



**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.

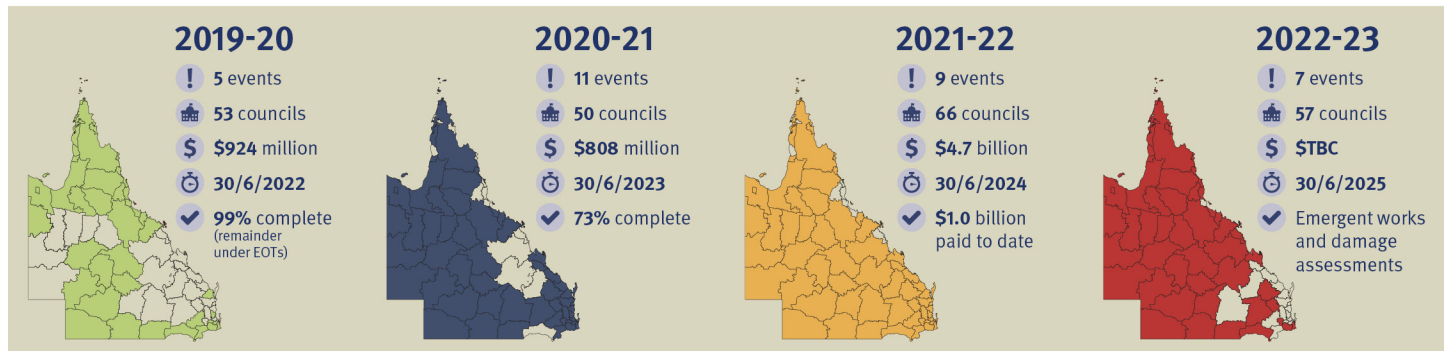
**DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

**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 \$6.4 billion arising from 32 events from the 2019-20 to 2022-23 disaster seasons in the delivery and/or acquittal phase.

**CURRENT STATEWIDE PROGRAM**

**!** 32 events      **🏛️** 76 councils with an active program      **💰** \$6.4 billion



**APRIL**

In April, QRA’s activity in administering disaster assistance and resilience grants in Queensland continued to deliver on milestones. A key activity in April has been to work with councils recently impacted by the north-west flooding and other recent disaster events to undertake damage assessments and compile funding submissions to progress recovery and reconstruction works.

During the month, the state began to implement a \$12 million extraordinary funding package to help flood-affected north-west primary producers, small businesses and not for profits to hire or purchase equipment and materials, clean up, remove debris, replace fencing and other costs associated with the recovery process.

## 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.

### Engagement with Local Governments, other stakeholders, and the community

QRA Resilience and Recovery Officers have been continuing to assist with queries relating to the eligibility and availability of the assistance packages for the Western Downs Bushfires and the North West Queensland Monsoonal Flooding events.

To date, a \$12 million Category D package has been approved for the North West Queensland Monsoonal event and QRA is working with local communities and Functional Recovery Groups (FRG) to understand the requirement for any further recovery and resilience measures.

In April, QRA met with Functional Recovery Group leads for the quarterly FRG meeting. The group was introduced to the newly-appointed QRA CEO Jake Elwood and discussed lesson learned from the 2021-22 disaster season as well as current agency responses and recovery activities for the 2022-23 Monsoon event.

Following in-person engagement and site visits in March and April, QRA Resilience and Recovery Officers will travel to Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council in early May to assist with the development of a Event Specific Local Recovery Plan (ESLRP) for that council, and also visit Burke Shire Council to discuss the implementation of their own ESLRP. More broadly, QRA will continue to engage with local governments on the development of Recovery Sub-Plans during the winter dry season, and discuss their Local Resilience Action Plans (LRAP) developed under the Regional Resilience Strategy framework.

### Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding, 20 December 2022

Severe, continuous rainfall starting in December 2022 and continuing into 2023 has caused significant long-term flooding and isolation for many councils in North West Queensland. Among the 45 councils that have been activated for the disaster event, Burke Shire Council, Boulia Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, and Mount Isa City Council have been most heavily impacted and have required immediate support.

Burketown and Doomadgee were both isolated during the rainfall events, with both townships isolated by road for more than 12 weeks since November 2022. On 11-12 March 2023, residents of Burketown and vulnerable residents of Doomadgee were evacuated by rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft to accommodation in Mt Isa. They were supported by DCHDE Community Recovery staff deployed to establish a Recovery Hub in the city.

