

2017

Year in Review



Fitzroy River flood gauge in the aftermath of TC Debbie.



Overview

Earlier this year, many Queensland communities, along with the disaster management system that supports them, were tested by impacts associated with Tropical Cyclone (TC) Debbie.

The extent and intensity of these events saw the disaster management system fully activated across much the State, with recovery efforts continuing into the future.

Events such as TC Debbie may highlight a need for us to recalibrate our expectations regarding the future, to shift our traditional retrospective lens used previously for continuous improvement (lessons learnt) to consider plausible futures with events beyond our experience and determine ways to map critical systems and identify their vulnerabilities.

We had some opportunities to step into this thinking throughout the year, as well as being tasked with a major review of the response to TC Debbie at a systems level.

In addition to this key review, we implemented a comprehensive range of other initiatives and assurance activities to support our key stakeholders to collectively ensure Queenslanders continue to benefit from the best possible disaster arrangements. These included:

- ✦ Reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of disaster management plans at local and district levels.
- ✦ Progressing research and collaborative opportunities with universities and other institutions so that lessons identified, research and good practice are integrated into evidence-based policy and advice.
- ✦ Facilitating continuous improvement, consultation and collaboration across the sector through an award-winning, State-wide network of disaster management officers and local disaster coordinators.
- ✦ Reviewing evacuation management arrangements and recovery arrangements in Queensland.

- ✦ Developed an initial version of a *Queensland Disaster Management Lexicon* in collaboration with the sector.
- ✦ Enabling stakeholders to conduct a health check of their disaster management capability against the *Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland* (the Standard) through systems and processes that are easy to use, accessible and that provide clear, useful and timely information.

My goal for the coming year is to forge even further into a futures-thinking approach, where collectively, we develop a lessons management capability at the systems level to identify, map and tackle root causes of consistent themes, providing us with a proactive lens to strengthen our arrangements and their links to other critical service delivery systems upon which our communities' depend.

This year's edition of our Year in Review is structured using the principles of the Emergency Management Assurance Framework to showcase the Office's examples of their application.

Iain MacKenzie AFSM
Inspector-General Emergency Management



Leadership

“Leadership at all levels is demonstrated through a commitment to a shared culture of disaster management excellence.”

“Strategic planning, within the context of resources and risk, underpins clear decision making and planning to achieve outcomes.”

Leadership is the ultimate responsibility of us all and this year we saw exemplars from all levels in the sector, such as:

- ✦ At a systems level, the State Government’s commitment to a shared culture of excellence was reflected in the response to the 2017 Cyclone Debbie Review, assigning leadership across agencies to ensure further improved community outcomes.
- ✦ The Office and the Disaster Management Officers’ Network won the Leadership Category at the 2017 Premier’s Awards for Excellence. This award recognises the shared culture of disaster management excellence the network has collectively built over the past two years by working together to share and draw on each other’s expertise, driven by an intention to and focus on improving outcomes for their respective communities.

- ✦ In March, the Inspector-General recognised leadership at the individual level by awarding the *IGEM Champion of Change* award to Ms Cheryl-Lee Fitzgerald, Executive Manager Emergency Management, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES).



Ms Cheryl-Lee Fitzgerald was recognised for her leadership abilities, support for staff and support for remote communities, and is seen here with Iain MacKenzie at the event.



Receiving the Award on behalf of the DMO Network are (left to right) – Trish Sharpe (IGEM), Klynt Oberto (Brisbane City Council), Matt Pinder (Ipswich City Council), Mike Lollback (LGAQ), Glenn Bell (Central Highlands Regional Council), Phil Nickerson, Jeff Hawthorne, Nicola Moore (all IGEM), and Carla Bailey (Logan City Council).

Public Safety

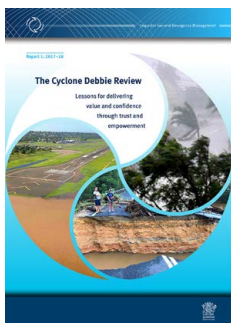
“Queensland’s disaster management arrangements are delivered through effective disaster management groups where policy, procedure and practice all focus on safety of the public, engaging stakeholders and sharing responsibility.”

