

State Disaster Coordination Centre

Annual Activity Report

1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017



Contents

Introduction	3
Executive Summary.....	3
State Disaster Coordination Centre	3
Emergency Alert Phase 4	4
SDCC Training and Exercises	4
Exercise Roll Call – 20 to 21 October 2016	5
Exercise Continuity – 21 June 2017	5
Fire Weather Training	5
Watch Desk	5
Event Management System.....	6
Reporting	6
Queensland Emergency Management Report (QEMR) (0500hrs Daily).....	6
QFES Daily Operational Brief (0600hrs Daily)	7
Ministerial Summary SMS (0700hrs Daily).....	7
Queensland Emergency Management Report (QEMR) (1000hrs Daily).....	7
Weather Outlook (1000hrs Tuesday and Fridays October to April)	7
Department of the Premier and Cabinet Weather Forecast Brief (1000hrs Daily)	7
SES Weekly Report (1000hrs Monday)	7
Incident Briefs including “Critical” (As required)	7
Bureau of Meteorology.....	8
SES TAMS	8
SDCC Tours and Visits	9
Severe Weather Events.....	10
Rain Event - Friday 15 to Thursday 21 July 2016	10
Western Queensland Flooding September 2016.....	11
Severe Thunderstorms North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District – 09 January 2017	13
Supplementary Events	16
White Spot Disease, Alberton and Logan - Commenced 01 December 2016	16
Bowen Earthquake - 18 August 2016.....	16
Fraser Island Oil Spill - 16 October 2016.....	17
Russell Island Vegetation Fire - 15 December 2016	17
Bushfire Coolum – 20 January 2017	18
Resupply Operations - January and March 2017	18

Introduction

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) Annual Activity Report provides an overview of the activities within the centre for the 2016-2017 financial year. This report outlines the functions, systems, and outputs of the SDCC. It also summarises significant training and operational activities in the SDCC, as well as some key statistical information.

Executive Summary

As custodians of the SDCC, QFES undertake continuous emergency management preparation and operations in liaison with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and other stakeholders. Staff from the QFES State Operational Coordination Branch (SOCB) conduct reviews, operational preparedness, training, planning, and daily operations. As a result, the SDCC frequently implements improvements and changes (such as procedural and physical) to maintain a state of readiness for activations. The SOCB facilitated 50 formal training courses to train more than 400 personnel, two exercises, and many internal competency maintenance sessions. The SOCB Emergency Management Readiness Unit and Emergency Management Planning Unit conducted the 2017 Queensland Natural Hazard Risk Assessment. The 2017 assessment was limited in scope to the seven most frequent and significant natural hazards, however this scope will expand in future assessments to cover the definition of a Disaster Event in the Disaster Management Act 2003. The assessment was completed by using the Queensland Emergency Management Risk Framework (QERMF).

Much of the daily operational work is associated with the use of several key SDCC systems, such as the Event Management System (EMS), Emergency Alert (EA), and the State Emergency Service (SES) Task and Management System (TAMS), to manage information, contacts, and tasks. The SDCC actioned more than 55,000 inbound emails including about 3,000 weather warnings via the EMS. The Watch Desk also oversaw more than 10,000 SES tasks. In addition to managing notifications and tasks, the SDCC continued to produce high-level emergency management reports, such as the Queensland Emergency Management Report and Incident Briefs. The Watch Desk and SDCC staff maintain a close working relationship with the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Senior Forecaster imbedded in the SDCC to aid with weather notifications and emergency management reporting.

This report provides a summary of 21 Queensland severe weather and emergency events. Although, the SDCC may not have been activated for these events, the Watch Desk fulfilled its operational tasks including notifications, SES tasking, and resupply administration, as well as ongoing monitoring and reporting. The SDCC activated once during this reporting period for Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie and the associated flooding events in South East Queensland and the Fitzroy River. For these events, notable SDCC activities were 75 EA campaigns and 750 weather warnings actioned by the Watch Desk, and 20 QDMA Requests for Assistance.

State Disaster Coordination Centre

The SDCC is a permanent facility located within the Queensland Emergency Operations Centre at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron. The centre is permanently staffed by QFES SOCB, QPS as well as a BoM Senior Forecaster.

The SDCC provides an operational venue for the State Disaster Coordination Group (SDCG) to deliver state-level support to disaster management operations in accordance with decisions from the QDMC.

