

# State Disaster Coordination Centre Annual Activity Report

*1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018*



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## Introduction

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) Annual Activity Report provides an overview of the activities within the centre for the 2017-2018 financial year. This report outlines the functions, systems, and outputs of the SDCC. It also summarises significant operational activities in the SDCC, as well as some key statistical information.

## Executive Summary

As custodians of the SDCC, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) undertakes continuous emergency management preparation and operations in liaison with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and other relevant 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 to maintain a state of readiness for activations.

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 47 000 inbound emails including more than 2800 weather warnings via EMS. The Watch Desk also oversaw more than 6500 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 (QEMR) and Event Incident Briefs. The Watch Desk and SDCC staff maintain a close working relationship with the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Meteorologist imbedded in the SDCC to aid with weather notifications and emergency management reporting.

This report provides a summary of Queensland's significant, severe weather and emergency events. While the SDCC may not have been activated for these events, the Watch Desk conducted operational tasks including the dissemination of notifications and warnings, SES tasking and resupply administration, as well as ongoing monitoring and reporting to disaster management stakeholders.

The SDCC activated once during this reporting period for Severe Tropical Cyclone Nora and the associated heavy rainfall and flooding events in northern and far northern Queensland.

## State Disaster Coordination Centre

The SDCC is a permanent facility located within the Queensland Emergency Operations Centre at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron. During normal business hours, the centre is staffed by approximately 40 personnel, made up of QFES and QPS staff and a BoM Meteorologist.

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 Queensland Disaster Management Committee (QDMC).

Upon activation of the SDCC, the QPS takes operational control of the centre and works with QFES to manage operations and additional staffing arrangements. Staffing numbers in the SDCC can increase by more than 100 during this time, with staff from Queensland and Commonwealth government agencies, utility, telecommunications and non-government organisations, brought in to work across seven capabilities; Command, Operations, Logistics, Planning, Intelligence, Aviation and Public Information. Staffing of the SDCC is scalable and numbers are based on the anticipated and identified need.



Queensland State Disaster Coordination Centre

## **SDCC Training and Exercises**

SDCC staff maintain currency in disaster management capability by committing to ongoing study, attending relevant professional development courses and attending and conducting training and exercises.

The SOCB Exercise Coordination Team along with QPS and Watch Desk staff conducted in-house training for EA, Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA), Train the Trainer and System Administration to ensure the SDCC workforce remains current and competent for centre activations.

Ongoing external EA training is also being conducted to ensure staff from local government, QFES and other relevant agencies throughout the State have sufficient skills and knowledge to identify the need for an EA campaign, and the correct process for creating, requesting and approving the requests.

### **Capability Training**

During the 12 month period from July 2017 to June 2018, SOCB and QPS staff delivered Capability Training to more than 400 Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), Whole of Government and QFES staff, in preparation for the severe weather season. The training is comprised of comprehensive courses aimed at staff who have no previous SDCC experience, and refresher courses designed to inform former participants of any updates and ensure competency is maintained. The courses cover processes for working within the SDCC during activation, general human resource, rostering and safety aspects for all participants, who then receive targeted capability training for one or more of the Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, Intelligence, Public Information or Aviation Cells.

### **Emergency Alert**

Watch Desk staff are authorised EA users; the only officers in Queensland trained to generate and disseminate approved EA campaigns.

In accordance with the Queensland Disaster Management Training Framework, disaster management stakeholders are required to undertake training in EA, relevant to their role.

SDCC Watch Desk staff have been proactive in supporting local government and relevant disaster management stakeholders with valuable training, by hosting local council visits to the



SDCC and by attending Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) meetings and exercises throughout the state. Watch Desk staff are able to provide an overview of the EA process and system and facilitate demonstrations of 'real time' scenarios in the live EA system. It also provides the opportunity to test and review current, pre-prepared EA messaging and polygons and provide valuable, face to face feedback regarding recommended modifications.

SDCC Watch Desk staff also worked closely with Emergency Management Coordinators, assisting with the preparation of community messaging for local and district disaster management groups.

### **Fire Weather Training**

The BoM meteorologist embedded in the SDCC conducts fire weather training annually 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 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.

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

### **Operational Readiness**

SDCC Watch Desk staff are responsible for ensuring the SDCC is maintained in a state of operational readiness and ready to be activated at any time.

Watch Desk staff ensure equipment in the centre is fully functional at all times by conducting regular, scheduled testing and immediately reporting any issues encountered, so they can be resolved in a timely manner.

SDCC Watch Desk staff also complete regular, coordinated training and skills maintenance exercises to maintain competency and test system performance for critical programs such as EA, TAMS and EMS.



SDCC Watch Desk

## Event Management System

Contact with stakeholders is primarily managed through EMS, ensuring accountability and an auditing ability. The system can be configured to meet the specific needs of users and is utilised to action tasks, send and receive emails and SMS messages, log information and create and disseminate a range of reports.

Table 1 in this document, highlights the volume of communications and tasks that were processed by Watch Desk staff through EMS during the 12 month period, 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

		Emails Received	Emails Sent	SMS Messages Sent	Logged Entries	Reports Lodged	Tasks Actioned
2017	July	3081	23 442	959	1382	321	672
	August	3814	27 723	995	1482	399	715
	September	4279	34 701	4683	2003	477	889
	October	5330	56 685	22 446	1927	657	1208
	November	3836	38 949	1253	1424	397	852
	December	3793	47 086	22 583	1383	477	1053
2018	January	3294	38 390	13 564	1291	387	848
	February	4223	52 754	21 299	1728	620	1125
	March	7440	133 742	27 209	3118	1021	1740
	April	3535	47 166	7332	1655	409	671
	May	2722	25 596	1147	1060	313	595
	June	2259	23 951	1092	956	250	493
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>47 606</b>	<b>550 185</b>	<b>124 562</b>	<b>19 409</b>	<b>5728</b>	<b>10 861</b>

Table 1: EMS Figures – July 2017 to June 2018

## Reporting

SDCC Watch Desk staff monitor events and work collaboratively with emergency management stakeholders to produce a variety 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 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 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 Friday - October to April)

The Weather Outlook is compiled by the BoM Meteorologist working within the SDCC to provide additional weather intelligence to emergency management stakeholders. The Weather Outlook accompanies the 1000hrs QEMR twice per week from 01 October until 30 April. Additional outlooks can be issued outside this period for predicted, severe weather events. This report indicates the likelihood and severity of forecasted Queensland weather activity by forecast districts. This Weather Outlook is a restricted document and is not for public or media dissemination.

## Incident Briefs (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.

## Community Impact Report

The Community Impact Statement is created and disseminated by the Watch Desk to provide stakeholders with up to date information relating to ongoing, significant events. The report can be tailored to suit the current situation and is generally disseminated twice daily. The report incorporates updates from relevant agencies, consolidated into a single report by Watch Desk staff.

