



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:
Stronger, safer, resilient Queensland communities.

OUR PURPOSE:
Coordinate action to improve the resilience of Queensland communities and facilitate locally-led disaster recovery.

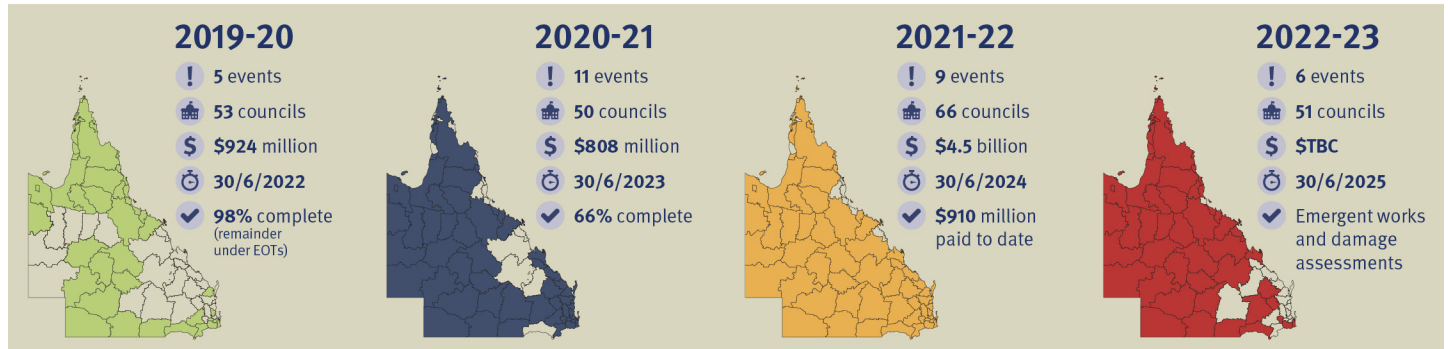
DISASTER ASSISTANCE

DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

QRA is currently administering a recovery and reconstruction program under the joint Commonwealth State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) worth in excess of \$6.2 billion arising from 31 events from the 2019-20 to 2022-23 disaster seasons in the delivery and/or acquittal phase.

CURRENT STATEWIDE PROGRAM

! 31 events **🏛️** 76 councils with an active program **💰** \$6.2 billion



FEBRUARY

The focus in February has been to support communities that continue to be impacted by monsoonal rain and flooding in the north of the state, and bushfires in the west, including to progress activation of DRFA assistance measures to support recovery.

Concurrently, QRA has been closing out delivered works from the 2018-19 and 2019-20 programs, and also continuing pre-approval assessments relating to the massive reconstruction program resulting from the South East Queensland floods and other 2022 Events. QRA continues to support councils to scope reconstruction works following the more recent events of 2023.

Another focus in February was to progress the audit of Queensland’s next DRFA claim to the Commonwealth due by 31 March 2023. On lodgement, the claim will acquit \$1.1 billion of State expenditure incurred in 2021-22, and

secure the state more than \$670 million Commonwealth contributions towards the ongoing recovery and reconstruction program.

QRA has also been busy progressing applications for the Australian Government’s national \$200 million 2023-24 Round One of the Disaster Ready Fund. QRA worked with state agencies, local councils, non-government organisations and universities to assess and submit around 150 applications aimed at supporting disaster risk reduction that are due to the Commonwealth by 6 March 2023.

During February QRA also conducted damage reconstruction assessments and coordinated recovery activities across South East Queensland to monitor the pace of recovery 12 months after the 2022 Floods.

RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

The Resilience and Recovery team within QRA provides leadership, coordination, direction and advice for the development and implementation of disaster resilience and recovery planning, policy, funding, and support.

To deliver on this commitment, roles and responsibilities are dispersed between and across levels of government and with key stakeholders.

RECOVERY

QRA works extensively on natural disaster preparedness and recovery planning with stakeholders and communities impacted by major disaster events, increasing capability and awareness through active participation and providing support for local recovery governance.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements activations – 2022-23 disaster season

After a wet December, January and February, the North and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding event was extended to include further monsoonal weather systems. This ensured that Local Governments who sustained repeated damage from being flooded multiple times received further funding, particularly in relation to Counter Disaster Operations (CDO) and Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA), including emergency works.