Staffing of the SDCC is scalable. Upon activation of the SDCC, staffing numbers will vary across seven Capabilities (Command, Operations, Logistics, Planning, Intelligence, Aviation

and Public Information), according to the anticipated need. The SDCC is further supported by 37 agencies (including 23 Queensland government agencies, Commonwealth agencies, utility, telecommunications and non-government organisations) making a total trained workforce of about 740. The QPS takes operational control of the SDCC and works with QFES to manage the additional staffing arrangements.

The SDCC Watch Desk is the permanent operational unit of the SDCC. It provides a 24/7 emergency management capability for the Queensland Government and disaster management stakeholders, regardless of SDCC activation status. Watch Desk staff are responsible for monitoring, collecting, and analysing a wide range of emergency management information from diverse mediums in order to notify, inform and warn key stakeholders.

Emergency Alert Phase 4

SOCB is engaged to represent QFES in the procurement of an EA solution beyond July 2018 focusing on new and innovative solutions to meet the requirements for the next five to seven years incorporating flexibility around trending network and technology advances. This has involved reviewing project documentation, participating in various teleconferences and interstate workshops with agency representatives from other Australian states and territories to discuss and view various proposals and systems.

State Natural Hazard Risk Assessment Process

QFES has responsibility under the *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan* to prepare a State Natural Hazard Risk Assessment. In addition, all Australian States and Territories agreed via the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council (LCCSC) to conduct state level risk assessments by 30 June 2017 for collaboration and discussion at the national level.

To undertake this assessment, QFES has developed and is continuing to mature the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) which was the assessment methodology applied to conduct the State Assessment. The assessment was completed by 30 June 2017 as required and will be provided to the QDMC for endorsement and provision to the Australian Government.

As part of the ongoing maturation of the QERMF, QFES Community Resilience and Risk Mitigation team have been providing and are continuing to provide a Supported Integration Program to Local Councils and Disaster District support officers by facilitating risk assessment workshops. Some of the direct benefits observed from the delivery of these workshops have been; increased sharing of disaster risk information across the QDMA, strengthening of partnerships between QFES, Local Government and relevant state agencies and improved risk-based planning outputs for disaster management planners.

SDCC Training and Exercises

SOCB staff maintain currency in disaster management capability through participating in and conducting training and exercises.

The SOCB Exercise Coordination Team coordinated SDCC training courses across all seven Capabilities and conducted in-house training for EA, Heightened Level of Operations, Train the Trainer and System Administration, to ensure the SDCC workforce remains current and competent for centre activations.

The SDCC training courses comprise new courses, which are aimed at staff who have no previous SDCC experience, and refresher courses designed to inform participants of any updates and ensure competency is maintained.

The courses are facilitated by both QFES and QPS personnel.

During the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, 50 SDCC and in-house training courses were conducted with a total of 428 personnel trained.

Exercise Roll Call – 20 to 21 October 2016

Exercise Roll Call, conducted on 20 and 21 October 2016 tested the ability of the SDCC to generate a fit for purpose SDCC roster within the Event Management System (EMS) in a timely manner following a decision for the SDCC to activate.

Exercise Roll Call was used to test the operational readiness of the SDCC by ensuring there is clarity and accountability in the rostering process and in the ability to generate a roster within a defined time period.

The exercise proved to be very beneficial, highlighting a number of learnings and confirming the validity of the current rostering processes.

Exercise Continuity – 21 June 2017

SDCC Watch Desk officers participated in a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) exercise called Exercise Continuity on Wednesday 21 June 2017. The intent of Exercise Continuity was to test and exercise the evacuation, relocation and restoration processes and procedures of the SDCC Watch Desk and the ability to maintain operational readiness.

The first phase of the exercise involved an orientation discussion outlining the step by step plans, processes and procedures of the SDCC Watch Desk BCP. The second phase was for SDCC Watch Desk staff to undertake a functional exercise to practice, evaluate and assess the SDCC Watch Desk BCP as an end to end process. The functional element involved setting up equipment and maintaining operations at a redundancy site and fulfilling the restoration processes and procedures upon return to the SDCC.

Exercise operations were documented and learnings and outcomes from Exercise Continuity will be used to ensure clarity of the SDCC Watch Desk BCP process.

Fire Weather Training

The BoM meteorologist embedded in the SDCC conducts fire weather training to QFES representatives and other government agencies such as Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The training is designed to promote a better understanding of the impact that weather has on fire behaviour and interpretation of the weather forecasts provided by the BoM.

Watch Desk

The Watch Desk is staffed 24/7 by a State Duty Supervisor and two State Duty Officers who source and analyse information used to conduct threat assessments, manage forward planning and brief key decision makers. Staff support the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) by ensuring the SDCC is maintained in a state of operational readiness, SES tasking across the state is effectively coordinated and through the provision of timely and accurate warnings and reports which are disseminated to relevant local, district, regional, state and interstate stakeholders.