**Queensland Emergency Management Report**  
As at 1000hrs Tuesday, 27 February 2018

Significant Events	Queensland	Australia	International
Geological event	Nil reported	Nil reported	Indonesia: 6.2
Severe Weather	Nil reported	Nil reported	Texas: New scores: 56.8
Flood	Refer to <a href="#">Current Situation</a>	Nil reported	Nil reported
Cyclone	Nil reported	Nil reported	Nil reported
Fire	Nil reported	SA: Fire Weather Warning	Nil reported
Aviation	Nil reported	VIC: (Aeronautical) Outage	Nil reported
Maritime	Nil reported	WA: Nil	Nil reported

**Major Infrastructure**

**Roads & Rail & Bridges & Air**

- Severe thunderstorm activity overnight has resulted in the temporary closure of local roads in southeast Queensland, while multiple roads throughout Queensland remain closed or have travel restrictions imposed due to heavy and ongoing severe weather and flooding.
- For current road information, refer to Department of Transport and Main Roads: QLD Traffic.

**Power Outages – Energy & Gas/Energy**

- Enrgen reported 7473 customers with power outages as at 23:00hrs yesterday evening due to severe storms. The main areas impacted included:
  - Brisbane City 3800
  - Gold Coast City 2700
  - Ipswich City 200
- Fringe camps worked overnight to re-establish power supply, restoring services to all but approximately 2000 customers at 09:00 hours.

**QFES Daily Operational Brief**  
As at 0600hrs Saturday, 03 March 2018

**EXECUTIVE-IN-CONFIDENCE – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION**

**Significant QFES Operations (Fire & Rescue, Rural Fire Service and SES)**  
Sourced from Queensland's National Incident Reports, National Disaster, SES Task and Management System, SES and other sources.

**Road Operations**

- Fire & Rescue Service and State Emergency Service crews responded to Lower Damtree, where Queensland Ambulance Service personnel and a patient were stranded on the Dubboone River bridge, which had become stuck on a ramp. All persons were removed from the bridge, however, the ambulance was unable to be removed.

**Hazards**

- Fire & Rescue Service: Fire & Rescue Service crews responded to assist two persons who became trapped by a rockfall when they attempted to leave the camping ground at Corral Creek, Chinchoung overnight. Search and rescue personnel located the trapped persons and walked them back to safety.

**Control**

Nil of significance reported

**Search Coord**

Nil of significance reported

**Fire & Rescue Service**

- Fire & Rescue Service crews attended the scene of a truck versus car at Duncraig, near Steeles Bay yesterday morning. The Mackay Regional Road was closed in both directions while QFES crews and Queensland Ambulance Service personnel attended to the vehicles and patients and Queensland Police personnel conducted investigations. Five people were transported to hospital, two by helicopter and three by road.

**Search Warnings**

Nil of significance reported

SDCC Watch Desk Report Examples – QEMR and QDOB

## Bureau of Meteorology

During the period July 2017 to June 2018, 2858 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	Hazardous Surf	Tropical Cyclone	Storm Tide	Tsunami No Threat	TOTAL
2017	July	0	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	5	65
	August	3	0	0	86	2	0	7	0	0	6	104
	September	29	0	0	123	19	14	0	0	0	5	190
	October	2	67	0	74	184	22	0	0	0	5	354
	November	0	3	0	29	143	0	0	0	0	10	185
	December	0	13	0	11	198	0	0	0	0	4	226
2018	January	0	8	0	39	114	8	4	0	0	7	180
	February	0	102	0	94	215	9	13	0	0	3	436
	March	0	425	4	119	66	49	16	35	23	8	745
	April	0	40	14	82	14	8	8	25	0	2	193
	May	0	3	0	109	0	0	0	0	0	3	115
	June	0	0	0	64	0	0	0	0	0	1	65
		34	661	18	890	955	110	48	60	23	59	2858

Table 2: BoM Warnings Received - July 2017 to June 2018

### 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, including those with local government and at times the QDMC, and the facilitation of weather-related training for staff.

## SES TAMS

Between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018, the Watch Desk received more than 6500 SES task requests via TAMS. These figures include Brisbane City Council (BCC) SES task request numbers since October 2017. Prior to October 2017, calls for SES assistance in the BCC area were diverted to council call centre operators who dealt 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 including staff from QFES Communication Centres (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
2017	July	20	79	99
	August	19	69	88
	September	16	80	96
	October	1131	81	1212
	November	392	75	467
	December	883	66	949
2018	January	274	84	358
	February	1573	77	1650
	March	1069	141	1210
	April	120	68	188
	May	50	51	101
	June	25	58	83
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5572</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>6501</b>

Table 3: Number of SES Task Requests received via TAMS: \*July 2017 to June 2018  
\* Figures include Brisbane City Council SES tasks from 5 October 2017.

## **SDCC Tours and Visits**

Staff hosted official tours of the SDCC and gave presentations to representatives from many local, national and international agencies. Visitors included industry stakeholders and emergency management staff from government and non-government agencies, such as universities and colleges and volunteer organisations. Visitors are shown through the SDCC and its work areas and are informed of relevant aspects of the SDCC's processes, outputs, and relationships. The visits are generally aligned with courses, meetings or related emergency and disaster management activities being held in Brisbane.

## **Severe Weather Events**

Due to its size and location, Queensland experiences significant climate variations and is impacted by a range of weather phenomena including tropical cyclones, thunderstorms and flooding. The BoM issues weather warnings based on the threat or threats and these warnings are further disseminated to a wide range of internal and external disaster management stakeholders by Watch Desk staff, who assess the warning and impact area to determine the distribution requirements.

During severe weather events, staff on the Watch Desk liaise with a range of stakeholders, monitor TAMS, the QFES Inform Browser, infrastructure websites, along with social and print media to determine the impact of the event and monitor response activity.

Watch Desk staff ensure significant weather events are reported on efficiently and effectively, with the level of impact determining whether additional, event specific Incident Briefs or Community Impact Reports are required in addition to standard daily reporting.

Events of significance for the 12 month period July 2017 to June 2018 are listed on the following pages.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Central Coast and Whitsundays, Central Highlands and Coalfields and Wide Bay and Burnett Forecast Districts - 02 October 2017**

Queensland was impacted by severe weather and severe thunderstorms on Monday, 2 October 2017. Severe weather warnings for heavy rainfall, which may lead to flash flooding were issued by the BoM for the above forecast districts throughout Sunday 1 and Monday, 2 October 2017, with severe thunderstorm warnings issued by the BoM for the same areas from the early hours of Monday morning.

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) was activated for the Severe Thunderstorm Warning issued at 18:13 hours Monday, 2 October 2017, for parts of the Wide Bay and Burnett Forecast District. The warning included destructive winds and heavy rainfall and noted that 335mm of rain had fallen in Bundaberg over the previous 24 hours, with 286mm of the total recorded within the last six hours. Woodgate (northwest of Hervey Bay) recorded over 200mm of rain in a three-hour period.

Flash flooding resulted in local road closures and impacted train travel and afternoon flights from Bundaberg airport. At the peak of the storms 7000 customers within the Wide Bay Burnett area were reportedly without power.

QFES Swiftwater Rescue crews responded to nine incidents related to reports of people stranded in vehicles in flood waters.