In Boulia Shire Council, the community of Urandangi was significantly impacted by floodwater and experienced long-term isolation, with residents needing to be evacuated during the flood level peak. Council is continuing to undertake damage assessments and identify impacts to the area. QRA officers were in contact with surrounding councils to identify impacts and offer recovery support if required.

In the first week of April, Queensland Deputy Premier, the Hon. Steven Miles, QRA CEO Jake Ellwood, the State member for Traeger Robbie Katter MP, and QRA Resilience and Recovery and Regional Liaison staff visited Doomadgee and Burketown to hear first-hand from councils of their experiences during the flood event and how recovery was progressing.



The reopening of the region's road network has had a positive impact to the community, as this has allowed critical supply chains to return to normal, allowing food, fuel, and building and reconstruction materials to be delivered. Significant reconstruction works are still ongoing and will take several years to complete.

A team of 15 Disaster Relief Australia personnel have been on the ground in Burketown, as well as outlying stations for approximately two weeks to assist with the recovery effort.



Photo courtesy DRA

Environmental impacts are still being assessed across the region, however it is clear that substantial damage has occurred to natural and built assets in the region’s National Parks, cultural heritage sites, as well as the natural landscape.

QRA Regional Liaison Officers and Resilience & Recovery Officers continue to work alongside councils, state agencies and Non-Government Organisations to support the recovery effort across the region.

### **DRFA Category C & D extraordinary assistance packages in delivery**

QRA is continuing to work with State and Commonwealth partners on the delivery of exceptional circumstances packages, jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments, to support Queensland communities in their recovery from significant weather events.

For the Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding, 20 December 2022 – 30 April 2023, 45 of Queensland’s 77 local government areas (LGAs) have been activated for a range of disaster assistance through the joint State and Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to address the immediate and long-term impacts from this event.

To date, a \$12 million immediate extraordinary recovery program under Category D of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) has been approved, comprising:

- Extraordinary Recovery Grants of up to \$75,000 for Primary Producers,
- Extraordinary Recovery Grants of up to \$50,000 for Small Business and Not for Profit Organisations
- \$6 million Coordinated Livestock Support and Disposal Package.

Additional assistance packages for this event are currently being considered and developed by State Government FRGs now that impacts and emerging needs have been better identified.

In addition to this suite of packages, QRA continues to work with state and commonwealth partners in the roll out and implementation of the jointly funded \$2B Category C & D disaster recovery programs for the Southern Queensland Floods 2021-2022.



### **\$741 million Resilient Homes Fund – Registrations of Interest still open**

As at 02 May 2023, 6164 homeowners from eligible local governments area whose property was inundated have registered their interest in the Resilient Homes Fund. Of the active 4841 registrations, 655 people registering their interest in the Voluntary Home Buy-Back program, 1511 in the house-raising and 1894 in the retrofit, with 781 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 04 May, there have been 483 valuation inspections undertaken, 458 offers presented, 358 offers accepted and 182 contracts settled. Demolition of purchased properties has also commenced in multiple Councils, with 44 scheduled and 27 complete.

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

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

An establishment of a Peer Review and Technical Advisory Panel is now available to further support Councils in delivering their funded flood risk management projects under the \$31 million Flood Risk Management Program. The Peer Review and Technical Advisory Panel will ensure that studies delivered under the program align with industry best practice and guidelines.

A final series of 3 workshops were undertaken in April 2023 with Local Government representatives, to showcase the final Technical Report, website content, and the interactive map of the Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors, soon to be published on the QRA website. Extensive engagement has been undertaken between July 2022 to April 2023 with industry, State and Local Government representatives contributing to the development of the Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors, with local councils being the key stakeholders in providing data and feedback on the final outputs. The Statewide Assessment of Flood Risk Factors will deliver Queensland’s first ever comprehensive statewide assessment of flood risk management in Queensland, based on analysis of key flood risk factors across every Queensland Council.

