

# IGEM *Connect*

Inspector-General Emergency Management

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## Welcome to the second edition of IGEM Connect.

As we move towards the start of storm and cyclone season, it has been pleasing to see the large volume of preparatory work being undertaken at all levels across the disaster management sector.

Over recent times my office has observed or participated in a range of meetings, initiatives and exercises, such as Seaweed and Stan, to ensure our disaster management arrangements are as coordinated and effective as possible.

It is through this on-going process of testing and commitment to continuous improvement against the [Standard](#) and local plans and arrangements that our ability to achieve the best outcomes for Queenslanders during emergencies and disasters will be enhanced.

Currently, there are few better examples of this commitment than in Banana Shire.

In the wake of June's [Callide Creek Flood Review](#), Banana Shire Council, SunWater, the Department of Energy and Water Supply and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines have collectively and collaboratively embraced the reviews recommendations and have made significant cooperative progress towards finalising these.

I had the pleasure of attending a joint SunWater-Banana Shire Council Callide Dam Open Day on October 10 where residents were updated on progress against the recommendations.

I was extremely encouraged by the work undertaken and plans for the future to better prepare and warn residents during a flooding event. I was equally pleased to hear of the review, reworking, and testing of a number of operational aspects regarding disaster management response arrangements.

I am confident that this collaborative effort will result in significantly improved arrangements and outcomes for the future.

Away from noting this pre-season work, there are a number of other matters I want to highlight in the short term.

## Forward Program of Reviews

**The forward program of IGEM reviews for 2015-16 was recently approved by the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services, The Honourable Jo-Ann Miller.**

The forward program for this financial year includes:

- **A review of a specific district disaster group and local governments' capability to deliver effective disaster management outcomes.** The purpose of this review is to provide in-depth assessment of local government and district level capability measured against the Standard. The review will focus on at least one disaster district, including the District Disaster Management Group and all Local Disaster Management Groups in that district, and will also inform the development of an assessment process to align disaster management plans to the Standard. Areas identified for improvement will be supported by an integrated strategy across the disaster district. The review will provide a test case for potential replication in other disaster districts.
- **A review of the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local governments to deliver their disaster management responsibilities in line with the Standard.** A review of the 2014-15 disaster management plan assessments identified that additional support is required for some rural and remote councils, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local governments. The review will identify specific complexities that may impede an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local governments' ability to successfully apply the Standard, with a view to identifying ways to improving disaster management outcomes. The Queensland Government Champions will be engaged as part of the review.
- **A review of the implementation of the State Disaster Coordination Centre's Improvement Strategy.** The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) review report (June 2014) made 25 recommendations covering structure, operations and activities within the SDCC. The purpose of this review is to ensure that all recommendations have been implemented and the desired outcomes achieved.

In addition to these activities, my office will also examine data from Queensland disaster and emergency management exercises conducted over recent years and produce a discussion paper aimed at identifying trends, innovations and gaps which can improve disaster management arrangements overall.

The activity may result in the identification of opportunities for learnings to feed into doctrine and training curriculum development, and for cooperative partnerships to improve disaster management outcomes.

As well as being available to participating stakeholders, the outcomes of the activity will feed into other assurance activities, including the tier three *Review of disaster management outcomes at district and levels* and *State Disaster Coordination Centre Improvement Strategy Review*.

## Disaster Management Officer Network

**In collaboration with a working group of leading local government disaster management practitioners from across the State, my office is currently facilitating the establishment of a statewide network of disaster management officers and equivalents.**

The idea of the network is to provide a forum for the enhancement and sharing of disaster and emergency management practice.

The network will have the potential to provide benefit to local practitioners, their councils, the IGEM and broader Disaster Management Sector via the co-development of a peer network of colleagues with similar functions. The goals of the network will be

- Build a sense of community amongst local disaster management officers in Queensland
- Support each other in applying and navigating the intricacies of Queensland's disaster management arrangements and associated doctrine
- Keep up to date with changes in the arrangements, doctrine and legislation
- Share and develop skills, knowledge, resources, ideas and innovation

At this stage, it is envisaged the group will operate through a teleconference system, with an annual two or three day face-to-face workshop, subsidised by my office.