In addition to the monsoonal activity in the north of the state, communities in the Western Downs region were severely affected by bushfire activity occurring during January and February. DRFA assistance measures were activated, including CDO, REPA, Essential Services, Safety and Reconnection Scheme (ESSR), and Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS). As at end of February 2023, more than 290 applications have been received for financial support.

A total of 51 LGAs have so far been activated for DRFA assistance for the 2022-23 season.

Engagement with Local Governments, other stakeholders, and the community

QRA Recovery and Resilience Officers have had a busy month with a range of engagements occurring with key recovery stakeholders across the State.

QRA officers participated in a workshop for the newly established Community Recovery Community of Practice for the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE). The workshop was facilitated by several department Community Recovery and Resilience Officers (CROO), and the focus is to support effective community-led initiatives, facilitate linkages, collaboration, and partnerships between stakeholders. The QRA intends to continue attending and supporting the Community Recovery Community of Practice, give the benefits it will provide to the delivery of DCHDE’s recovery programs.

Local government engagement in February included visits to Barcoo, Winton and Longreach to discuss disaster impacts, damage, and recovery progress as a result of the Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding event in late December, early January.

The team also met with Mackay, Whitsunday, Isaac, Western Downs, Balonne, Goondiwindi and Southern Downs to discuss Regional Resilience Strategies and Regional Action Plans. Discussions included what support, if any, council may require with the implementation of any actions or projects outlined in the strategies.

Officers continue to undertake Disaster Funding Arrangements (DFA) training where applicable and provide support to councils on the status of their 2022-23 Get Ready Queensland activities.

QRA officers assisted councils prepare submissions for the first round of the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF), which is a flagship disaster resilience and risk reduction initiative, committing \$1 billion over five years, from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2028.

As a result of the Western Downs Bushfires in early February, QRA provided in-person recovery planning and reporting support to the Western Downs Regional Council Local Recovery Group in Dalby. QRA's Recovery team continues to remotely support the Local Government Group as it supports community recovery on the ground with personal hardship payments and support.

In early February the Resilience and Recovery division was invited to speak to a visiting delegation of academic and senior government officials from Thailand as part of the Mekong – Australia Partnership Short Term Awards – Thailand: Responding to the Climate Change Challenge. Two QRA Directors met with and presented to the delegation about the QRA's resilience and recovery programs, and particularly about Queensland's flood risk management framework. The delegation was supported by DFAT and the University of Queensland.



State Recovery Coordinator

The State Recovery Coordinator (SRC) Register assists in informing the appointment by the Premier of SRCs to coordinate recovery operations following a disaster and is updated annually.

After consultation with external stakeholders, this SRC register of nominated individuals has now been updated for the 2022-23 and the future 2023-24 Disaster Season.

In January, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) reached out seeking QRA's involvement in a familiarisation session for the QFES/QPS support which is provided to a SRC following an event – known as the deputy SRC. The session involved senior QPS and QFES emergency

services staff who have been nominated to be support staff to an SRC. QRA briefed the group on the SRC's role and responsibilities and have agreed to continue to regularly brief nominees to ensure they are prepared to support any major event.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Disaster Recovery Programs

The QRA has recently completed a significant package of fifteen evaluations of recovery programs which supported the recovery from the Central Queensland Bushfires in 2018, the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough in 2019, as well as the Queensland Bushfires in 2019. Evaluations have been made publicly available on the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) Knowledge Hub website.

The Recovery team will work with agencies in implementing recommendations and findings from these programs into future disaster recovery programs. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) have incorporated recommendations from the North West Queensland Beef Recovery Package into current programs. QRA are also attending Community of Practice Workshops with Community Recovery and Resilience Officers to discuss recommendations from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE) disaster recovery programs.