Watch Desk staff actioned more than 260 event related SES tasks. More than 220 of the tasks were for the Wide Bay Burnett local government area for flooding and structural damage.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for parts of South East Queensland, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Central West, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Maranoa and Warrego, Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts – 14 October 2017**

Severe thunderstorm warnings for heavy rainfall were issued from mid-morning Saturday, 14 October 2017. Thunderstorms continued throughout the day, resulting in significant rainfall totals being recorded in many areas. Totals of note include 117mm at Bli Bli, 146mm at Delaneys Creek (south of Woodford), 91mm at Bribie Island and 59mm at Toowoomba. The final warning was cancelled by the BoM at 18:36 hours.

Watch Desk staff actioned more than 35 SES tasks, mainly for leaking roofs and flooding in North Coast, Brisbane and South Eastern Regions.

## **Severe Weather Warning and Severe Thunderstorm Warnings for parts of Capricornia and Wide Bay and Burnett, Central Coast and Whitsundays Forecast Districts – 16 and 17 October 2017**

Severe thunderstorm and severe weather warnings for heavy rainfall which may lead to flash flooding were issued for coastal and adjacent inland areas from the North Coast to Central Queensland on Monday, 16 and Tuesday, 17 October 2017. SEWS was activated at 04:01 hours on Tuesday after 144mm of rain was observed in the three hours to 03:50 hours at Westwood Range, southwest of Town of Seventeen Seventy. More than 300mm of rain was recorded at Westwood Range during the rain event.

Other significant daily rainfall totals reported include, 113mm at Gin Gin, 242mm recorded in six hours at Bulburin Alert (near Builyan), 105mm recorded in six hours at the Mimdale alert (near Lowmead), 260mm at Mt Beatrice Alert (SW of Gladstone) and 190mm at the Ball Lookout (near Eumundi).

Multiple QFES resources were redeployed throughout the State to increase local capability in areas expected to be impacted by the ongoing severe weather. QFES crews responded to several swiftwater rescues, with one person being located deceased in a vehicle that was swept off a causeway near Gympie. QPS coordinated an extensive air and water search for the crew of a commercial fishing trawler which overturned in rough seas near Town of Seventeen Seventy on Monday, 16 October 2017.

The significant rainfall and localised flash flooding resulted in multiple road closures and the closure of many schools and childcare centres within North Coast and Central Region.

The Watch Desk received almost 400 SES tasks through the TAMS system in the 48 hours until midnight Tuesday, 17 October 2017, however further event related tasks continued to be received the next day, taking the total to more than 450.

The SDCC hosted high level teleconferences throughout the event, with Watch Desk staff working closely with the BoM Meteorologist, QFES regional staff and other government and non-government agencies to ensure the dissemination of relevant and timely information to disaster management stakeholders across Queensland.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Southeast Coast and parts of Central Highlands and Coalfields, Central West, Wide Bay and Burnett and Maranoa and Warrego Forecast Districts – 26 October 2017**

Severe thunderstorms with damaging winds and large hailstones were forecast for a large part of Queensland, from early afternoon on Thursday, 26 October 2017. By mid-afternoon the warnings had been upgraded to include destructive winds and heavy rainfall that may lead to flash flooding, with the BoM detecting several dangerous cells on the radar.

The thunderstorms resulted in significant power outages in multiple areas throughout the State, most significantly in Toowoomba, where almost 15,000 customers lost power.

The BoM received several reports of large hail, with 10cm hail reported at Mount Maroon, golf ball size hail reported at Josephville and 4cm hail reported in Toowoomba. Toowoomba also recorded an 89km/h wind gust.

The Watch Desk actioned more than 40 tasks received via TAMS. Most tasks related to roof damage caused by hail, including a retirement village at Darling Heights (Toowoomba) that received skylight damage to approximately 25 units within the complex.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for North West, Central West, Channel Country, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 29 October 2017**

Severe thunderstorm warnings forecasting damaging winds and large hailstones were issued for southeast Queensland at 17:05 hours on Sunday, 29 October 2017. Additional warnings were issued for areas in northern and central Queensland, however little impact was reported in areas other than South Eastern and Brisbane Regions where 20 of the 25 TAMS tasks received by the Watch Desk were allocated. Two properties in the Dayboro area, northwest of Brisbane reportedly sustained substantial roof loss because of the storms.

Energex reported widespread power outages and numerous flights were delayed at the Brisbane International and Domestic airports due to the storm activity.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Peninsula, North Tropical Coast and Tablelands, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, Central Coast and Whitsundays Forecast Districts – 01 November 2017**

Severe thunderstorms with damaging winds, heavy rainfall and large hailstones were forecast for northern, central and far northern Queensland on Wednesday, 1 November 2017, with the initial warning issued at 16:03 hours and the final cancellation issued at 19:30 hours.

A severe thunderstorm cell impacted Ravenshoe at approximately 17:30 hours, resulting in multiple Triple Zero calls being placed, mainly for trees down and fallen powerlines. Fire and Rescue Service and SES conducted damage assessments and a reconnaissance of the impacted area throughout the night and assisted with the removal of debris from several yards and roadways. A horse stable at the local pony club reportedly lost its roof as a result of the storm.

Watch Desk staff monitored the situation and reported accordingly but did not receive any direct requests for SES assistance from the general public via the TAMS system.



## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Wide Bay and Burnett, Southeast Coast, Central Coast and Whitsundays, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia and Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts – 7 November 2017**

Severe thunderstorms began impacting Queensland soon after midday on Tuesday, 7 November 2017. Damaging winds and large hailstones were forecast, with the warnings upgraded later in the afternoon to destructive winds. A 104km/h wind gust was reported at Double Island Point, and a 98km/h wind gust recorded at Bundaberg, with the BoM advising of unofficial reports of gusts up to 150km/h in Bundaberg. 2-3cm hail was reported near Beaudesert, Northlakes and Banyo, while 5cm hail was reported at Melawondi, north of Imbil.

Ergon Energy reported that 27,000 customers in the Bundaberg area lost power because of the storm activity. QFES crews assisted local authorities with the clearing of debris on roadways so that power could be restored to homes.

North Burnett Regional Council area was also impacted by severe thunderstorm activity, with four homes receiving significant damage as a result of hail and strong winds.

Watch Desk staff received more than 220 requests for SES assistance via TAMS on the Tuesday and Wednesday, with nearly 200 of the tasks being for the Bundaberg Regional Council area.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Central Coast and Whitsundays, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, Herbert and Lower Burdekin and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 29 November 2017**

Widespread storm activity impacted Queensland on Wednesday, 29 November 2017. The initial warning for heavy rainfall was issued for the Southeast Coast, Wide Bay and Burnett and the Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts just after midday, with reports that 62mm of rain had been recorded in one hour near Enoggera Dam. Warnings for additional areas were issued as storms continued throughout Queensland during the afternoon and evening. All storm warnings were eventually cancelled at 01:10 hours on Thursday, 30 November 2017.

Rainfall totals of more than 100mm were recorded in Brisbane and North Coast Regions, with 101mm recorded at Wamuran and 111mm recorded at Mount Cootha.

The Watch Desk received more than 40 requests for SES assistance, via the TAMS system, with the bulk of the requests being for leaking roofs and downed trees in Brisbane Region.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Southeast Coast, Central Highlands and Coalfields and Wide Bay and Burnett Forecast Districts – 4 December 2017**

A severe thunderstorm warning for heavy rainfall was issued for Southeast Queensland just before 11:00 hours Monday, 4 December 2017.