SDCC Watch Desk staff are the only personnel in the state trained and authorised to create and disseminate Emergency Alert Campaigns within Queensland. Staff conduct multiple training tasks throughout the year in order to maintain Emergency Alert skills and test system performance.

The SDCC Watch Desk supported numerous operational incidents and events that occurred state-wide during the period 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017. The SDCC formally activated

once during this time to provide enhanced disaster management capability in support of Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie prevention, preparation, response and recovery operations.

Watch Desk Communication Strategy

During 2016 senior members of the SDCC & SOC toured a road show throughout Queensland to reinforce the strategy of raising awareness of the functions and roles of the Watch Desk within QFES. Open communication and knowledge sharing between QFES Officers throughout the State will continue to be developed through 2017-2018.

Event Management System

Contact with stakeholders is managed through EMS which ensures accountability and an auditing ability. The system is able to be configured to meet the specific needs of users and is utilised primarily to action tasks, send and receive emails and SMS messages and log shows the volume of communications and tasks that were processed by Watch Desk staff during the 12 month period July 2016 to June 2017.

		Emails Received	Emails Sent	SMS Messages Sent	Logged Entries	Reports Lodged	Tasks Actioned
2016	July	2,874	25,276	2,873	1,199	438	1,034
	August	3,039	29,185	3,984	1,204	413	891
	September	3,553	39,881	4,621	1,492	574	1,107
	October	3,782	31,237	2,718	1,610	438	941
	November	4,240	38,399	13,605	1,935	488	1,001
	December	4,976	38,814	13,883	2,157	599	1,160
2017	January	4,338	42,247	11,436	2,153	647	1,226
	February	3,973	38,433	7,809	2,176	515	942
	March	13,840	169,230	46,615	5,197	1,783	3,519
	April	6,057	99,663	6,334	2,999	1,462	1,873
	May	3,359	32,679	1,950	1,510	393	820
	June	3,053	24,118	821	1,291	356	690
TOTAL		57,084	609,162	116,649	24,923	8,106	15,204

Table 1: EMS Figures – July 2016 to June 2017

Reporting

Watch Desk staff monitor events and work collaboratively with emergency management stakeholders to produce a number of reports that are disseminated on a regular or as required basis. These reports include:

Queensland Emergency Management Report (QEMR) (0500hrs Daily)

The 0500hrs QEMR provides key ministerial and departmental stakeholders with an early daily summary of recent and emerging, significant emergency management activities. It also briefly identifies weather and other local, national and international emergency management related risks which have the potential to impact the Queensland Government and its resources.

QFES Daily Operational Brief (0600hrs Daily)

This daily report informs the QFES Executive of significant events, issues and incidents from the previous 24 hours and provides early indication of events scheduled within the next 72 hours. The report also summarises regional operational activity from all streams of QFES.

Ministerial Summary SMS (0700hrs Daily)

This text message is delivered to a defined group of key stakeholders and is designed to provide a brief summary of QFES operations for the previous 24 hours, current interstate incidents with the potential to impact Queensland and its resources, the day's weather and any significant media relating directly to QFES.

Queensland Emergency Management Report (QEMR) (1000hrs Daily)

The 1000hrs QEMR is a more general report distributed to a wider emergency management audience. This daily report summarises Queensland emergency management activity from the previous 24 hours as well as significant local, national and international, emergency events which may impact on Queensland Government resources. The report also provides an overview of Queensland weather observations and forecasts, significant QFES operational activity and the status of all Queensland Disaster Management Groups.

Weather Outlook (1000hrs Tuesday and Fridays October to April)

The Weather Outlook accompanies the 1000hrs QEMR twice per week between October and April. Additional outlooks can be issued outside of this period for predicted, severe weather events. This report indicates the likelihood and severity of forecasted Queensland weather activity by forecast districts. The Weather Outlook is compiled by the BoM meteorologist working within the SDCC to provide additional weather intelligence to emergency management stakeholders.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Weather Forecast Brief (1000hrs Daily)

This report is a Microsoft Word copy of the weather information published in the 1000hrs QEMR, developed specifically for the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

SES Weekly Report (1000hrs Monday)

This report summarises the operational activity for the Queensland SES, including briefly describing significant tasks undertaken, for the preceding seven day period. It also notes reported operational issues, volunteer injuries and referrals to the Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN).