Follow-up damage assessments provide snapshot of South East Queensland flood recovery

Over three weeks in February, QRA officers, supported by officers from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Disaster Relief Australia (DRA) and DCHDE, visited more than 3600 homes, across 15 local government areas, that were affected in the 2022 South East Queensland flood to monitor recovery progress.

QRA officers collected information on structural damage, insurance matters and referred any urgent community recovery matters to DCHDE. Information collected through Damage Assessment and Reconstruction Monitoring (DARM) will be shared with councils and relevant state agencies, to improve their understanding of the needs and priorities of impacted communities.



Update on Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

QRA is continuing to work with state and Commonwealth partners on the roll out of exceptional circumstances packages, jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments, to support Queensland communities in their recovery from significant weather events during the 2021-22 disaster season.

The QRA secured more than \$2 billion in extraordinary assistance packages under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), to provide support to communities in need following the Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, Ex TC Seth, SEQ Rainfall and Flooding and Southern Queensland Flooding (6 May 2022-20 May 2022).



RESILIENT HOMES FUND

\$741 million Resilient Homes Fund - Registrations of Interest still open

As at 27 February 2023, 5923 homeowners from eligible local governments area whose property was inundated have registered their interest in the Resilient Homes Fund. Of the active 4925 registrations, 650 people registering their interest in the Voluntary Home Buy-Back program, 1470 in the house-raising and 1996 in the retrofit, with 809 people unsure which option is best suited to their individual needs.

Rollout of the Home Buy-Back component of the Resilient Homes Fund has continued in Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Gympie, Moreton Bay, Lockyer Valley, Goondiwindi, Somerset, Gold Coast and Noosa local government areas. As at 27 February, there have been 478 valuation inspections undertaken, 386 offers presented, 242 offers accepted and 87 contracts settled.

Further details: [Resilient Homes Fund Eligibility and funding factsheet](#)

Property Level Flood Information Portal

Delivery of the Property Level Flood Information Portal ("the Portal") continues, with market responses to the Expression of Interest being evaluated and shortlisted for the next stage of procurement.

The Portal has the principal aim of assisting residents to understand, be more informed and better prepared for future flooding events by giving them access to flood risk information specific to their property.

Delivery of the Portal will enable any member of the public in an eligible local government area to enter their address into a locally hosted platform and obtain key information about flooding at their property. Where data is limited, the system will still be implemented using existing datasets and allow for updates as new data becomes available.

The project is funded under the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund to support resilience measures in Queensland homes across 39 activated councils impacted by the Central, Southern and Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, Ex TC Seth, SEQ Rainfall and Flooding and Southern Queensland Flooding (6 May 2022 -20 May 2022).

Flood studies, risk assessment and management strategies and intelligence systems (WP3)

Flood-impacted councils across Queensland will share in a total of \$18.25 million to improve flood resilience through flood studies, risk assessments and other special projects.

A total of 36 councils will receive funding for 127 projects through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements in response to the 2021-22 disaster season.

This funding will allow councils to invest in flood studies, flood risk management plans, and flood warning intelligence systems, so they're better prepared for the threat of natural disaster.

This package is one of three made available through the \$31 million Flood Risk Management Program, which is being administered by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

Other packages under the program include support for community engagement and education around disaster preparedness; and for remote sensing technology to create 3D maps and models of environments, to better understand potential risks.

The Flood Risk Management Program is part of the greater \$721 million extraordinary disaster assistance package delivered jointly by the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments through the DRFA following the 2021-22 season to address the medium and long-term recovery and resilience needs of Queensland communities.

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.

As the most disaster-prone state in Australia and with on-going disaster impacts across the state, QRA is continually considering new ways to improve the safety and resilience of Queensland communities. This includes building trusted, reciprocal and robust relationships with community leaders, thought-leaders, and local, state, Commonwealth and international partners, and participating in a wide range of activities to inform our policies.

DISASTER RESILIENCE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Disaster Ready Fund Update

The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is the Australian Government's flagship disaster risk reduction initiative which will fund a diverse set of projects in partnership with states and territories to deliver medium-term and long-term national outcomes, investing up to \$1 billion over the next five years.