Storms continued throughout the afternoon, with additional warnings issued for parts of Wide Bay and Burnett, Central Highlands and Coalfields, and Central Coast and Whitsundays Forecast Districts. The storm warning for the Southeast Coast were cancelled early afternoon and for other areas in the early evening.

Areas impacted by the storms received significant rainfall totals and experienced flash flooding. Significant rainfall totals included: North Coast Region, 121mm at Mountain Creek and 112mm at Tanawha, Brisbane Region, 75mm at Green Hill Reservoir Alert and South Eastern Region, 84mm at Beenleigh.

More than 260 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk as a result of the storm event, with more than 170 of these being for North Coast Region, mainly for inundation to homes and leaking roofs.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Southeast Coast, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett and Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts – 9 December 2017**

A line of storms crossed southeastern Queensland on Saturday, 9 December 2017. The event was largely caused by the combination of a humid air mass over eastern Queensland and a south-easterly wind change that pushed through southeast Queensland during the day.

Destructive winds and large hailstones were predicted, with the BoM reporting wind gust recordings of 113km/h at Double Island Point and 81km/h at Cape Moreton and Redcliffe. Hail was reportedly three to four centimetres at Mount Tamborine and two to three centimetres at Canungra. Hourly rainfall totals included 118mm at Bli and 92mm at Sunshine Coast Airport.

Ergon and Energex reported a peak of about 16,000 customers without power across the southeast due to the severe thunderstorm activity. Most of issues were caused by fallen down trees on powerlines.

Several local roads were impacted by debris, potholes and signal faults.

The Watch Desk received more than 200 requests for SES assistance, with jobs relating to the severe storms continuing to be received more than 24 hours later. More than 160 of the SES Tasks were for North Coast Region, predominantly for damage relating to downed trees.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Central Highlands and Coalfields, Wide Bay and Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Maranoa and Warrego and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 25 December 2017**

Monday, 25 December 2017, saw severe thunderstorm activity across vast areas of the State, with significant wind gusts and heavy rainfall reported. Roma recorded a wind gust of 89km/h and in Beaudesert, an 87km/h gust was recorded. Heavy rain fell, with Upper Springbrook recording 81mm of rain in 60 minutes, Pacific Pines recording 55mm in 30 minutes and Mount Cotton recording 54mm in 30 minutes.

The Watch Desk received more than 80 requests for SES assistance via the TAMS system, with most requests being for the Gold Coast, Scenic Rim, Logan and Brisbane City council areas. The requests related to assistance required for leaking roofs and fallen trees.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Central West, Wide Bay and Burnett, Maranoa and Warrego and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts - 26 December 2017**

Severe thunderstorms developed over southeast Queensland on the afternoon of Tuesday, 26 December 2017. A particularly intense thunderstorm cell originated near Southbrook, southwest of Toowoomba. As this cell tracked north through Wellcamp and Oakey, it produced large hail stones with a diameter greater than 4cm at Southbrook and hail up to 11cm in diameter was reported at Silverleigh and Goombungee, both north of Oakey. Damaging wind gusts snapped power poles and large tree branches around Norwin. A 111km/h gust of wind was recorded at St George.

The Watch Desk received more than 100 requests for SES assistance via the TAMS system. Most of these requests were for the North Coast, South Western, South Eastern and Brisbane areas for damage relating to fallen trees, and hail.

Rural Fire Service and SES crews assisted council in removing a large number of trees from roadways in the South Burnett Council area.

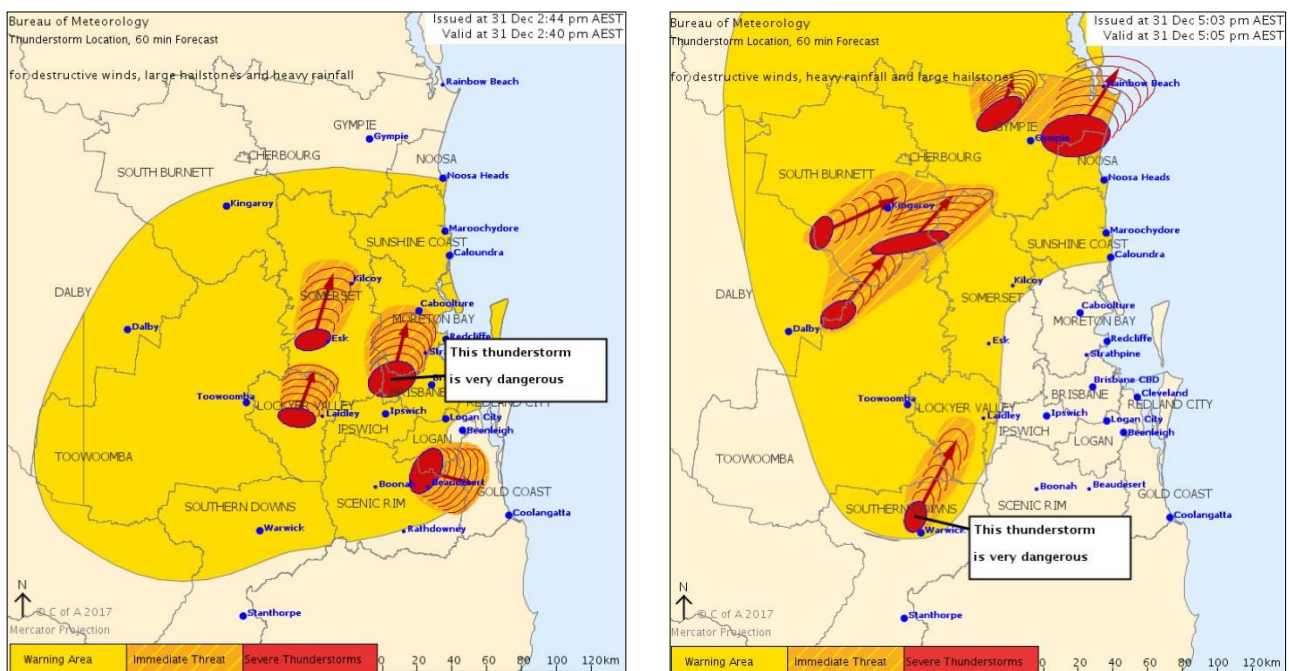
### Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Wide Bay and Burnett and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 31 December 2017

Severe thunderstorm warnings for destructive wind, large hail and heavy rainfall were issued for South East Queensland on the afternoon of Sunday, 31 December 2017. The warnings included eleven "very dangerous" severe thunderstorm warnings that were issued for the Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast areas.

An EA Campaign was issued by the Watch Desk at 15:30 hours on behalf of Moreton Bay Regional Council for the Woodford area, warning attendees of the Woodford Folk Festival to seek shelter from the impending storms.

Energex and Ergon reported more than 13,000 customers without power because of storm activity and Telstra outages occurred in Gin Gin, Wallaville and Mt Perry.

More than 50 storm-related SES requests for assistance were received by the Watch Desk, mostly for roof damage and localised flooding in South Eastern and North Coast Regions.



