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Queenslanders not fully prepared for disasters

Queenslanders overestimate their preparedness for natural disasters despite years of severe flooding and cyclones, a new state-wide survey has found.

The 2013 Queensland Community Preparedness Survey revealed Queenslanders believed they knew local natural disaster risks and were adequately prepared, but in many cases were not.

A report on the survey – from the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management - also found South East Queensland households showed lower levels of preparedness than other regions in the state.

Other key household findings from the report found :

- 92% did not have a documented emergency plan;
- 73% did not keep items stored as an emergency kit;
- 59% did not include a household member with a current first aid kit;
- 44% had not decided what to do if their home was at risk of bushfire, cyclones, storms or flooding;
- 43% had not pre-arranged to stay with family or friends if forced to evacuate;
- 41% did not have access to a hard-copy list of disaster related contact telephone numbers;
- 39% would not have enough drinking water to last three days; and
- Complacency remained a key issue in the 10% of households which thought they were unprepared.

Although Queenslanders overestimate their preparedness, data showed that approximately 30% had implemented new preparedness measures in the 12 months prior to the survey (June 2012 to May 2013).

Inspector-General Iain MacKenzie said that while there had been some clear improvement in a number of areas of preparedness, there was still a long way to go.

“This will allow us to drill down and target specific sections of the community and particular attitudes that need to change if we’re going to be the best prepared and most resilient state in Australia,” Mr MacKenzie said.

“While we can’t prevent floods and cyclones, we can do something about helping Queenslanders to minimise the threat to their personal safety and property.

“This report shows the importance of the Get Ready Queensland campaign, introduced this year, and that there is always more that can be done to be ready for these events.”

The 2013 Queensland Community Preparedness Survey can be found at:
www.disaster.qld.gov.au/Disaster-Resources/Community-Survey.html

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