The Office has completed a comprehensive range of assurance activities to discern a level of confidence in Queensland’s disaster management system in delivering public safety, via the identification of risks and gaps and the prioritisation of areas for improvement.

Reviews

The Cyclone Debbie Review – a systems-level review of disaster management effectiveness

- ✦ 80 stakeholder groups were consulted during the review process
- ✦ 1200 affected residents surveyed from the three impacted areas across the State
- ✦ 34 findings led to 18 recommendations for improvement (17 recommendations accepted with the remaining recommendation accepted in principle)
- ✦ Good practice identified and shared
- ✦ Formal government response published as a sector action plan – assigning leadership across State agencies for improved community outcomes.



Review of evacuation management arrangements

- ✦ 47 stakeholder groups interviewed across 28 local governments, 14 state agencies and five not-for-profit organisations
- ✦ Three planning workshops were held in the Gold Coast, Townsville and Rockhampton with 89 attendees overall
- ✦ The review is yet to be finalised; testing and integration of plans will be a feature of the report.



Townsville District and Local Capability Review

A review into the capability of local and district disaster management groups in the Townsville region:

- ✦ includes the Townsville District Disaster Management Group and the Local Disaster Management Groups of Burdekin, Charters Towers, Flinders, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island, Richmond and Townsville City.



Review of recovery arrangements in Queensland

- ✦ A total of 30 interviews undertaken, including:
 - » 14 local government site visits (Brisbane, Bundaberg, North Burnett, Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Central Highlands, Cook, Gympie, Isaac, Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim, Tablelands, Wujal Wujal and Whitsunday)
 - » nine State agencies interviews (DCCSDS, State Development, EHP, HPW, TMR, QPS, QFES x 2 and QRA)
 - » four key stakeholder interviews (SRPPC, SRC, NGOs, community member)
 - » three local government phone interviews (Logan, Ipswich x 2).

DM plan assessments

Reported on the effectiveness of local and district disaster management plans to 70 local governments and 21 disaster districts. The Townsville Disaster District and its seven local governments were not included in this assessment due to the deeper evaluation of their disaster management capability currently underway by the Office.

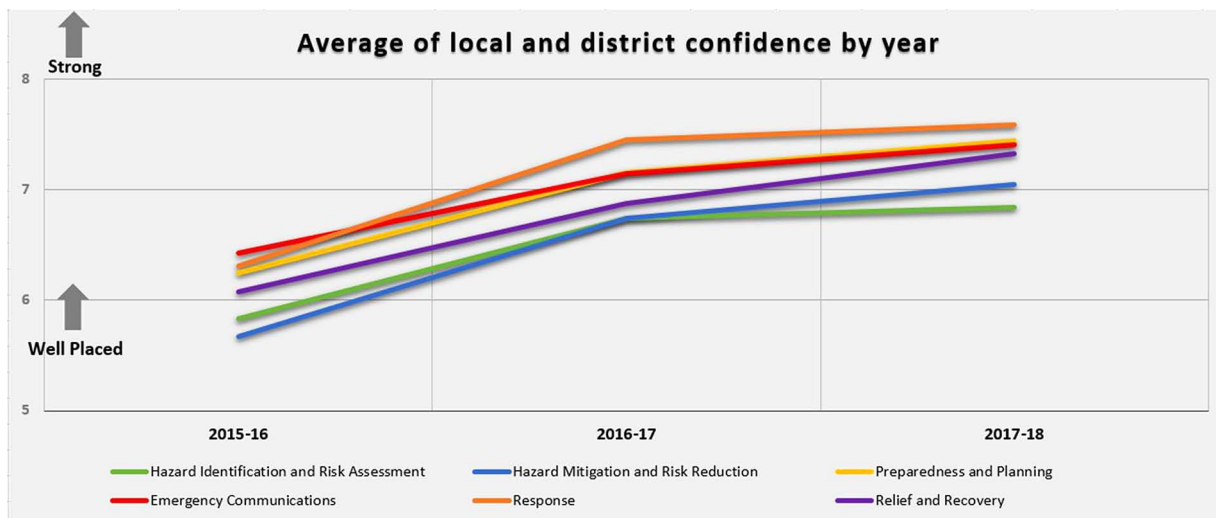
Standards

Contemporary assurance frameworks, activities and tools that enable improved performance across emergency management:

- ✦ 12 regional workshops to 193 local and district disaster management group members.
- ✦ Presented workshops to:
 - » Department of Transport and Main Roads
 - » Department of Energy and Water Supply
 - » Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.
- ✦ Supported State agency adoption of the Prioritisation Tool to embed best practice into departmental disaster management plans and improve business continuity planning by considering disaster management.