Incident Briefs including "Critical" (As required)

The primary function of the brief is to quickly inform relevant stakeholders of a significant event, generally in one of the following categories:

- disaster or emergency event (natural and man-made)
- other events significantly impacting QFES operations and resources (e.g. staff/volunteer injury, deployments)

Subsequent briefs relating to the event or incident are created and disseminated as required.

Bureau of Meteorology

During the period July 2016 to June 2017, 3058 weather advices were received from the BoM and analysed and actioned by the Watch Desk staff. These warnings were for events such as cyclones, severe weather, severe thunderstorms and flooding. Table 2 below, shows the number and type of warnings received by Watch Desk staff during the 12 month period.

		Fire Weather	Flood	High Seas / Ocean Wind	Marine Wind	Severe Thunderstorm	Severe Weather	Storm Tide	Tropical Cyclone	Tsunami No Threat	Tsunami (Excluding No Threat)	TOTAL
2016	July	0	78	0	81	21	11	0	0	3	0	194
	August	0	55	0	92	2	7	0	0	19	0	175
	September	0	208	0	59	31	6	0	0	10	0	314
	October	0	68	0	72	23	0	0	0	4	0	167
	November	6	0	0	47	167	0	0	0	9	0	229
	December	4	46	0	55	189	0	0	0	9	0	303
2017	January	0	149	0	50	161	0	0	0	6	0	366
	February	4	49	1	65	90	25	0	12	6	0	252
	March	0	165	15	92	167	35	24	62	5	0	565
	April	0	107	0	121	0	0	0	0	3	0	231
	May	0	19	0	108	5	0	0	0	4	0	136
	June	0	0	0	123	0	0	0	0	3	0	126
TOTAL		14	944	16	965	856	84	24	74	81	0	3,058

Table 2: BoM Warnings Received - July 2016 to June 2017

BoM Meteorologist

The BoM meteorologist embedded in the SDCC provides SDCC and SOC staff with up-to-date information on current and emerging weather-related events. This is achieved through the issuing of routine weather outlook products and event-specific weather intelligence briefs, attendance and input at key tele/video conferences, and the facilitation of weather-related training for staff.

SES TAMS

Between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017, the Watch Desk received more than 10,000 SES task requests via TAMS. This figure does not include the task requests for the Brisbane City SES Unit. These requests are diverted to the Brisbane City Council call centre operators who deal directly with the relevant SES groups.

Requests for SES assistance from the public are generally received as a result of cyclone, flood and storm emergencies, with residents requesting assistance with leaking roofs, downed trees and water inundation.

Agency Support Requests, normally require the activation of SES volunteers for functions such as Air Observer, Rural, Urban and Forensic Searches and Vertical, Flood and Road Crash Rescue. Watch Desk staff are contacted directly by agencies such as QFES Firecom, QPS Communication Centres, and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Agency Support Requests are often time critical, time intensive and are actioned as a priority by Watch Desk staff. Table 3 below, shows the number of tasks received and actioned during the 12 month period.

		Storm / Flood	Agency Support	TOTAL
2016	July	114	62	176
	August	23	48	71
	September	70	61	131
	October	83	71	154
	November	353	95	448
	December	579	70	649
2017	January	309	66	375
	February	162	52	214
	March	5,758	150	5,908
	April	1,548	70	1,618
	May	114	66	180
	June	65	61	126
TOTAL		9,178	872	10,050

Table 3: Number of SES Task Requests received by the Watch Desk – July 2016 to June 2017

SDCC Tours and Visits

Staff hosted official tours of the SDCC and gave presentations to representatives from numerous local, national and international agencies. Visitors included personnel from government and non-government agencies, emergency management units, universities and colleges and volunteer organisations. Table 4 below shows the number of tours and visits hosted by Watch Desk staff during the 12 month period.

SDCC Tours - July 2016 to June 2017											
July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
6	7	7	6	7	7	1	7	5	3	4	5

Table 4: Number of SDCC Tours – July 2016 to June 2017

Severe Weather Events

Due to its size and location, Queensland experiences significant climate variations and is impacted by a number of weather phenomena including tropical cyclones, thunderstorms and flooding. During severe weather events, staff on the Watch Desk monitor TAMS, the QFES Computer Aided Despatch (ESCAD) system and infrastructure websites as well as social and print media to determine the impact of the event and monitor response activity.

Events of significance for the 12 month period July 2016 to June 2017 are listed on the following pages.

Rain Event - Friday 15 to Thursday 21 July 2016

Multiple severe weather and severe thunderstorm warnings were issued by the BoM for weather that impacted Queensland from Friday, 15 July 2016. An upper low which intensified over western Queensland and remained slow moving, combined with a deepening surface trough, generating widespread unseasonal rainfall, particularly through central, southern and western Queensland.