Severe Thunderstorm Maps - Issued 31 December 2017 \*Courtesy BoM

### Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 01 January 2018

Severe thunderstorms began impacting Queensland in the early afternoon, Monday, 1 January 2018. The storms continued until after midnight and were finally cancelled at 12:22 hours Tuesday, 2 January 2018.

Dalby recorded wind gusts of 91 and 96km/h and 86mm of rainfall was recorded in 60 minutes at Gin Gin. Bucca Weir, east of Gin Gin recorded 132mm of rainfall in two hours. Boyne Island, south of Gladstone recorded 75mm of rainfall in 60 minutes and 53mm of rainfall was recorded in 30 minutes at Gladstone Radar. 2.5cm hail was reported at North MacLean.

The storms caused significant power disruptions, with Ergon Energy and Energex reporting 54,000 customers without power at the height of the storms.

More than 40 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk via the TAMS system, with most requests relating to leaking roofs and trees down in North Coast and South Eastern Regions.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning for in Wide Bay and Burnett, Southeast Coast, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia and Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts – 02 January 2018**

Severe thunderstorms impacted Queensland from early afternoon on Tuesday, 2 January 2018. 57mm of rain fell in one hour at Beaudesert, leading to flash flooding.

Approximately 80 storm-related SES requests for assistance were received by the Watch Desk, mostly for leaking roofs, fallen trees and sandbagging requests in South Eastern, North Coast and Brisbane Regions.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Wide Bay and Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt and Southeast Coast, Peninsula, Gulf Country and Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders Forecast Districts – 3 January 2018**

Severe thunderstorms with damaging winds and large hailstones began to affect areas of Queensland from early afternoon until late in the evening on Wednesday, 3 January 2018. 2cm hail was reported at Harrisville and 3cm hail reported at Summerholme, near Laidley.

Hail between two and four centimetres in diameter was recorded at Harrisville, Hatton vale and Traveston.

The Watch Desk received more than 30 requests for SES assistance via the TAMS system. Most the requests related to leaking roofs and fallen trees in South Eastern and North Coast Regions.

Fire & Rescue Service, Rural Fire Service and SES crews assisted in securing a Uniting Church at Tiaro after the church moved off its stumps because of the severe thunderstorms.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District – 17 January 2018**

Warnings for severe thunderstorms with heavy rainfall that may lead to flash flooding were issued for people in parts of the North Tropical Coast and Tablelands forecast district at 03:30 hours on Wednesday, 17 January 2018. The warning was cancelled at 05:18 hours, however rainfall increased across the Cairns area and a severe thunderstorm warning was re-issued at 09:01 hours and cancelled at 11:05 hours.

The Cairns Airport recorded 126mm of rain over a three-hour period during the morning and areas around Innisfail recorded up to 180mm of rain in the 24 hour period to 05:00 hours on 17 January 2018.

More than 30 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk via TAMS, with all but four of the requests being for the Cairns area. Requests related to assistance with leaking roofs, fallen trees and requests for sandbags to prevent water inundation to homes.

## Monsoon Trough – January - February 2018

A monsoon trough extending across Cape York Peninsula and into the northern Coral Sea in the latter part of January and early days of February 2018, led to higher than average rainfall across the Gulf Country and Cape York Peninsula. The moist monsoonal westerly winds strongly influenced the western Cape York Peninsula, with several locations observing weekly rainfall totals in excess of 500mm. Aurukun, on the west coast of the Cape had the highest weekly total, recording 592.7mm in the week to Monday, 5 February 2018.

The continued heavy rainfall combined with King Tides and strong winds contributed to beach erosion, infrastructure damage and localised property inundation, in coastal areas and Islands in the Torres Strait.

SDCC Watch Desk staff monitored the situation and reported to stakeholders accordingly.

The Watch Desk received a number of requests for SES assistance via TAMS for mainland areas of the Gulf and Cape York, with residents requesting assistance for property inundation and downed trees; however, no SES task requests were received for the islands, with management of the situation being coordinated locally by Torres Strait Regional Council and QFES regional staff.



Inundation at Saibi Island, Torres Strait \*Courtesy QFES

## Severe Thunderstorm Warning North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District – 5 February 2018

A Severe thunderstorm warning for people in parts of North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District was issued at 03:55 hours on Monday, 5 February 2018 and while the warning remained current for only just over an hour, areas around Cairns recorded significant rainfall totals. Gordonvale Alert recorded 235mm of rain, Bartle View Alert 211mm and Cowley Beach 117mm.

QFES Swiftwater Rescue crews were responded to rescue three people from the top of their campervan in rapidly rising flood waters at a camping ground beside the Mulgrave River at Gordonvale in the early hours of Tuesday, 6 February 2018.

The Watch Desk received more than 20 requests for SES assistance overnight and early the next day, primarily for inundation and leaking roofs of homes in the area.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Southeast Coast, Wide Bay and Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt and Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 11 February 2018**

Severe storms developed around the southern border ranges and Granite Belt on Sunday, 11 February 2018, with the first severe thunderstorm warning issued at 15:34 hours. This band of storms tracked to the northeast, moving over Brisbane, while a secondary band of storms developed around the Esk area and moved northeast, eventually reaching the Tewantin and Gympie areas.

Little rainfall was recorded; however damaging winds gusts of more than 100km/h and large hailstones were reported. Maximum wind gust recordings include: 111km/h at Inner Beacon, 109km/h at Redcliffe, 107km/h at Alexandra Hills and 98km/h at Cape Moreton; while golf ball to tennis ball size hail was reported in Boonah.

At the height of the storms, Energex reported 135,000 customers without power in Brisbane and South Eastern Regions.

Approximately 300 requests for SES assistance were received by the Watch Desk via TAMS, with the majority of jobs being for fallen trees and damaged structures caused by the strong winds in the Brisbane City and Logan City Council areas.

Rural Fire Service and SES volunteers responded to tasks generated in TAMS, while Fire & Rescue Service crews responded to more than 70 storm related Triple Zero calls from members of the public, primarily concerned with downed powerlines and electrical infrastructure damage.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Gulf Country, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, North West, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Maranoa and Warrego and Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 14 February 2018**

Severe thunderstorms warnings were issued for multiple forecast districts throughout Queensland on Wednesday, 14 February 2018. The initial warning was issued at 16:12 hours, with the BoM reporting heavy, slow-moving thunderstorms across the northern interior and extensive thunderstorm activity developing across the eastern interior.

Storm activity continued throughout the afternoon, with multiple SES, Rural Fire Service and Fire & Rescue Service crews responding to numerous tasks generated by a destructive storm that impacted the Kingaroy and Nanango areas. Tasks included clearing access to the Nanango Hospital after a tree came down and blocked the driveway and covering damaged skylights in the hospital's emergency department.

More than 50 tasks were received by the Watch Desk via TAMS, the majority relating to trees down on houses and roads, plus structural damage to roofs due to the strong winds.



## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, Channel Country, Central West, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, Central Coast and Whitsundays, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Maranoa and Warrego and Darling Downs and Granite Belt, Forecast Districts – 20 February 2018**

Severe thunderstorm activity impacted Queensland from early morning on Tuesday, 20 February 2018. An initial severe thunderstorm warning was issued by the BoM at 06:09 hours for people in parts of the Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast District. The town of Condamine had recorded 29mm of rain in the 15 minutes until 06:05 hours. Thunderstorms continued throughout the day along much of the east coast, inland into the Gulf Country and throughout much of Queensland. The final cancellation was issued at 01:27 hours Wednesday, 21 February 2018.