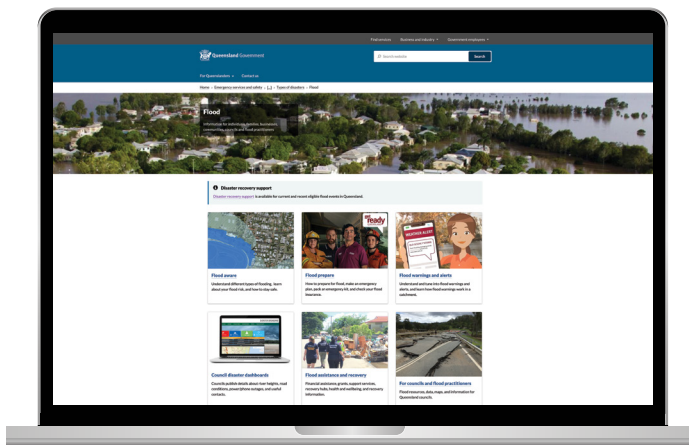
## RESILIENCE

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.

### Queensland Government flood website

The Queensland Government flood website at [www.qld.gov.au/flood](http://www.qld.gov.au/flood) is now live. The flood website acts as a source of truth and gateway so that Queenslanders can easily find reliable information about flood. It has flood information suitable for the public, and a dedicated section of more detailed and technical flood information for councils and flood practitioners.



### Non-DRFA Resilience Funding Programs

Along with QRA’s lead role in managing and coordinating Queensland’s program of recovery and reconstruction funding within disaster-impacted communities, QRA also administers a range of disaster resilience funding programs on behalf of the State.

A number of resilience funding programs are currently in delivery, with some projects completed, helping to strengthen the disaster resilience and preparedness of Queensland communities.

#### STATUS OF ACTIVE NON-DRFA (RESILIENCE) GRANTS PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY QRA

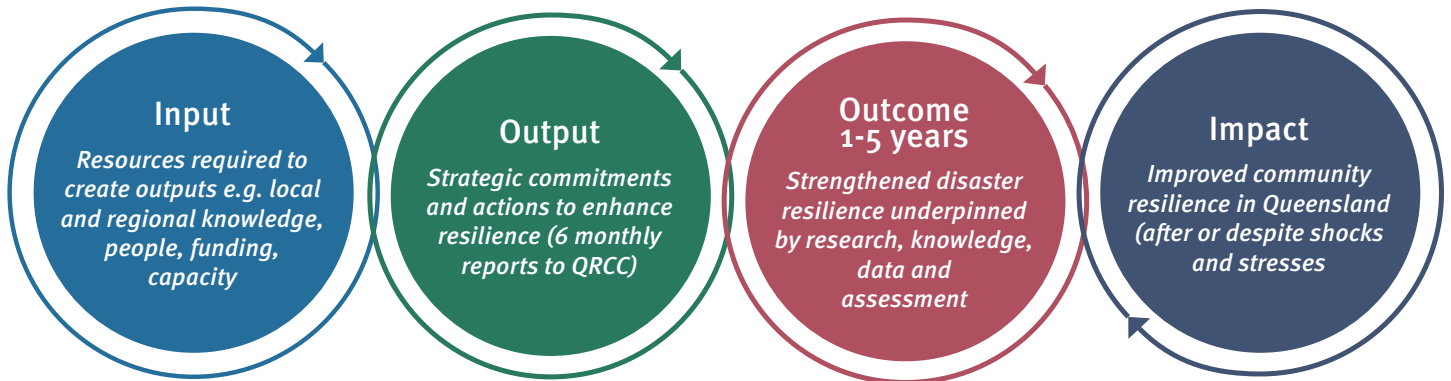
Program	Approved amount	Approved projects
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2019-20)	\$13.1M	68
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2020-21)	\$13.1M	57
Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (2021-22)	\$13.1M	33
Managing Disaster Risk (2020-21)	\$6M	25
Managing Disaster Risk (2021-22)	\$6M	20
North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program (2021-22)	\$10M	22
Recovery and Resilience Grants (2020-21)	\$12M	66
National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program (2020-21)	\$4.1M	3

## Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience

Following the release of the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022-2027 (QSDR) in September 2022, QRA has been working closely with agencies to develop a monitoring and reporting process to ensure successful implementation of strategic commitments and resilience actions. QRA is now monitoring progress of the QSDR against a set of indicators to track progress in delivering resilience activities and programs across the State over the next five years.

This month, all lead agencies responsible for actions under the QSDR have provided progress reports on their actions. QRA is collating this information into the first QSDR Progress Report to be tabled at the next Queensland Resilience Coordination Committee meeting.