Queensland's applications for Round One of the DRF closed on 13 February 2023. QRA, as the lead agency coordinating Queensland's application for the DRF, have worked closely with state agencies, local councils, non-government organisations and universities to identify, review and submit applications that are due to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) by 6 March 2023.

Announcement of successful projects will be made by the Commonwealth from May 2023.

Further information can be found at www.qra.qld.gov.au/funding-programs/disaster-ready-funding

\$75m Emergency Response Fund Resilience and Recovery Package

On 18 March 2022, in response to large scale floods across Queensland and New South Wales during February and March, the Australian Government announced an additional \$150 million from the Emergency Response Fund for recovery and post-disaster resilience initiatives that support flood-affected communities in those states.

Queensland and New South Wales have each been allocated a grant of \$75 million to spend on projects where they, in agreement with the Australian Government, determine the funding is most needed.

QRA is continuing to work closely with local councils, state agencies and NEMA to finalise Queensland's projects for this funding package to support additional recovery activities and increase the disaster resilience of some of our most impacted communities.

Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund 2021-22

Fifty-three projects across Queensland have been approved for \$19.1 million through the 2021-22 round of the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF) and the Managing Disaster Risk program.

This consisted of joint funding under the QRRRF (\$8.3 million by the Queensland Government and \$4.8 million by the Commonwealth Government) to support communities mitigate and manage the risks associated with natural disasters. A further \$6 million was funded by the Commonwealth Government's Managing Disaster Risk program to support 14 local government areas identified by the Commonwealth as hardest hit by the 2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

The approved projects will help support 28 councils, two state agencies, four universities and eight not-for-profit organisations to increase the resilience of Queensland's communities.

Independent Review into Disaster Funding

The Australian Government has commissioned an Independent Review into Disaster Funding to take stock of Australia's disaster funding environment following the significant government financial support provided to impacted communities over the last three years in response to significant events. Former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mr Andrew Colvin AO APM will lead the Independent Review.

The review will consider how Commonwealth arrangements for disaster funding can be optimised to support a system that is fit-for-purpose to support wellbeing, national productivity, prosperity and economic security, and maintains state, territory and local government roles and responsibilities in the context of the projected increase in natural disasters over the coming decades.

The review will take approximately 18 months. During this time there will be extensive consultation across all levels of government, as well as with industry, businesses, community groups, and the not-for-profit sector. A final report is expected to be provided to Government in April 2024.

This provides an exciting opportunity for Queensland to advocate for improvements in disaster funding and ensure funding arrangements meet local and regional needs.

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 QRA, alongside a grass roots grants program providing \$2M across Queensland’s 77 councils and the Weipa Town Authority to deliver locally-led disaster preparedness initiatives.

Emphasis on state-wide collaboration

February saw the recommencement of two key GRQ stakeholder meetings, both aimed at building collaboration and co-operation across the state.

The first Get Ready Queensland Local Government Community of Practice for 2023 featured healthy discussion about resources for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Practitioners in Toowoomba and Townsville shared their experiences in developing translated fact sheets and videos that help people understand their risk and prepare for extreme weather. The meeting also gave the Bureau of Meteorology a platform to share new heatwave resources, which will build awareness and knowledge of Queensland’s deadliest weather phenomena. GRQ presented the results of the 2022 behaviour-change campaign, with outcomes well-received by council representatives.

These results were also shared at the first Queensland Resilience Coordination Group meeting for 2023. This forum meets every two months and brings together State Government agencies and external parties who undertake communications or engagement activities relating to disaster resilience. In February, the group also received updates from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services regarding the new Australian Warning System, the National Emergency Management Agency about their engagement structure and Multicultural Australia about an important stakeholder mapping exercise that is underway.

Get Ready Queensland plays a key role in strengthening relationships across the state. Meetings like these put the focus on a collective approach to promoting preparedness and resilience. Doing so enables consistency of key messages and wider reach and impact.