Significant rainfall totals and wind speeds were recorded throughout the State, including 30 minute rainfall totals of 65mm at Giru, between Townsville and Ayr and 70mm at Koumala, south of Mackay. Wind gusts of more than 90km/h were recorded at locations including Lucinda, Clermont and Charleville and a 104km/h gust was recorded at Moranbah.

Partial roof losses and structural damage were reported for the Mount Isa Hospital and private residences in Northern and Central regions.

Ergon Energy reported over 76,000 customers lost power due to storm activity, primarily in Whitsunday, Townsville, Western Downs, Isaac, and Mackay regional council areas.

Queensland Police Service issued a Media Statement for Moranbah residents, warning of the potential dangers resulting from downed powerlines; urging residents to travel only when essential and not attempt to clear fallen trees and debris by themselves.

The severe storm cells generated more than 70 tasks via TAMS over a 48 hour period with more than half of the tasks being for Central Region. Further tasks were identified by QFES Damage Assessment crews who inspected areas including Moranbah, Dysart and Clermont.



Moranbah School - \*Courtesy QPS

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Gulf Country, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, North West, Capricornia, Wide Bay and Burnett, Southeast Coast Forecast Districts – 22 February 2018**

Severe thunderstorms again impacted large areas of Queensland from just after midday Thursday, 22 February 2018. Storms initially kicked off in the Capricornia District, continuing throughout the afternoon over much of northern Queensland and the east coast, with the warning for the Southeast being cancelled at 22:20 hours, all storm warnings eventually cancelled at 04:12 hours on Friday, 23 February 2018.

Rainfall totals from 09:00 hours on 21 February 2018 to 05:00 hours on 22 February 2018, include 179mm at South Mission Beach, 102mm near Ayr, 68mm in Emerald and 137mm in Maryborough.

The Watch Desk received more than 130 SES tasks via TAMS, with more than half of the requests being to homes in North Coast Region. Jobs were primarily requests for assistance with flooding and leaking roofs.

## **Severe Weather Warning Southeast Coast Forecast District – 23 February 2018**

A severe weather warning was issued for parts of the Southeast Coast Forecast District at 09:52 hours Friday, 23 February 2018, with the BoM warning that a very moist air mass would combine with a coastal trough to produce areas of heavy rain across Southeast Queensland during the day and into the next morning. Six hourly rainfall totals of 90mm to 120mm and isolated heavier falls of up to 150mm were forecast for coastal and adjacent inland areas, extending from the Sunshine Coast hinterland down through Brisbane and into the Gold Coast hinterland.

Significant rainfall totals were recorded, with numerous observations of between 100mm and 200mm recorded between Yandina and the New South Wales Border, up until 05:00 hours Saturday, 24 February 2018.

Multiple swiftwater rescues were performed by QFES crews on both 22 and 23 February 2018, with the majority being the result of members of the public driving through floodwaters.

The Watch Desk received more than 350 SES requests for assistance via TAMS. Most tasks were for the Brisbane, Logan and Sunshine Coast local government areas for water inundation and leaking roofs.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Gulf Country, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, North West, Central Highlands and Coalfields, Wide Bay and Burnett and Darling Downs and Granite Belt Forecast Districts – 24 February 2018**

Severe thunderstorm warnings, initially for the Herbert and Lower Burdekin district were issued from 15:00 hours Saturday, 24 February 2018. By 18:00 hours storm activity had increased, and additional area warnings were issued. Significant rainfall had already been recorded, with Toolakea Alert, near Townsville recording 120mm of rainfall in the one hour to 16:45 hours and Rollingstone recording 66mm in one hour up to 18:00 hours. Cloncurry recorded a wind gust of 81km/h at 17:50 hours.

The final thunderstorm warning was cancelled at 01:44 hours Sunday, 25 February 2018. Watch Desk received more than 100 requests for SES assistance via TAMS. More than 30 of the requests were for the Townsville area, while most of the other 70 tasks related to the ongoing rainfall being experienced in Brisbane, South Eastern and North Coast Regions.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Southeast Coast Forecast District – 26 February 2018**

A severe thunderstorm warning was issued by the BoM for the Southeast Coast Forecast District at 17:34 hours Monday, 26 February 2018. The severe thunderstorms impacted South Eastern Region, leading to localised flash flooding in Logan City, Goodna and Durack areas.

QFES crews responded to several swiftwater rescues of members of the public being trapped in floodwater, including 2 at Durack, 3 at Oxley and 1 at Clagiraba.

Watch Desk staff received more than 90 requests for SES assistance via TAMS for Brisbane and South Eastern Regions.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Central Highlands and Coalfields Forecast District – Tuesday 27 February 2018**

An early morning, severe thunderstorm in central Queensland resulted in heavy rainfall totals including 104mm in three hours at Springsure and 131mm recorded in three hours nearby, at Roddas Lookout. The resulting flash flooding caused infrastructure damage to the town of Springsure including road pavement damage, the loss of a major foot bridge and damage to some commercial properties.

The Watch Desk reported on the event accordingly, however no private residences were impacted and no requests for SES assistance received.

## **Severe Weather Warning Herbert and Lower Burdekin, Gulf Country, North Tropical Coast and Tablelands, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders Forecast Districts and Severe Thunderstorm Warning Herbert and Lower Burdekin Forecast District – 28 February 2018**

Severe weather warnings for multiple forecast districts and a severe thunderstorm for the Herbert and Lower Burdekin Forecast District were issued by the BoM on Wednesday, 28 February 2018. Heavy rainfall that may lead to flash flooding was predicted, as a surface low located near Townsville was forecast to deepen during Wednesday and Thursday in response to a slow-moving upper trough and associated low.

Heavy rainfall was experienced, particularly in Townsville and surrounding areas, with six hour rainfall totals that included 197mm at Bushland Beach, 162mm at Pallarenda and 212mm at Nelly Bay, Magnetic Island.

The severe thunderstorm warning issued for people in the Herbert and Lower Burdekin Forecast District at 05:31 hours was cancelled at 08:43 hours, however the severe weather warning for heavy rainfall that was issued for multiple forecast districts remained active until Monday, 5 March 2018, as the slow moving low pressure system impacted the State.

The Watch Desk received more than 50 requests for SES assistance for the Townsville area, mainly for leaking roofs and flash flooding on 28 February 2018.

## North Queensland Low - 28 February to 5 March 2018

A severe weather warning for heavy rainfall for multiple forecast districts, issued on Wednesday, 28 February 2018, remained current until Monday, 5 March 2018. Severe thunderstorm warnings that included the threat of damaging wind and large hailstones were also issued for areas within the severe weather warning area over the same period.

The severe weather warnings were issued as a result of a low pressure system that tracked west from the north tropical coast to the northwest of the State during late February and into early March resulting in major flooding in the north tropical coast. The heavy rainfall led to major flooding in the Gulf Country, most notably in Cloncurry and at Walkers Bend. Flooding then occurred in the southwest and southern inland parts of Queensland, with major flooding at Winton, and moderate flooding at Longreach. Burketown became completely isolated during this period, with no vehicular access from any direction.