Multiple July rainfall records were set during this time; including 24 hour falls in excess of 250mm in Yeppoon, 136mm at the Rockhampton airport and 48 hour rainfall totals of 485mm at Byfield; while areas in the Central West recorded up to 65mm of rain.

The significant rainfall and strong winds resulted in flash flooding, property isolations and power disruptions, particularly in Central Region. Two successful swift water rescues were executed by QFES crews in the Rockhampton / Yeppoon area.

Watch Desk staff liaised with the BoM and provided timely reports for relevant stakeholders.

More than 100 storm related requests for SES assistance were actioned by the Watch Desk. More than 90 of the requests were for Central Region, predominantly in the Livingstone and Rockhampton local government areas for damaged and leaking roofs and down trees.



QFES Swiftwater rescue technicians in Bowen Central Region .Source: QFES

Western Queensland Flooding September 2016

Heavy rainfall throughout August, resulted in flooding of the Diamantina, Bulloo and Warrego river catchments which continued into early September. A series of troughs which spread across Queensland throughout the month brought widespread rainfall to much of western and southern Queensland, resulting in renewed river level rises across the catchments already in flood and into areas including the Georgina, Eyre, Thomson, Barcoo, Cooper, Paroo, Wallam, Maranoa, Balonne, Moonie, Weir, Macintyre and Dawson catchments. Numerous roads within these catchments experienced prolonged closures and diversions, many of which were still in place at the end of September

The township of Birdsville became isolated after it received a third of its annual rainfall total in one day. The ensuing flooding resulted in the isolation of thousands of tourists and a delayed start to the iconic Birdsville Races. Watch Desk staff liaised with local QFES representatives, however the issue was managed locally and no State assistance was requested.

A total of 131 SES tasks were received by the Watch Desk throughout the month of September, with more than 70 of those relating to storm damage operations for downed trees and flooding. SES crews performed resupply and ferrying operations to isolated properties in South Western Region.

Severe Thunderstorm - South East Queensland 03 October 2016

The BoM issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning for damaging winds for Southeast Queensland on the afternoon Monday, 3 October 2016. The strong winds resulted in significant damage to homes, particularly in Acacia Ridge and Rochedale South areas. Wind speeds of 78 km/h were recorded at Archerfield, 80 km/h at Oakey, 70 km/h at Toowoomba and 87 km/h at Dalby. Almost 10 000 Energex customers lost power as a direct result of the storms. Watch Desk staff received 64 requests for SES assistance, mainly for Brisbane and Logan City Council areas.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning Central West and Channel Country Forecast Districts – 11 November 2016

Severe thunderstorm warnings were issued for the Central West and Channel Country on Friday 11 November 2016. The storms produced damaging winds, with a gust of 107km/h recorded at Winton in the early evening. A number of trees were downed and the Winton Hotel and a number of dongers at the Winton Caravan Park sustained roof damage and required tarping by the local SES and a Fire and Rescue crew.

Severe Thunderstorms Southeast, Southwest, Central and Northern Queensland – 12 November 2017

Severe thunderstorms with damaging winds, heavy rainfall and large hailstones impacted a large area of Queensland from early afternoon until late in the evening Saturday, 12 November and again from early morning until late in the night on Sunday, 13 November 2016.

Thousands of lightning strikes were recorded and a wind gust of 85km/h was reported at Oakey and a gust of 96km/h reported at Peel Island in Moreton Bay. Rainfall figures of more than 80mm were recorded on the Sunshine Coast and falls of approximately 70mm were recorded in the Brisbane region.

More than 16 500 Energex customers had their power interrupted as a result of downed power lines and damage to mains from trees.

More than 60 requests for SES assistance were actioned by the Watch Desk, mainly for leaking roofs, downed trees and water inundation.

Severe Thunderstorms Southeast, Southwest, Central and Northern Queensland – 13 November 2016

Severe thunderstorms impacted Queensland from early morning until late at night Sunday, 13 November 2016. A wind gust of 91km/h was recorded at Normanton, however no reports of damage were received.

Brisbane Airport recorded a wind gust of 106km/h at 15:05 hours and at 17:35 hours, a wind gust with the intensity of a Category 2 cyclone (157km/h) was recorded. The destructive winds resulted in flight delays and a loss of power to runway lights; multiple containers were blown over at the Port of Brisbane,.

Ergon and Energex reported a combined total of more than 30, 000 power outages to customers as a result of the storms.

The Watch Desk received more than 120 requests for SES assistance, mainly for downed trees and debris clean up in the North Coast Region.