Mackay District and Local Capability Review – Improvement Strategy Workshop

In collaboration with relevant State agencies, jointly facilitated the Mackay Disaster District Capability Improvement Workshop with 49 key regional stakeholders.



Above: On average, confidence in disaster management plans have demonstrated consistent improvement over the last three years, across all shared responsibilities in the Standard.

Background: Roadside pause to assess some approaching weather during the field visit to the Townsville and hinterland Disaster Management Groups.



Partnerships

“Everyone has a role to ensure Queensland is the most disaster-resilient State.”

“Strategic partnerships are well-governed, drive clear roles and responsibilities and promote true collaboration.”

Engagement driving collaborative partnerships:

The Office addressed, presented and participated in workshops, symposiums and conferences including:

- ✦ Australia & New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference (ANZDMC)



IGEM staff member Dr Allison Rifai and QUT Intern Ms Caitlyn Ward presented on the Immersive Technology Project at the Australia & New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference (ANZDMC).

- ✦ AFAC Conference and BNHCRC Research Forum

Alex, Amy and Rowena with IGEM posters at the AFAC Conference in Sydney.

- ✦ Fourth Annual Emergency Services, Enforcement and Defence Leadership Summit
- ✦ AFAC National Flood Warning Framework Sub-Group Workshop
- ✦ AFAC AIIMS Steering Group meeting
- ✦ AFAC Lessons Management Forum



Iain MacKenzie presenting lessons from the Cyclone Debbie Review at the AFAC Lessons Management Forum.

- ✦ National Review of Warnings and Information Working Group
- ✦ National Warnings Handbook Working Group



- ✦ National Disaster Resilience Glossary Steering Committee and Working Group
- ✦ The International Australasian Evaluation Society Conference
- ✦ Australian Strategic Policy Institute
- ✦ COTA's State Disaster Preparedness for Older People Group
- ✦ Queensland Flood Warning Consultative Committee.

General engagement and communications:

- ✦ Released four editions of the online e-newsletter *IGEM Connect* to more than 1,300 stakeholders.
- ✦ Published an article in the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* detailing key outcomes achieved so far by the Office.
- ✦ Attended six local and district disaster management exercises:
 - » Dam Topping 2017 (Fraser Coast)
 - » Muddy Waters (Noosa)
 - » Exhale (Flinders)
 - » Papa India (Palm Island)
 - » Exodus (Redlands)
 - » Noah (Gympie)
 and two recovery exercises:
 - » the SDCG Recovery Exercise
 - » Noosa Recovery Exercise.
- ✦ Visited and met with a total of 36 local councils.
- ✦ Attended and presented to three regional disaster management networks.
- ✦ Presented to Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and The University of Queensland (UQ) students.
- ✦ Undertook numerous radio, television and newspaper interviews.
- ✦ Attended QDMC, DM IDC, SHSRC and SDCG meetings.
- ✦ Met with Chief Information Officer and Department of Natural Resources and Mines to discuss augmented/virtual reality communities of practice.
- ✦ Meetings with dam operators Sunwater and Seqwater regarding implementation of the *Water Legislation (Dam Safety) Amendment Act 2017*.

- ✦ Monitored the *Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan Project* managed by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
- ✦ Attended four aged-care forums in the Tablelands, Logan, Redlands and Townsville.

Strategic partnerships underpinned by effective collaboration

DMO Network and Forum

- ✦ Awarded the 2017 Premier's Award for Excellence (Leadership Category) on behalf of the Disaster Management Officers' (DMO) Network.
- ✦ Facilitated the DMO Network forum in Mackay that included presentations and workshops involving more than 70 participants from more than 55 local councils, NGOs and state agencies.