The ongoing, heavy rainfall resulted in multiple roads across Queensland being closed or having travel restrictions imposed, delays and cancellations of some rail services and the temporary closure of several Queensland schools and childcare centres.

QFES Swiftwater Rescue teams responded to several incidents where people became isolated by fast rising floodwaters.

During the period 1 - 5 March 2018, the Watch Desk received more than 120 requests for SES assistance via TAMS. Approximately 70 of the requests were for Northern Region, with people requesting assistance with sandbagging and roof tarping.



Swiftwater Rescue Technicians near Calliope \*Courtesy QFES

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Southeast Queensland – 5 March 2018**

A severe thunderstorm warning for heavy rainfall was issued by the BoM at 20:56 hours Monday, 5 March 2018 and cancelled at 12:43 hours Tuesday, 6 March 2018.

Significant rainfall totals were recorded, with Bonogin, west of Palm Beach recording 79mm in one hour and 140mm between 09:00 hours 5 March 2018 and 05:00 hours 6 March 2018. Loder Creek, west of Southport recorded 113mm of rain during the same time frame.

More than 50 SES task requests were received by the Watch Desk via TAMS. The majority of these were for Logan, Gold Coast and Brisbane City Council areas for assistance with leaking roofs.

## **Severe Thunderstorm Warning Gulf Country and North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast Districts – 8 March 2018**

A severe thunderstorm warning was issued for the Gulf Country at 01:25 hours Thursday, 8 March 2018 and was updated at 04:39 hours to include the North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District. The warning was cancelled at 11:02 hours, but a further warning that remained current for just over an hour was issued for the North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast District at 12:57 hours.

Heavy rainfall lead to flash flooding in areas of northern and far northern Queensland, with multiple recording stations reporting rainfall totals of more than 100 and 200mm from 09:00 hours 7 March 2018 to 05:00 hours on 8 March 2018. Ingham recorded 160mm, Ravenshoe 216mm and Millaa Millaa 259mm.

The Watch Desk issued a Watch and Act EA message to Hinchinbrook residents, advising them to prepare for the impending flood.

The Watch Desk received almost 90 requests for SES assistance via TAMS, mainly for sandbags due to flash flooding and in preparation for predicted, ongoing heavy rainfall.

## **Severe Tropical Cyclone Nora – 23 March 2018**

A tropical low identified in the Afura Sea on 20 March 2018, formed into Tropical Cyclone Nora at 04:00 hours Friday, 23 March 2018. The Category 3 cyclone crossed the west coast of Cape York Peninsula between Cape Keerweer and Pormpuraaw on Saturday, 24 March 2018.

The cyclone damaged some houses and brought down numerous power lines and trees in the town of Pormpuraaw, resulting in power outages for the entire town of 230 residents.

The BoM reported maximum sustained wind speeds of 155km/h and wind gusts of 220km/h.

Tropical Cyclone Nora weakened below tropical cyclone intensity on Sunday, 25 March 2018, however a Severe Weather Warning for heavy rainfall and damaging winds was issued for the Gulf Country. As ex-Tropical Cyclone Nora moved slowly across northern Queensland, severe weather warnings were issued for the North Tropical Coast and Tablelands, Herbert and Lower Burdekin, Northern Goldfields and Upper Flinders Forecast Districts.

The remains of Severe Tropical Cyclone Nora tracked across the base of Cape York Peninsula and produced heavy rainfall and renewed major flooding in the Barron, Herbert, Tully and Murray, and Mulgrave and Russell catchments.

The ongoing heavy rainfall lead to flash flooding around Cairns on the Monday, 26 March 2018, with multiple swiftwater rescues and the evacuation of two caravan parks conducted by QFES crews.



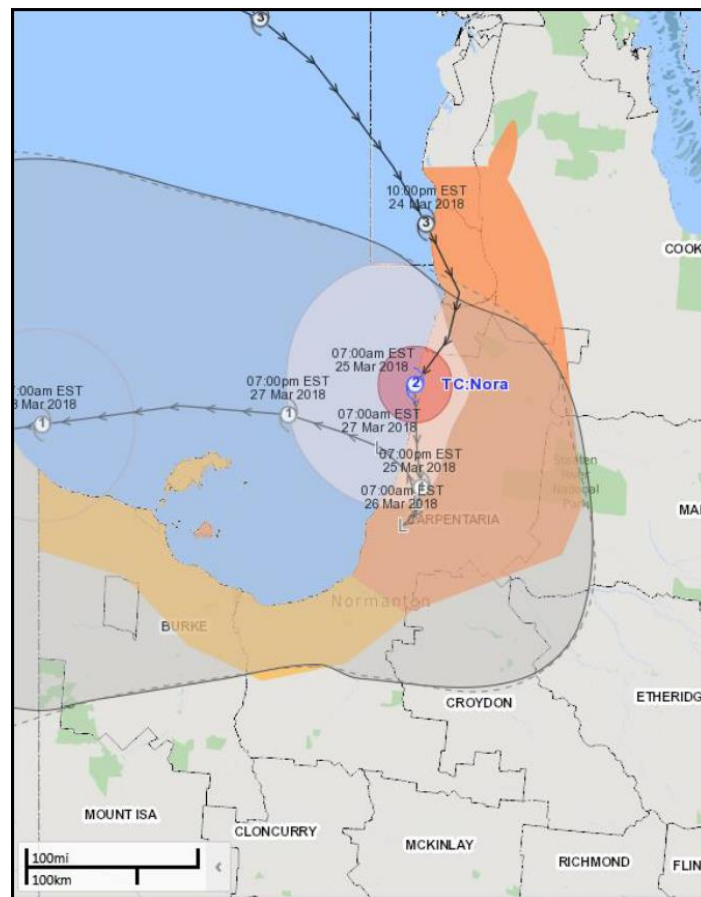
Cairns Airport recorded 229mm of rain between 09:00 hours Sunday, 25 March 2018 and 05:00 hours Monday 26 March 2018. Black Mountain, south of Daintree, recorded 361mm of rain during the same period and Port Douglas recorded 593mm of rain in 24 hours from 09:00 hours Sunday, 25 March 2018 to 09:00 hours Monday, 26 March 2018.

The SDCC moved to Stand Up in response to Severe Tropical Cyclone Nora at 18:00 hours Saturday, 24 March 2018 and moved to Stand Down on Friday, 6 April 2018.

During the event, Watch Desk staff continued to provide standard daily reports to stakeholders, supplemented by twice daily Community Impact Statements, developed through the consolidation of information submitted by government and non-government agencies involved in the response and recovery efforts for Tropical Cyclone Nora.

Ten EA campaigns were issued by the Watch Desk during the SDCC activation period. Eight campaigns were issued for residents in Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama, Karumba, Aurukun, Mapoon, Napranum and Weipa, one for the Cairns area and one for Ingham and Halifax.

The Watch Desk received more 400 requests for SES assistance via TAMS between Saturday, 24 March and Thursday, 29 March 2018. The requests included sandbags, tarpaulins and flood boat rescue or transport.