Severe Thunderstorms Southeast, Southwest and Central Queensland - 02 January 2017

Severe thunderstorms impacted areas of Queensland from mid-afternoon Monday 2 January 2017, resulting in localised flooding and disruption to Brisbane City train services. Mosely's AL near Warwick recorded 51mm of rain in thirty minutes, 47mm of rain was recorded in thirty minutes at Maroon Dam and 72mm in one hour in Brisbane. Rainfall totals of more than 100mm were recorded throughout southeast and central Queensland.

A lightning strike was reported as the cause of a fire at a church in Warwick. Swift water rescue crews were called to incidents at Parkinson and Salisbury as a result of flash flooding.

Energex reported more than 6 000 power outages for customers, mainly in the Brisbane and Logan City areas.

The Watch Desk received more than 90 requests for SES assistance, the majority of tasks being for leaking roofs.

Severe Thunderstorm Central Coast and Whitsundays – 03 January 2017

A severe thunderstorm warning was issued for the Central Coast and Whitsundays forecast district on the evening of Tuesday, 3 January 2017. The heavy rainfall resulted in multiple road closures and the evacuation of two properties in Sarina due to landslip. SES and QPS door knocked residents in low lying areas to warn them of the rising flood waters. Sucrogen Weir near Sarina recorded over 200mm of rain with 152mm falling in two hours.

The Watch Desk received 13 requests for SES assistance, with the majority of requests being for sandbags to prevent water inundation.

Severe Thunderstorms North West, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast Districts – 04 January 2017

Severe thunderstorms likely to produce heavy rainfall and flash flooding were forecast for northern and far northern Queensland on Wednesday, 4 January 2017. 119mm of rain was recorded near Innisfail, 133mm was recorded near Mareeba and 146mm was recorded west

of Townsville. Heavy rainfall continued in Central Region as a result of an active monsoon trough, with Mackay airport recording more than 233mm of rain.

The Watch Desk received more than 30 requests for SES assistance, mainly for leaking roofs in the Mackay area. SES and swift water rescue crews responded to a search for a male swept away in flood waters at Tolga in Far Northern Region.

Severe Thunderstorms North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District – 09 January 2017

Severe thunderstorms and a weak low pressure system off the Townsville coast caused heavy rainfall and flash flooding in northern and far north Queensland on Monday, 9 January 2017. Areas north and west of Innisfail recorded 230mm of rain in a six hour period, with totals of more than 350mm recorded in areas around Tully and Innisfail. Swift water rescue responded to two people stranded on the top of their vehicle when it became submerged in floodwater at Innisfail. The SDCC Watch Desk received more than 20 requests for SES assistance, mainly for water inundation of homes in the Innisfail and Mourilyan areas.

Severe Thunderstorms Central, Western, Northern and Southeast Queensland – 14 and 15 January 2017

Numerous severe thunderstorms occurred across Queensland from the early hours of Saturday, 14 January until late in the evening Sunday, 15 January 2017. The focus of activity was Central, Northern and South Western Regions on the Saturday, while on the Sunday, the Southeast Coast and Wide Bay and Burnett forecast districts received the heaviest falls.

Rainfall totals of more than 100mm were recorded at Mt Kelly, south of Townsville and Upper Dalrymple Creek, north of Warwick on 14 January, and on 15 January areas around Ipswich recorded 91mm of rain in one hour, while Carindale recorded falls of 68mm and Mt Glorious 67mm over a 30 minute period.

The heavy rainfall led to localised flash flooding in the impacted areas with the Landsborough Highway between McKinlay and Kynuna blocked for some time when in two separate incidents, trucks became lodged in creeks after hitting floodwaters.

More than 90 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk in the 48 hours to midnight 16 January, mostly for leaking roofs in the Southeast corner. Almost half of these requests were for the Redbank Plains and Ipswich area.

Tropical Low/Tropical Cyclone Alfred Gulf of Carpentaria – 17 February 2017

On Friday, 17 February 2017, a tropical low was situated near the north coast of Mornington Island. The slow moving low developed into Tropical Cyclone Alfred on Monday, 20 February and remained as a category 1 cyclone for nearly 24 hours before again weakening to a tropical low. A Cyclone Warning and Watch was issued for areas from Port Roper in the Northern Territory to Mornington Island and Burketown in Queensland.

An active monsoon trough in the north had already brought significant rainfall to northern Queensland, isolating Doomadgee in northwest Queensland. Further rainfall associated with the tropical low resulted in multiple road closures and the isolation of residents in Burketown.