Facebook focus paying off for GRQ

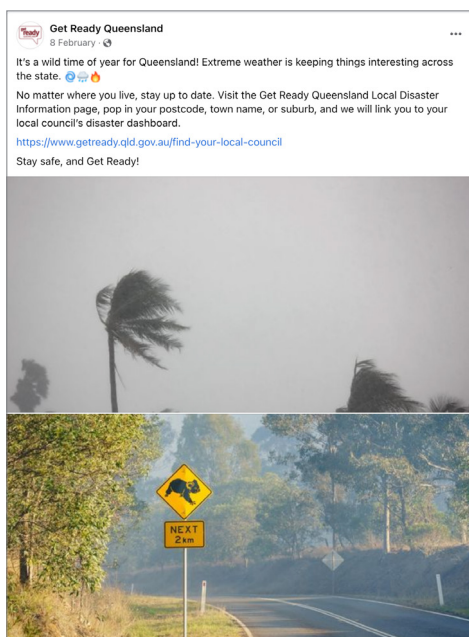
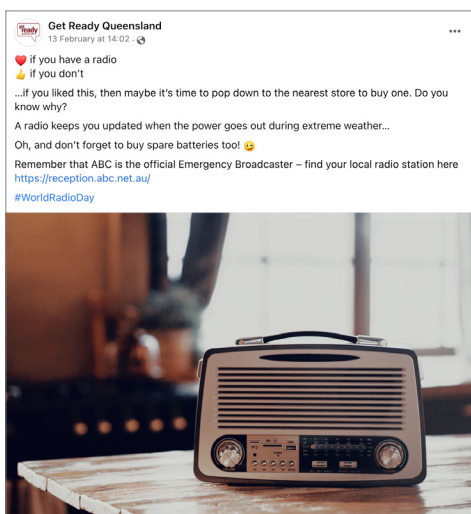
In just a month, GRQ’s Facebook page has seen a 155 per cent increase in organic reach.

The team has been focused on improving engagement through this important channel, achieving results by:

- employing interactivity, humour and a lighter tone to bridge disaster fatigue

- promoting quick, easy, shareable preparedness tips during active weather events
- activating local community influencers through content shares, building credibility and trust online.

GRQ will continue to focus on strengthening digital presence throughout 2023, not just through social channels, but also with a new, interactive website.



Screenshots of some of GRQ’s high performing posts in February

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

QUEENSLAND'S FLOOD RECOVERY CONTINUES ONE YEAR ON

This time last year Queensland was experiencing one of the most significant natural disasters in its history.

The state's recovery operations from the 2021-22 natural disaster season continues with an estimated reconstruction bill now exceeding \$4.2 billion.

This amounts to one of the costliest recoveries Queensland has ever seen, in response to nine devastating disaster events that hit the Sunshine State between November 2021 and May 2022, impacting 66 of Queensland's 77 local government areas.

The largest of these was the 'rain bomb' over South East Queensland in late February which saw the wettest six-day period in the region's recorded history, while the Mary River in Gympie peaked at almost 23 metres, breaking records that had stood for a century.

The scale of damage from these disaster events was extraordinary, with homes, businesses and communities severely impacted – some of them multiple times.

Among the nine disasters to strike the state in the 2021-22 disaster season, southern regions experienced four consecutive widespread major floods, which caused a level of destruction not seen since the floods of 2011.

Areas from Maryborough and Gympie, west to Goondiwindi and south to the Gold Coast saw extremely heavy falls that broke multiple rainfall records.

Local emergency service workers and volunteers were called on time and again to protect their communities and they did an unbelievably good job.

These events remain very raw for Queenslanders, especially those who lost loved ones, lost their homes, and lost their businesses. We know the effects of these floods will be felt for a long time.



Queensland's recovery continues one year on from the 2022 floods

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

QUEENSLAND'S FLOOD RECOVERY CONTINUES ONE YEAR ON - CONTINUED

In response, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority established various programs and funding channels through the jointly funded Commonwealth-state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to assist flood-impacted communities and businesses, including:

- The first-of-its-kind \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund
- \$174.7 million for human and social initiatives like mental health services and accommodation support
- \$177 million for economic recovery, including loans for medium-to-large businesses, grants for rural landholders, and support for small businesses and tourism operators
- \$180 million to rebuild, recover and strengthen community and recreational assets
- \$59.9 million for environmental recovery, including \$31 million for flood risk management
- \$150 million Betterment fund for councils and state agencies to improve the resilience of essential public infrastructure
- \$30 million clean-up package for beaches, waterways and parks
- \$24 million local recovery and resilience grants.