Track Map TC Nora - TOM Operational Mapping System

## Tropical Cyclone Iris – 2 April 2018

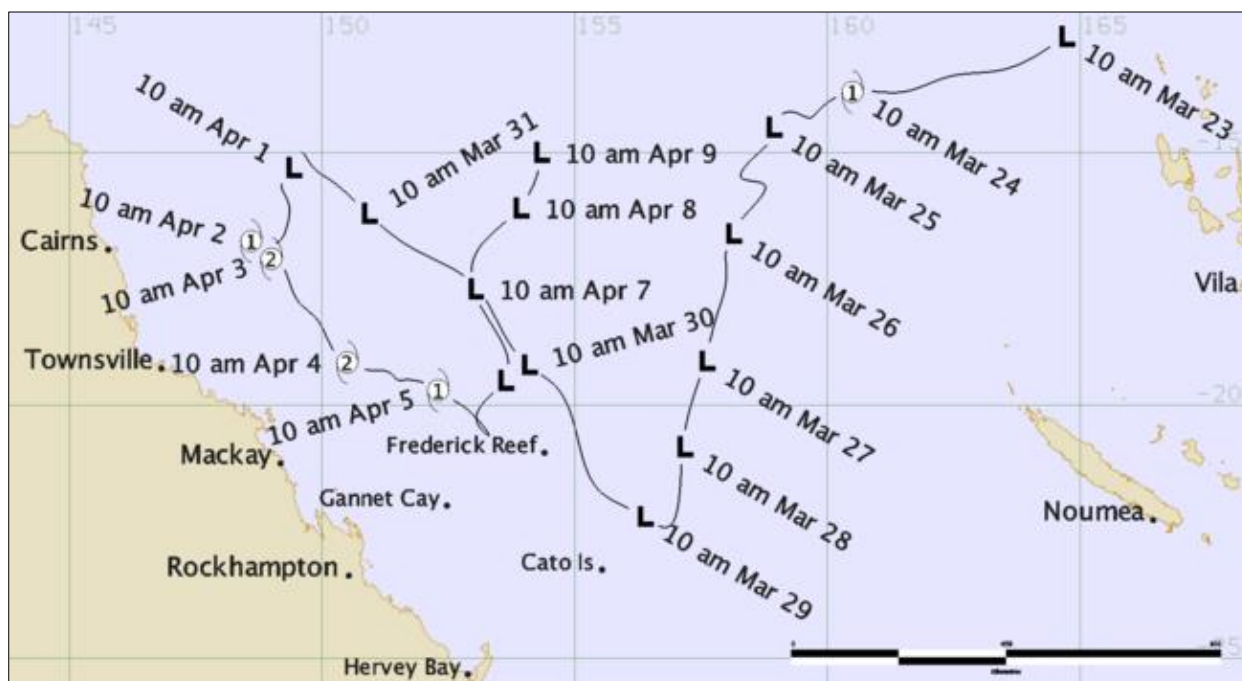
During the period of SDCC activation for Tropical Cyclone Nora, Watch Desk Staff were also monitoring a tropical disturbance that developed into Tropical Cyclone Iris. The disturbance was first identified over the eastern Solomon Islands on Tuesday, 20 March 2018 and was named Iris by the Fiji Meteorological Service on Saturday, 24 March 2018. Within 24 hours however, the system had weakened below tropical cyclone strength.



A severe weather warning was issued on Sunday, 1 April 2018 for the Central Coast and Whitsundays, Herbert and Lower Burdekin and North Tropical Coast and Tablelands Forecast Districts as the remains of the system moved into the Australian area of responsibility, and on Monday, 2 April 2018, the system redeveloped into a tropical cyclone.

Tropical Cyclone Iris reached Category 2 strength, making its closest approach to the Queensland Coast north of Hamilton Island, where wind gusts of up to 106 km/h were recorded. The system once again weakened below tropical cyclone intensity on Friday, 6 April 2018.

The Watch Desk received more than 100 requests for SES assistance between Sunday, 1 and Friday, 6 April 2018. Most requests were for Mackay and the Whitsundays, predominantly for sandbags.



Track Map for Tropical Cyclone Iris \* Courtesy BoM

## Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

Responding to natural disasters, including the provision of relief and recovery assistance to disaster affected communities, is primarily the responsibility of state and territory governments. However, in recognition of the significant cost of natural disasters, the Australian Government established the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) to alleviate the financial burden on the states and to facilitate the early provision of assistance to disaster affected communities.

Through the NDRRA, the Australian Government provides financial assistance directly to the states to assist them with costs associated with certain disaster relief and recovery assistance measures.

Queensland<sup>1</sup> severe weather events during the 12 month period, resulted in six activations of the NDRRA for the state.

<sup>1</sup> [Queensland Reconstruction Authority](#)

## **Supplementary Events**

### **Canada Bush Fires – July 2017**

A series of widespread thunderstorms between 6 July and 8 July 2017 contributed to over 190 new wildfire starts in British Columbia. Many of the wildfires grew rapidly and displayed aggressive, dangerous fire behaviour, prompting Evacuation Orders and Alerts for thousands of residents. A Provincial State of Emergency was declared on 7 July 2017 and was not rescinded until 15 September 2017.

On 13 July 2017, the Australian Government received a request from Canada, for Australian support to British Columbia. Nine QFES personnel formed part of a larger 53 person Australian Contingent who were deployed to the area to perform roles including Air Operations Manager, Fire Behaviour Analyst, Air Attack Supervisor and Level 3 Operations Officer.

One QFES representative was also deployed to Melbourne as Duty Officer for the National Resource Sharing Centre.

The SOC remained Activated for the duration of the deployment, while SDCC staff monitored the situation, ensuring relevant information was reported to stakeholders as necessary.

### **Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games - 4 to 15 April 2018**

The 2018 Commonwealth Games, which ran from 4 to 15 April 2018, involved more than 6600 athletes and team officials from 71 Commonwealth nations and territories. Events were held in Gold Coast, Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville.

In preparation for the event, SDCC Watch Desk staff liaised with Commonwealth Games officials and Queensland Police Service personnel and developed predetermined EA polygons covering event venues.

During the Commonwealth Games, Watch Desk staff monitored the weather situation and familiarised themselves with the pre-prepared EA campaigns, testing them on a regular basis throughout the duration of the event.

### **Gayndah Earthquake – 28 April 2018**

On Saturday, 28 April 2018, a Magnitude 3 Earthquake occurred 21km north west of Gayndah. Watch Desk staff liaised with local QFES personnel and monitored the situation and while Geoscience Australia received 'Felt' reports, no damage was reported.

### **Resupply Operations – March and April 2018**

Heavy rainfall from Tropical Cyclone Nora resulted in flooding and the isolation of several communities in north Queensland. Multiple resupply operations were conducted by SES and local councils throughout the event, but the isolation of Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama required an aerial resupply of perishable foodstuffs and essential items.

Watch Desk staff liaised with regional QPS and QFES staff and obtained the necessary authorisation for the resupply, in line with the Queensland Resupply Manual. Due to aircraft availability and the capacity to get essential goods into the towns, the resupply activities were conducted over two separate days. The initial resupply was delivered Saturday, 31 March 2018, with the balance of items flown in to the towns the following day.

## **The End**