Severe weather warnings were issued for the Gulf Country Forecast district from 16 to 21 February, warning residents in the area of the potential for flash flooding and damaging wind gusts. In the 24 hours to 0900hours Saturday, 18 February 2017, 216mm of rain was recorded at Sweers Island and 161mm at the Burketown Post Office. SDCC Watch Desk staff

disseminated weather warnings to areas of potential impact and liaised with QFES personnel and disaster management groups to ensure support was provided where necessary and relevant disaster management stakeholders remained informed.

Due to the resilient nature and preparedness of residents in the impacted area, less than 20 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk.

Severe Thunderstorms - Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, North and Central West, Wide Bay and Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 13 February 2017

Severe thunderstorms impacted large areas of Queensland from early afternoon Monday, 13 February 2017 until just after midnight on Tuesday 14 February. Warnings were issued for damaging winds, heavy rainfall that may lead to flash flooding and large hailstones. Rainfall totals of 40 – 50mm were recorded in Northern, North Coast, South Western, Brisbane and South Eastern Regions, however most of the damage to infrastructure and residences was caused by strong winds.

A wind gust of 89km/h was recorded at Archerfield, a 115km/h wind gust was recorded at Inner Beacon in Moreton Bay and Carters Bore near Mount Isa recorded a gust of 95km/h.

The SDCC Watch Desk received more than 60 requests for SES assistance, mainly for trees down and structural damage caused by the strong winds. The majority of requests were for Ipswich and surrounding areas.

Energex reported power outages to approximately 20, 000 customers in the Ipswich area during the peak of the storm.



Airlie Beach Tropical Cyclone Debbie 2017 Source: QFES

Tropical Cyclone Debbie March - April 2017

Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie made landfall at Airlie Beach as a category 4 system at 12:40 hours Tuesday, 28 March 2017. Heavy rainfall and destructive winds were experienced from about Bowen to Mackay. A peak wind gust of 263 km/h was recorded at Hamilton Island and Proserpine recorded wind gusts up to 165 km/h.

Debbie weakened to a tropical low by around 03:00 hours, Wednesday, 29 March 2017. The remnant low turned southeast, and produced damaging winds and torrential rainfall from central Queensland to the southeast. Clarke Range, west of Mackay, received 986mm in the 48 hours to 09:00 hours Wednesday, 29 March and Mt Jukes, northwest of Mackay, recorded 635mm in the 24 hours to 09:00 hours Thursday, 30 March. Several locations in the Fitzroy River basin received up to 1000mm of rainfall over two days, and the Fitzroy River went into major flood warning at Rockhampton during the following week.

By Thursday, 30 March, Ex Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie had tracked towards the southeast, with damaging wind gusts and widespread rainfall totals between 150mm - 600mm recorded in the Gold Coast, Scenic Rim and Logan City Council areas.

The SDCC moved to Stand Up at 08:00 hours Saturday, 25 March 2017.

Upon activation of the SDCC, staffing of the centre is complemented by Whole of Government staff, who have been trained to work in specific cells within the centre. The SDCC Watch Desk becomes part of the Operations Cell, but continues to monitor, maintain situational awareness and report on activities outside the scope of the primary event.

During activation for a disaster event such as Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie, a significant amount of information is provided, sourced, developed and/or disseminated by the SDCC.

The SDCC Logistics Cell actioned 20 QDMA requests for assistance, the Public Information Cell disseminated 28 Whole of Government Key Messages and the Operations Cell collated information from agency Situation reports to develop 13 State Updates.

The BoM issued more than 750 event related weather warnings, with the bulk of them disseminated to stakeholders by the SDCC Watch Desk, to ensure relevant personnel received current and accurate information.

SDCC Watch Desk staff executed 75 Emergency Alert Campaigns, reaching almost four million people during the event. Campaigns included notice of school closures, cyclone, flood, storm tide and recovery information.

The SDCC Watch Desk received more than 7, 500 requests for SES assistance. Varying request types included, debris clean up, chainsaw operations, evacuation, resupply and flood rescue.

The SDCC moved to Stand Down at 15:15 hours Tuesday, 11 April 2017.

After the event, SDCC Watch Desk staff collate and provide information to relevant departments including Inspector General Emergency Management (IGEM), to ensure lessons learned and continuous improvement in disaster management performance, as per the Emergency Management Assurance Framework (EMAF).



