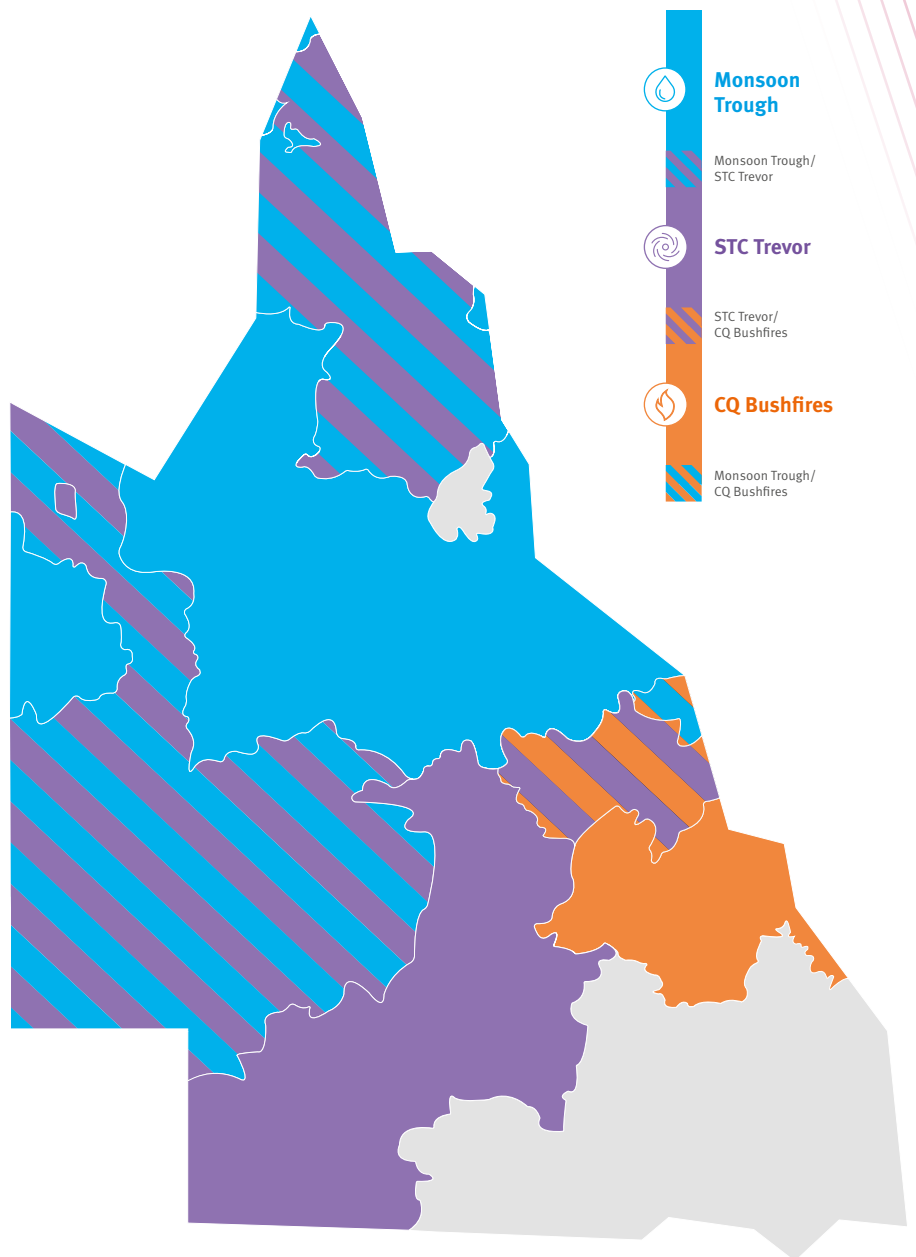
25 January – 14 February 2019

- + 39 councils activated for disaster assistance
- + 1,800 people assisted with emergency housing
- + Livestock losses up to 500,000 cattle and 30,000 sheep
- + 3,369 residences damaged including 1,255 uninhabitable
- + 6,420km of State road network impacted
- + Highest ever rainfall recorded in and around Townsville, in excess of 1,000mm over nine days

Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor

19-27 March 2019

- + 21 councils activated for disaster assistance
- + Winds up to 120km/h



Over the past 10 years, more than \$15B in damage to public infrastructure

Rebuilding Regional Communities

North and Far North Queensland
Monsoon Trough

\$242M DISASTER RECOVERY PACKAGE +

The Queensland Government has secured a \$242 million disaster funding package for the monsoon trough through the DRFA.