### QSDR 2022-2027 Monitoring and Reporting



## Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Reporting

QRA is a member of the Sendai Time-Limited Working Group supporting the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) within Australia. As part of this, QRA provides consolidated Queensland data for reporting against the Sendai Framework to the Commonwealth annually. In January 2023, QRA collated data from Queensland agencies for Sendai reporting. The March 2023 round of reporting included a focus on COVID figures with an emphasis on the below areas:

- Number of deaths attributed to disasters, per 100,000 population.
- Number of injured or ill people attributed to disasters, per 100,000 population.
- Number of disruptions to health services attributed to disasters.

It is anticipated that as the Queensland Government continues to implement key recovery and resilience activities to strengthen the resilience of Queensland communities, the figures around community impacts that Queensland is reporting on for achieving the targets in the Sendai Framework relating to disaster impacts in Queensland should start to decline.

## Gender and Disaster Training



### Gender & Disaster Australia

QRA staff across Resilience and Recovery, Operations and Get Ready Queensland attended a joint training session with colleagues from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on Gender and Disaster training, presented by Dr Rachael Mackay and Steve O'Malley from Gender and Disaster Australia (GADAus).

GADAus training works to understand the role that gender plays in the emergency management practice to help staff address and minimise the harmful impacts of gendered expectations in disaster. GADAus discussed the evidence which demonstrates a higher rate of domestic, family and gender-based violence in communities during and after disaster. QRA and NEMA staff spent the day workshopping how the social construct of gender impacts the women's, men's, children's and LGBTIAQ's peoples experience during disaster and recovery, looking at strategies to appropriately and safely manage and respond to these sensitive issues.

More information on GADAus and their resources can be found on their website [www.genderanddisaster.com.au](http://www.genderanddisaster.com.au)

## 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.

### Flood risk perception under the microscope

GRQ is preparing to embark on an important discovery project to get to the bottom of flood risk perception in Queensland. Existing research already shows that:

- Despite high self-reported levels of risk awareness, people don’t prepare because they do not think they are personally at risk
- People prepare and make assessments about risk based on flooding they’ve experienced, not the worst possible outcome
- People understand the need to prepare but acknowledge it’s not a priority unless a weather event is inclement.

There is a gap in exploring how to change these perceptions. GRQ has commissioned an external research company to do just that. The research will investigate flood risk perception within the community, at work and at home. A mix of qualitative and quantitative data will be collected to interrogate:

- what factors people are considering as part of their risk analysis
- what they find difficult about understanding their risk
- what interventions will encourage them to better evaluate their risk.

The results of the research will shape future campaigns and the design of important tools that will guide Queenslanders through their personalised preparations.



*South East Queensland community experiencing major flood levels*

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**BETTERMENT A WINNER AT PREMIER’S AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

On Tuesday 4 April 2023 QRA scored a big win at the Premier’s Awards for Excellence, with the Queensland Betterment Programs taking out top honours in the category, ‘Enhancing our lifestyle through planning and infrastructure’.

These awards recognise high performing and outstanding achievements from teams and initiatives across the Queensland public service.

QRA established Australia’s very first Betterment Program after Cyclone Oswald caused extensive damage across the state in 2013. Since then, more than 520 projects across 70 Queensland LGAs have been approved, helping create stronger, more resilient communities.

More importantly, of the \$137 million worth of Betterment projects that have been re-impacted by natural disaster, we’ve seen approximately \$391 million in avoided reconstruction costs, representing close to a three-fold saving on investment.

The QRA Betterment Fund improves the lives of Queenslanders living in disaster-impacted communities, and last night’s award is acknowledgement of the transformational nature of the program and a decade of hard work that’s gone into it.

There are still many people working in QRA who were part of establishing the program back in 2013 and this is well deserved recognition for that foresight. Equally, the strength of the current Queensland Betterment Program is due to the hard work and dedication of our people across the organisation who have contributed to its success.



*L to R: Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk; QRA staff Jimmy Scott, Kieran Dibb, Andrew Nehill, Nelson Tiong, and Zef Thie; Ms Rachel Drew (representative of corporate sponsor Holding Redlich), and Member for Aspley Bart Mellish MP.*

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**CASE STUDY – MONSOON FLOODING HITS NORTH-WESTERN ROADS**

Damage assessments and repairs are underway after monsoonal flooding caused widespread impacts across north-western, central-western and far-northern Queensland in early 2023.

The north west was hardest hit when a tropical low dumped more than 500mm of rainfall over two days in early March 2023 in the Nicholson, Gregory and Leichhardt river catchments. The low produced weekly totals of 300 to 600 mm over the Gulf Country, about 2.5 to 5 times the March average for these areas.