A further \$35.8 million has also been provided in personal hardship assistance, benefitting more than 111,000 people.

This assistance allowed impacted Queenslanders to purchase food, clothing or medical supplies, and also included \$8 million in Structural Assistance Grants that have helped more than 980 people repair their homes.

More than \$127 million has also been approved to date for more than 7800 grants of up to \$75,000 for affected primary producers, and up to \$50,000 for small businesses and not-for-profits.

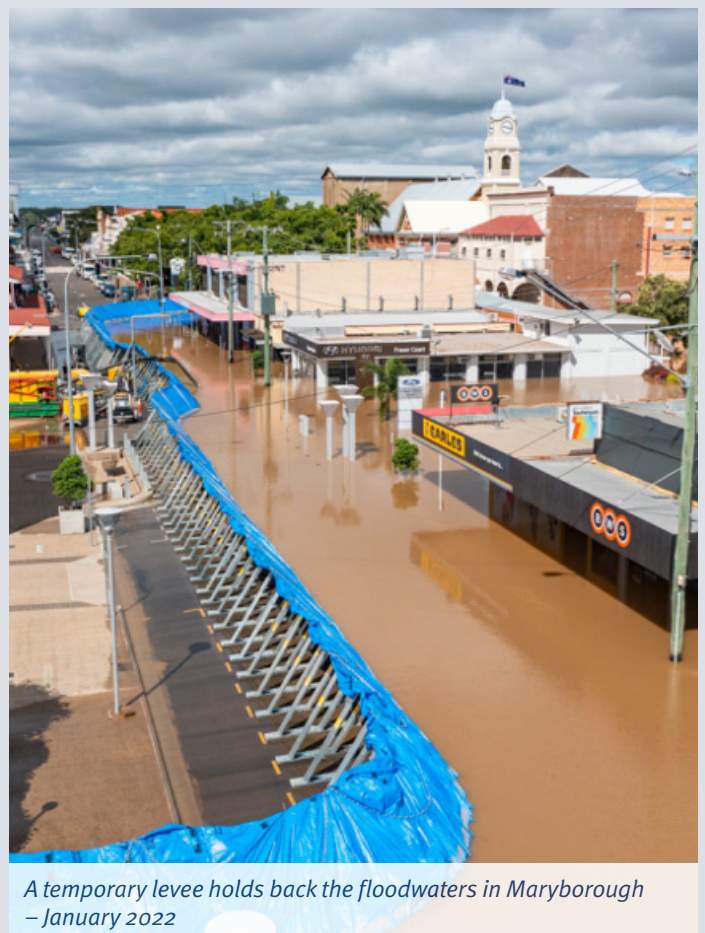
Meanwhile, the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund has seen more than 5900 registrations for house raising, resilient retrofitting or voluntary home buy-back, with 258 flood-affected homeowners having now accepted offers through the Voluntary Home Buy-Back Program, which will allow these people to move away from the threat of rising floodwaters for good.

Wherever and whenever a disaster impacts the state, QRA will always be there to offer a helping hand on the road to recovery.

QRA is also constantly working hard to invest in greater resilience, so the next inevitable disaster doesn't have the same effect as the last.



Inundation in Gympie – February 2022



A temporary levee holds back the floodwaters in Maryborough – January 2022

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

BEECHMONT ROAD UPSLOPE REPAIRS COMPLETED

Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has completed upslope stabilisation works on Beechmont Road in the Gold Coast hinterland and the reconstruction project will now focus on the damaged downslope section.

It is one of several Gold Coast hinterland roads that suffered severe damage following record rainfall in February and March 2022, with more than 700mm reported at Beechmont during the South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding event.