\$134.5M Infrastructure

- ⊕ **\$100M** Betterment Fund to repair infrastructure. Examples include the May Downs Carfax Road in the Isaac Regional Council area, Jerome Bridge in the Scenic Rim, Pilbeam Drive in Rockhampton, and Monal Road in the North Burnett.
- ⊕ **\$14.5M** for restoration of damaged water and sewerage infrastructure
- ⊕ **\$20M** for the clean-up and repair of community and recreational assets and facilities

\$39M Business and Industry

- ⊕ **\$10M** for business and industry support
- ⊕ **\$5M** for a tourism recovery package
- ⊕ **\$22M** for a North West Queensland Beef Recovery Package
- ⊕ **\$2M** for fodder supply

\$36M Environment

- ⊕ **\$33M** for river and coastal recovery
- ⊕ **\$3M** for weeds and pest management



\$12.75M Community Wellbeing

- ⊕ **\$7M** for community health and wellbeing, including mental health
- ⊕ **\$5.25M** for a community development program
- ⊕ **\$0.5M** for monitoring and evaluation

\$19.75M Resilience

- ⊕ **\$15.5M** for flexible grants to help support community-led recovery activities and initiatives
- ⊕ **\$0.75M** for community information and education
- ⊕ **\$3.5M** for a flood mapping and warning program

\$100M ADDITIONAL RECOVERY SUPPORT



\$32.5 million in personal hardship assistance to more than 116,000 people helping cover essential items such as food, clothing and accommodation



More than **\$6 million** for small business owners and non-profits to help cover clean-up costs and recovery



\$62 million in approved grants to more than 1,070 primary producers

Of the 11 separate natural disaster events in 2018–19, the most devastating was the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

It wreaked havoc across 39 local government areas and had a catastrophic impact on communities, businesses and primary producers from the Torres Strait in the far north to the South Australian border in the south west.

Record-breaking rainfall from the event cut off communities, devastated the livestock industry, has left freight routes at a standstill and destroyed infrastructure, homes and businesses. Over 56 per cent of Queensland’s land mass was impacted.

Led by the QRA with the support of the Australian Defence Force, 15 state government departments and agencies, six regional bodies and more than 10 non-government organisations and peak bodies provided assistance to impacted communities in the wake of the Monsoon Trough.

Mount Isa rail reopens following huge recovery effort

In response to North West Queensland’s unprecedented flood event, the Queensland Government acted quickly to fast track the recovery of 300 kilometres of flood-damaged track on the Mount Isa line.

More than 400 rail workers and contractors clocked up more than 160,000 hours working at more than 200 sites to reopen the line in just 11 weeks.

Freight is now moving again in the state’s north west following this extraordinary effort in difficult conditions.

The Mount Isa line plays a critical role in connecting Queensland regions and industries.

It reopened on 28 April 2019.



Repair work on the Mount Isa rail line.



Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk visits flood affected regions early 2019.

Rebuilding Regional Communities

Central Queensland Bushfires



In November and December 2018, the Central Queensland Bushfires devastated 35 communities across eight Queensland local government areas.

The firefighting operation was the largest in Queensland history and the catastrophic conditions recorded during the peak of the wildfires were a first for the state. There were 1,250 fires across the state, with over 140 fires in Central Queensland causing disastrous consequences for residents, primary producers, agriculture and the environment.

More than 1.4 million hectares of Queensland were burned over the peak two weeks of the fires and thousands of people were evacuated from communities

in the path of the widespread and unpredictable blaze.

The response to the Central Queensland Bushfires was an enormous coordinated effort to protect people, their homes, property and the environment. The response operations included 3,000 fire and emergency services personnel from Queensland and 1,202 from interstate.

A \$12 million disaster funding package has been allocated to restore social networks and build community resilience and capacity for the future in response to the Central Queensland Bushfires.

This funding will support jobs in the region and ensure local businesses and industry gets back on track.



More than **\$1.8 million** in Emergency Hardship Assistance grants paid to 10,393 residents



15,000+ items delivered to impacted communities and over 4,900 offers of goods and services received by GIVIT



413 community recovery workers assisted bushfire-impacted communities



479 damage assessments in 35 impacted localities across eight LGAs

Drought support



Floods, bushfires and cyclones are not the only weather events impacting Queensland rural communities.