Hamilton Island Tropical Cyclone Debbie 2017 Source: QFES



Sarabah, Gold Coast Hinterland. Source: QFES

Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

Queensland¹ severe weather events during the 12 month period, resulted in seven activations of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

Supplementary Events

White Spot Disease, Alberton and Logan - Commenced 01 December 2016

On Sunday, 2 December, Biosecurity Queensland released a statement confirming a case of White Spot Disease (WSD) at an aquaculture property in Alberton, Logan. White spot is a highly contagious viral infection that affects crustaceans such as prawns, crabs and yabbies. When found in high intensity production areas, such as prawn farms, white spot results in the rapid mortality of prawns.

White spot was subsequently confirmed in seven prawn farms located in the Logan River region. The white spot virus that causes white spot disease was also found in a number of wild caught prawns and crabs taken from the Logan River region, Moreton Bay, Redcliffe Peninsula and Deception Bay.

Decontamination of infected properties was conducted by Biosecurity Queensland and restrictions which prohibit the movement of uncooked crustaceans out of the white spot movement control area have been implemented. To date, all samples that have been collected outside the movement control area have returned negative results for the virus that causes white spot.

SES and Rural Fire Service volunteers supported operations by providing a presence at public boat ramps in order to engage residents and fishermen and provide them with current information relating to the WSD.

Throughout the prolonged event, SDCC Watch Desk staff provided updates to senior management, using information provided in Biosecurity Queensland Situation Reports and kept other relevant stakeholders informed by including WSD information in standard daily reports.

Bowen Earthquake - 18 August 2016

¹ [Queensland Reconstruction Authority](#)

At 14:30hrs (AEST) on Thursday, 18 August 2016, a Magnitude 5.8 earthquake was detected offshore near Bowen. In excess of twenty aftershocks of varying strength were recorded in the coastal areas of Airlie Beach, with the strongest aftershock recorded as a Magnitude 4.1. Two Tsunami No Threat Bulletins were issued by the BoM and disseminated by Watch Desk staff as a result of the original earthquake and subsequent aftershocks.

Watch Desk staff liaised with QPS and QFES regional staff to determine the impact on the local community and developed incident briefs to keep relevant stakeholders informed.

No damage or injuries were reported, however evacuations of buildings occurred in some areas as a precaution.

Fraser Island Oil Spill - 16 October 2016

On the afternoon of Sunday, 16 October 2016, a Queensland Parks and Wildlife Ranger identified patties of oil on the beach in an area adjacent to Eurong Beach Resort on Fraser Island. Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) confirmed the presence of oil on Fraser Island Beaches the following day.

MSQ initiated an oil spill response, with reports of varying sized oil patties along approximately 40km of beach. A multiagency response ensued, with council officers, National Parks and Wildlife and MSQ staff performing clean-up operations which were completed by Tuesday, 25 October 2016.

The SDCC Watch Desk monitored the situation and developed incident briefs for relevant stakeholders based on situational reports provided by MSQ.

Russell Island Vegetation Fire - 15 December 2016

Multiple Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire Service crews and aerial assets responded to a large, fast moving vegetation fire that broke out on Russell Island on Thursday, 15 December 2016.

A bushfire Emergency Warning was issued and the Public Safety Preservation Act (PSPA) was invoked by QPS who evacuated a number of properties that were under threat from the fire. SES volunteers provided welfare support to crews on the fire ground and assisted at the evacuation centre set up for displaced residents. The incident was handed back to local crews on Tuesday, 20 December.

SDCC Watch Desk staff monitored the event and kept senior management advised of the situation.



Russell Island, December. 2016 Source: QFES



Russell Island deployment. December 2016 Source: QFE

Bushfire Coolum – 20 January 2017

An Emergency Warning was issued for a large bushfire is located at Coolum on the Sunshine Coast on Friday, 20 January 2017. Multiple resources including aerial assets were utilised to bring the fast moving fire under control. The PSPA was declared and QPS and SES door knocked residents and provided assistance to those evacuating homes under threat. The PSPA was revoked late in the evening and residents allowed to return to their homes, however a PSPA was invoked again in the early hours of Saturday, 21 January due to the number of spot fires still burning in the area.

SDCC Watch Desk staff maintained situational awareness of the incident, creating an incident brief to inform relevant stakeholders of the status of the incident.



Coolum Bushfire Source: QFES

Resupply Operations - January and March 2017

Heavy rainfall, exacerbated by the Monsoon Trough, resulted in flooding and the isolation of Doomadgee between January and February 2017. Aerial supply of perishable foodstuffs and essential items were required due to the inability to deliver supplies by road. Watch Desk staff assisted with the processing of resupply requests for Doomadgee that were conducted on 20 January 2017 and 24 February 2017.

The Watch Desk maintains a Resupply Register to ensure auditability and accountability of all resupply transactions.