The deluge caused a significant embankment failure and damage at multiple locations on Beechmont Road, requiring a road closure for safety between Bottletree Lane and North Road. TMR fast-tracked emergency repairs, with a temporary single-lane side track opening in late July 2022 to restore access for the community and businesses while further repairs are undertaken.

The temporary side track is open under traffic control on weekdays before 8.30am and after 2.30pm to facilitate commuter travel. Access is closed on weekdays from 8.30am to 2.30pm, to allow reconstruction works to continue at the site. On weekends the road is open, and access maintained under traffic signals, with some works requiring short delays.

Works are expected to continue until mid-2023 (subject to weather and site conditions) to stabilise the downslope area and build up the embankment to restore Beechmont Road to two lanes of traffic, and repair other damaged sections of the road.

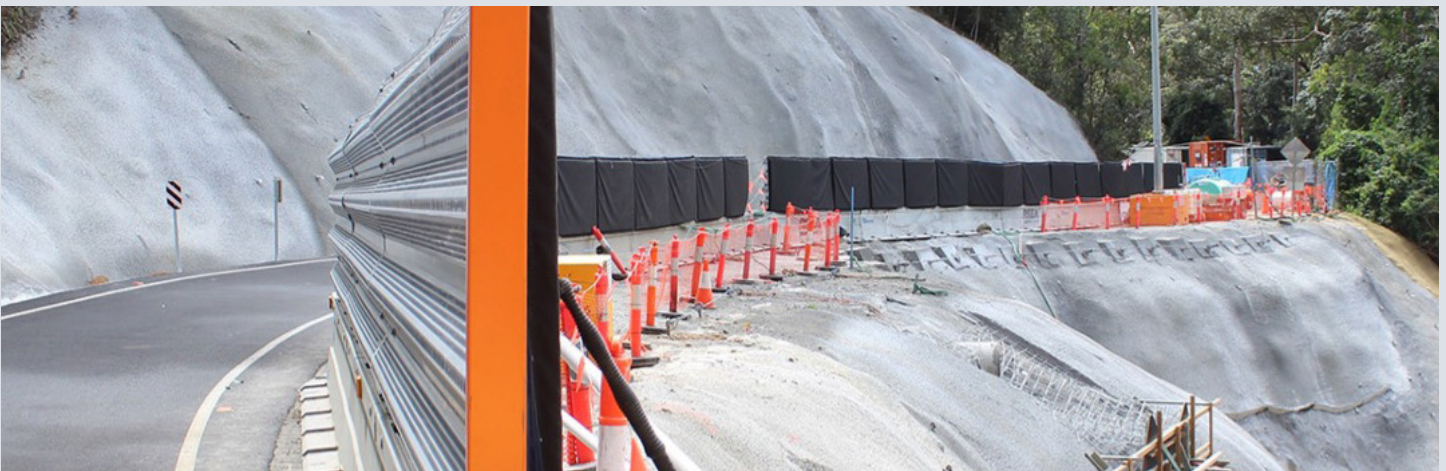
Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



Beechmont Road – embankment failure (late March 2022)



Beechmont Road – downslope stabilisation works in progress (December 2022)



Beechmont Road – completed upslope stabilisation works (December 2022)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

PINE CREEK ROAD REOPENED FOLLOWING EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Pine Creek Road in the Gold Coast hinterland has reopened to two lanes following the completion of emergency works.

The road was damaged by heavy rainfall from severe storms in late September 2022, when up to 340mm of rain fell in the area in one night, including 120mm in one hour.

Part of the uphill climbing lane was damaged, with significant soil erosion and damage to multiple drains along the road.

Following initial inspections, the road was temporarily reduced to single-lane traffic for safety while repairs were undertaken.

Emergency works including debris removal, asphaltting and drainage repairs were completed, allowing Pine Creek Road to fully reopen on 9 December 2022.

This is good news for the Springbrook community, who are using this route while landslip repairs are undertaken on nearby sites along Gold Coast–Springbrook Road.

Major works continue on several hinterland roads damaged during extreme rainfall during 2022.

Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



Pine Creek Road – damage from South East Queensland Severe Storms



Pine Creek Road – completed emergency works