Participants at the Disaster Management Officers Network and Forum in Mackay.

- ✦ Presented at three regional DMO networks.
- ✦ Two new regional networks were established.



Participants at the newly-formed Disaster Management Officers Regional Group, encompassing the Mackay, Central Queensland and Central Highlands regions.

- ✦ Supported the establishment of a working group that finalised development of a standard State Emergency Service (SES) Memorandum of Agreement with QFES for use with local governments across the State.

Queensland Disaster Management Lexicon

- ✦ In collaboration with the sector, finalised over 100 terms for the *Queensland Disaster Management Lexicon* to enhance interoperability and communication within Queensland.
- ✦ This work is showcased at a national level via its influence on the development of the *National Disaster Resilience Glossary* project.

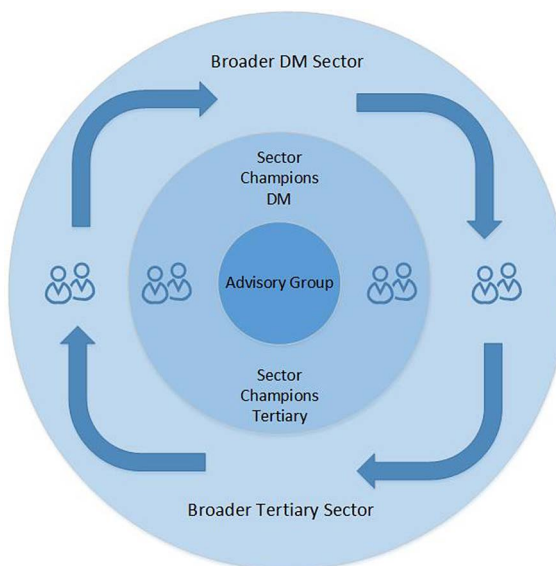
Australian Vulnerability Workshop

- ✦ In collaboration with Emergency Management Australia, co-hosted a two-day, cross-sector workshop with 47 stakeholders, focusing on deconstructing disaster and unpacking the question *'What makes Australia vulnerable to disasters when severe to catastrophic events impact what people value'*.

Queensland Disaster Management Research Framework

The Office has worked with disaster management and tertiary sectors in building a Disaster Management Research Framework for Queensland with a purpose of collaboratively developing and promoting research that:

- » is contextualised for Queensland
- » is relevant for coal-face disaster management practitioners to improve community outcomes
- » nurtures enhanced partnerships, cooperation and understanding between academic institutions and government agencies.



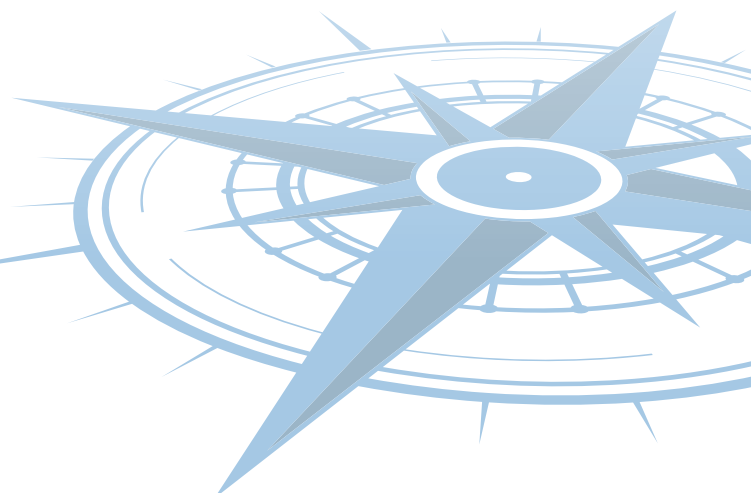
Achievements in 2017:

- ✦ Collaboratively identified research gaps and opportunities in Queensland, including:
 - » governance and doctrine, policy and legislation into practice
 - » the role of the legal system in disaster management
 - » disaster management and community resilience
 - » the professionalisation of disaster management
 - » risk assessment and modelling in changing and complex environments
 - » environmental, economic and community recovery
 - » community messaging and warning systems
 - » immersive technologies
 - » exercise development and evaluation.
- ✦ Established a Research Community of Practice of more than 100 disaster management researchers from universities across Queensland.
- ✦ Created an on-line living catalogue of research questions to support/guide discussions and translate strategic issues into practical research questions.
- ✦ Established a collaborative on-line environment to promote research partnerships.
- ✦ Supported IGEM reviews.
- ✦ Continued support of disaster management future practitioners through tertiary institutions, including QUT's *Destructive Earth* subject.
- ✦ Supported a QUT post-graduate student to map and analyse NDRRA activations in Queensland.
- ✦ Presented to students at both UQ and QUT.
- ✦ Collaborated with UQ and Rotary regarding a research project looking at warnings for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members.
- ✦ Worked with students from Griffith University as part of the *Queensland Disaster Management Lexicon* project.

- ✦ Employed a QUT intern to examine opportunities for immersive technologies to support disaster management training and community engagement.



QUT Intern Ms Caitlyn Ward presented outcomes of the Immersive Technologies Project to sector representatives.



Performance

“Productivity and effectiveness are measured by a combination of quality, cost, time or human relationships.”

“Performance is monitored and analysed against standards and good practice across the spectrum of prevent, prepare, respond and recover.”



Our people

The Office recognises the benefits of a diverse and engaged workforce:

- ✦ *2017 Working for Queensland Survey* – achieved 100% staff participation with positive results for innovation (89%), agency engagement (81%) and organisational leadership (76%)
- ✦ to support service delivery, 73% of staff use flexible work practices such as flexible work hours, telecommuting and part time work.

Setting our strategic direction

- ✦ Workshops held with 30 key stakeholders from council, State government agencies and non-government organisations to consider futures thinking, environmental scanning and stakeholder insights as part of the development of the Office’s Strategic Plan for 2017–21.

Above: One of the workshops held to develop the Strategic Plan 2017–21.

Right: Pictured at the White Ribbon Australia Workplace Accreditation ceremony were Judith Gibbon and Michelle Petrocitto (PSBA), Iain MacKenzie (IGEM), Shane Donovan (PSBA), Sarah March (IGEM), Peter Griffin, Rowan Boland, Tamara Bird and John Kyriakidis (all PSBA).

Key achievements

Developed and implementing:

- ✦ *Workforce Strategy 2017-21*
- ✦ *Inclusion and Diversity Plan 2017-19*
- ✦ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Plan 2017-18.*

Customer Satisfaction Survey

- ✦ 4% increase in customer satisfaction to 87%.
- ✦ Key reasons for satisfaction included providing accurate and clear information, timely service and adopting a collaborative approach.
- ✦ Ratings for Office staff continued to be extremely high, with 90% satisfied or very satisfied that staff are polite, respectful and professional.
- ✦ 90% satisfied or very satisfied that review processes are clear.

White Ribbon

- ✦ Awarded White Ribbon Australia Workplace Accreditation in conjunction with the Public Safety Business Agency.
- ✦ Worked with other State agencies to take active steps to prevent violence against women and support those affected by domestic and family violence.
- ✦ Participated in White Ribbon oath signing event and *Darkness to Daylight Challenge*.

Champion of Change Award

- ✦ Inaugural IGEM Champion of Change Award presented to Ms Cheryl-Lee Fitzgerald, Executive Manager, Emergency Management for QFES in Cairns, Far Northern Region.



Into the future

With an ongoing mandate to provide confidence in Queensland’s disaster management arrangements (system), the key imperative for the Office is to continue to find ways to reduce barriers to response and integrated disaster management and to identify ways for closer integration of local governments, State agencies and other partners.

A key piece of work for 2018 will be the development of a sector-wide Lessons Management Framework incorporating:

- ✦ the Queensland Disaster Management Research Framework
- ✦ a focus on stakeholder co-design to ensure continuous improvement and sharing of good practice
- ✦ current international, national and State policy contexts to shape a Framework that will ensure linkages to other systems.

This will provide the disaster management sector in Queensland with the means to have confidence that key strategic learnings are identified, analysed, shared and implemented.

This ability to access and contribute to a lessons management framework will deliver improved outcomes directly applicable to Queensland communities.





2017

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