This led to record flood levels at many townships around the Gulf of Carpentaria, including the isolated community of Burketown.

A total of 8463 kilometres of the state road network have been closed or had restricted access during the event in local government areas activated for financial relief measures under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). A significant number of temporary road closures or restrictions are still in place.

Major transport routes including the Barkly, Flinders and Landsborough highways were impacted by flooding.

Bridge and pavement damage temporarily closed the Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) at Inca and Nowrairie creeks, north-west of Mount Isa. This national highway is the main route from Queensland west to the Northern Territory.

Transport and Main Roads (TMR) prioritised emergency works, with a RoadTek concrete crew deployed as soon as floodwaters receded to begin abutment repairs at Inca Creek bridge on 13 March 2023. A pavement repair crew began works at Nowrairie Creek the following day. This enabled the Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) to reopen via single lane under traffic control on 16 March 2023.



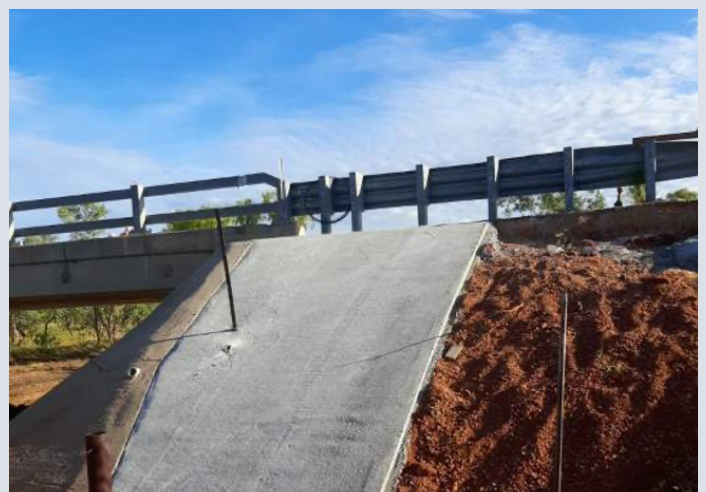
*Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) at Nowrairie Creek – emergency works (March 2023)*



*Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) at Inca Creek – damage from Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)*



*Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) at Nowrairie Creek – damage from Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)*



*Barkly Highway (Mount Isa–Camooweal) at Inca Creek – emergency works (March 2023)*



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

**CASE STUDY – MONSOON FLOODING HITS NORTH-WESTERN ROADS** CONTINUED

Further north, the Wills Developmental Road – the main highway leading to the Gulf communities of Gregory, Doomadgee and Burketown – was severely damaged, with major washouts near river crossings and sections of pavement damaged by weeks-long inundation. While works were undertaken to restore access, TMR liaised with the Local Disaster Management Group to put interim measures in place for essential services including food and fuel provisions, and for critical workers to assist with recovery.

It is expected further flooding will be experienced in central-western Queensland over coming weeks, as some floodwaters flow downstream through the Channel Country.

The full extent of damage to the state road network may not be known for months, however it is anticipated to be significant. Due to the widespread nature of the event, as floodwaters recede further inspections are being undertaken along thousands of kilometres of the road network to assess damage and determine the best way forward for repairs where required.

Assistance will be provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State DRFA.



*Wills Developmental Road (Julia Creek–Burketown) – damage from Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding (March 2023)*

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**CASE STUDY – FLOOD REPAIRS BEGIN ON TOOWOOMBA–CECIL PLAINS ROAD**

Major flood repairs have commenced along 72 kilometres of Toowoomba–Cecil Plains Road on the Darling Downs.

Sections of the key route between the regional city of Toowoomba and the cotton-growing township of Cecil Plains suffered severe damage as a result of unprecedented heavy rainfall last year, particularly in late February and March 2022.

As with many roads across southern Queensland, multiple heavy rainfall events compounded damage to the road surface and drainage along the road.

Emergency works were undertaken immediately after the events to ensure safety and access for rural communities.

Reconstruction works on Toowoomba–Cecil Plains Road will include repairing and resealing the road surface, repairing culverts and cleaning drains.

Repairs commenced in late March 2023 and are expected to take approximately eight months to complete, weather and construction conditions permitting.

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



*Toowoomba–Cecil Plains Road – seal delamination (March 2022)*



*Toowoomba–Cecil Plains Road – shoulder scouring (March 2022)*