The total area of Queensland that is now drought-declared has risen to 65.2 per cent after significant lack of rainfall across central, southern and south east Queensland.

The Queensland Government is supporting drought affected communities through the continuation of the Drought Assistance Package as well as implementing Queensland drought reform, with a provision of up to \$74.6 million available over four years.

This includes:

- ⊕ **\$50 million** for the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme
- ⊕ **\$15 million** for the Drought Relief from Electricity Charges Scheme
- ⊕ **\$5.2 million** for community assistance
- ⊕ **\$4.2 million** for land rent rebates and water licence waivers
- ⊕ **\$200,000** for fodder management

The Queensland Government will continue to support resilience building initiatives as part of the 2019–20 State Budget. Investing in mitigation and resilience before disaster strikes will reduce future costs, minimising the economic burden and protecting communities from undue suffering.

These initiatives include:

- ⊕ **2019 Queensland Betterment Fund** — a **\$100 million** investment to improve infrastructure in council areas impacted by the Monsoon Trough.
- ⊕ **Flood mapping and flood warning program** — **\$3.5 million** to enable communities to proactively reduce flood risk and increase resilience throughout their catchment, providing pathways to improve floodwater resilience.
- ⊕ **Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund** — **\$38 million** over four years to strengthen the resilience of Queensland communities.
- ⊕ **Get Ready Queensland** — a **\$2 million** program that delivers all-hazards, resilience building engagement to councils and locals to assist with disaster preparation and mitigation.
- ⊕ **Flexible grants program** — **\$21.5 million** in funding to rebuild community connectivity and resilience following the Central Queensland Bushfires (\$6 million) and Monsoon Trough (\$15.5 million).

Forecast expenditure for disaster events 2017 to 2019 for NDRRA and DRFA relief measures

(\$ million)	2018-19 Est Actual	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Budget	2021-22 Budget
Local Government assets	349	211	235	157
State Roads	34	199	113	135
Other support programs	152	254	102	30
Total	535	664	450	322



Floodwaters inundated vast tracts of the Harrington's properties.

Cattle farmer praises on-the-ground support

The Harrington family has seen its fair share of flooding in the 81 years they have been on Brinard Station, about 140-kilometres east of Cloncurry.

“There were big floods in ’74 and ’91 but nothing like what we got this time around,” Beau Harrington said.

In addition to the 37,000 hectares at Brinard, the Harrington Family also run cattle on another 49,000 hectares of land in the district.

Almost half of the Harrington’s land was under at least half-a-metre of water for some period of time during the monsoon event.

After years of drought the rain was initially welcomed but the grim reality of damage soon set in.

Mr Harrington said the floods meant they had to replace as many as 2,000 head of branded cattle, including precious breeders, but had no way of knowing how many unbranded calves were washed away when the floodwaters moved across the land.

Some areas are still inaccessible and it will be December before the Harrington family knows the full extent of the stock losses but early estimates put the figure around \$3 million.

Mr Harrington praised the support received from a multitude of government agencies and not-for-profit organisations.

“There has been, and there still is, lots of people on the ground providing assistance and support.”

Beau Harrington

The Harrington family is “just getting on with things” and has a 10-year plan in place.

Go Local, Grow Local in Townsville

Townsville business owner Karen Bennett of Bennett’s Barbershop has become one of the faces of Townsville’s Go Local campaign after her shop suffered water and electrical damage during the floods.

“When you support locally owned small businesses, you actually help create a community,” Mrs Bennett said.

“I think Townsville’s long-term recovery from this unprecedented event will see us grow as a community. North Queenslanders are the most positive and resilient people you’ll ever meet and together, we are supporting each other more than ever before.”



From left to right: Portia Wieden, Karen Bennett (owner), Fiona Collins.

Hockey complex back in action

Following flood damage the Townsville Hockey Complex is back in action in time for upcoming major sporting events.

Funding of \$1.7 million under the DRFA and Townsville City Council support allowed the Townsville Hockey Association to immediately start reconstruction work, re-laying fields and repairing damaged infrastructure after the floods.

The Queensland Under 18s Mens State Championships will now go ahead as planned on 30 June – 2 July 2019.

Losing the championships would have been devastating for the local hockey community and leave thousands of competitors, participants and families out of pocket for travel and accommodation arrangements already made.



Damaged Townsville hockey fields.