Detail surrounding a Terms of Reference, Events Schedule and operating arrangements are currently being finalised by the working group for presentation and discussion at the first teleconference.

At this stage, we hope to hold the first teleconference later in November.

I will be writing to all Local Disaster Coordinators in the near future seeking appropriate nominees to be involved with the network.

I will provide more detailed information regarding the DMO Network and first teleconference in the next edition of *IGEM Connect*.

## Annual Assessment of Disaster Management Effectiveness

I would like to thank local and district groups for their joint efforts in completing the disaster management plan process for 2015.

This is the first time this process has been undertaken as an assessment against specific indicators of the Standard and represents a much more streamlined process than over recent years.

Some graphical results have already been sent to the local and district groups which completed the plan assessment.

My office will provide additional feedback and analysis by 1 December.

I will also be providing a report on the effectiveness of the plans to Minister Miller by March of next year.

## Standard for Disaster Management Regional Workshops

**It is a very crowded calendar in the lead up to storm and cyclone season, which is why I would also like to thank many of you for attending the workshops we have held to date to better understand and apply the [Standard](#).**

So far, we have held workshops in the Sunshine Coast, Mackay, Bundaberg, Townsville, Cairns and a workshop for the greater Brisbane area was hosted in Logan.

Over coming weeks we will hold workshops around the Gulf, Rockhampton, Warwick and the Roma-Charleville district.

The feedback from participants to date has been strongly positive and my office is open to running these workshops elsewhere in the State.

Further information can be obtained from Rowena Richardson on 3227 6668.

## Torres Strait Good Practice

**I believe it is critical that best practice in disaster management is shared more broadly within the sector and where appropriate, I intend to highlight this through this newsletter.**

An example I want to highlight in this edition is the strong collaborative work being undertaken in the Torres Strait.

Last month several staff from my office attended the Local Disaster Management Group Meeting of the combined Torres Shire Council (TSC) and the Torres Strait Islander Regional Council (TSIRC).

As part of a wider implementation program for the Emergency Management Assurance Framework, my staff participated in the meeting to hear directly from council and agency stakeholders of their experiences in disaster management, and the application of the Standard for Disaster Management in their communities.

What impressed my office is the collaboration between the two councils and the sharing of resources, particularly a Disaster Management Officer, to the greater benefit of residents across the region.

The combined LDMG has embraced the concept of shared responsibilities under the Standard for Disaster Management and is committed to working towards achieving better outcomes for their island communities.

Importantly, the leadership shown by TSIRC Mayor Fred Gela and TSC Mayor Napau Pedro Stephen is fundamental to the development of a strong culture of continuous improvement.

Cr Gela said that they were always looking at ways to improve and felt that the combined LDMG, as well as having a dedicated DMO, was a critical strength in their local disaster management arrangements.

Cr Stephen reinforced the need to empower and train communities to be able to effectively prepare for and respond to disasters, and the development of individual community plans for each of the islands within the Torres region, supported by local community groups, reinforces the Shared Responsibilities outlined in the Standard and the principles of effective disaster management.

The collaborative work, facilitated by Disaster Management Officer Murray Hayton, and the partnership and cooperation between local agencies through the LDMG, reinforces a shared responsibility for better disaster management outcomes for all Torres communities.

## Farewell to BoM's Rob Webb

**Finally, I would like to collectively thank the Bureau of Meteorology's former Queensland Regional Director Rob Webb for his outstanding service to the sector over the past few years.**

As many of you would know, Rob finished up in his role this month to head up the Bureau's Hazards, Forecasts and Warnings Division, which oversees all the Bureau's weather and flood service delivery, nationally. It's the role that has been most recently held by Dr Ray Canterford.

Rob will remain in Brisbane until the end of the year before relocating to Melbourne.

On behalf of all of us Rob, thank you and best wishes!

**Iain MacKenzie**  
**Inspector-General Emergency Management**

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