

BACKGROUND (SUMMARY OF FACTS)

On the evening of Thursday, 26 October 2023, the North Burnett region was met with fast moving dry lightning storms which started multiple fires across the region.

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES) were the lead agency for fire response which included the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES).

The Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) moved to ‘Stand Up’ at 4.30pm on Friday, 27 October 2023. This was to ensure all LDMG agencies were ready and prepared to aid QFES, if and when required.

Overall, there were 11 major fires across the region which burnt a significant amount of rural farming land. There was one injury, however, there was no loss of life or houses.

The LDMG Recovery Group was activated to support our agricultural community as they recover from the bushfires. This included relevant state departments and service providers.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

What were the impacts	What was saved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35,439 hectares burnt • Loss of livestock (approx. 56) • Short power interruptions / replace 1 pole • Loss of feed for livestock • Orchard’s – perished trees • Loss of Fencing (267 km) • Burnt sheds, machinery & equipment • Minor road closures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No loss of life • Critical infrastructure: power, phone & internet • Landowner houses • Community assets • Roads & Transport

HIGH PRIORITY RECOVERY AREAS

Recovery area	Response	Lead Agency(s) Government	Support Agency(s)/Groups
Human & Social	Community is provided with psychosocial support services.	QH DoC	DAF RFC Rural Aid
Economic, Human & Social	Agricultural industry, if eligible, have access to financial support, grants, and loans.	DAF DoC	RFC QRIDA NBCS LiveBetter
Economic	Agricultural industry have access to fodder and water.	DAF	Rural Aid QRA RFC
Environment	Biosecurity is managed as part of fodder and hay distribution	DAF	NBRC Rural Aid
Environment	Safe disposal of carcasses	DAF DES	NBRC
Infrastructure	Support agricultural industry to rebuild fences e.g. boundary fences	DAF	Rural Aid BlazeAid
Human & Social	Community education – bushfire preparedness	QFES QRA NBRC	All service providers and agencies

KEY RECOVERY OUTCOMES AND TIMEFRAMES

Recovery timeframes	Priority	Short term (1-3 months)	Medium/long term (6 – 12 months)	Ongoing
	Human and social	1, 2, 4		8
	Economic		2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9
	Environment		3, 5, 7	
	Infrastructure	No major impact to critical infrastructure		

Recovery objectives	1	The community is aware of and has access to immediate physical and psychosocial support services during the recovery program.
	2	Agricultural industry is able, if eligible, to access financial support, grants, and loans to restore/rebuild infrastructure.
	3	Agricultural industry is able to access fodder and water.
	4	Preparedness messaging shared with community on being bushfire ready in both electronic and physical formats.
	5	Agricultural industry is aware of and are able to humanely manage injured stock and safely dispose of carcasses.
	6	Agricultural industry is supported to rebuild fences including rural property boundary fences.
	7	Environment and biosecurity matters are managed effectively to prevent the spread of disease, pests, and weeds.
	8	Community resilience is enhanced through education and key messages on disaster preparedness and resilience.
	9	Empower agricultural industry to improve their resilience to natural disasters.

HIGH PRIORITY RECOVERY AREAS IN MORE DETAIL

#	Recovery area	Recovery	Action	Lead Agency	Priority	Recovery Objective
1.	Human & Social	Ensure recovery information is accessible and available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community has access to recovery and support material. Information is shared with agencies and recovery group. 	NBRC DAF	S	1
2.	Human, Social & economic	Identification of Landowners affected by fires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify landowners to assess impact and support level required. All agencies to actively promote and encourage completion of DAF Disaster Impact Survey. 	DAF NBRC	S	1,2
3.	Human & Social	Reduce risks to public health following the disaster e.g., smoke and fire retardants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm with QFES if fire retardants were used. Conduct community education via media channels around reducing smoke inhalation, fire retardant usage and cleaning rainwater tanks. 	QH NBRC	S	1
4.	Human & Social	Psychosocial support including financial stress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include information on recovery webpage for landholders, families, and communities to provide psychosocial supports to enable recovery. Provide information to support agencies on who can provide support and assistance in the region. 	QH DoC NBRC	S	1, 2
5.	Economic & Infrastructure	Undertake damage assessments of impacted properties and infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake damage assessments of bushfire affected properties (when safe to do so). 	QFES QRA DAF	S	2
6.	Economic	Activation of DFRA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage primary producers to complete DAF Disaster Impact Survey. This information is used by DAF to submit DFRA activation requests. 	DAF QRA	S	2
7.	Economic	Economic loss impact assessment for North Burnett Agricultural Industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAF to calculate economic loss for the region through the Disaster Impact Survey and if appropriate apply for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DFRA) for primary producers. 	DAF DILGP	S	2
8.	Economic	Quantify the number of livestock loss during the event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine number of livestock lost through DAF Disaster Impact Survey tool and investigate circumstances. 	DAF QPS	S	5
9.	Environment	Agricultural industry is aware of and are able to humanely manage injured stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance on safe management of injured stock via communication channels (e.g., website) 	DAF	S	5
10.	Environment	Agricultural industry is aware of and are able to safely dispose of carcasses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance on safe management of carcasses via communication channels (e.g., website) 	DES NBRC	S	5
11.	Economic	Agricultural industry has access to fodder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if a coordinated approach to donations for fodder is required. <p>Note: Initial coordination of supply of fodder to impacted landholders was via DAF, however, this is not a long-term arrangement. Consider a community group to provide intermediary support.</p>	DAF Rural Aid NBRC	S	3

#	Recovery area	Recovery	Action	Lead Agency	Priority	Recovery Objective
12.	Environment	Biosecurity issues of fodder being brought in – pests and weeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on biosecurity included on the NBRC Recovery webpage. Primary Producers to manage biosecurity as per their farm biosecurity practices and general biosecurity obligations. 	DAF NBRC	S/M	3, 7
13.	Economic	Agricultural industry is supported to rebuild fences e.g. rural property boundary fences and fences lost due to backburns/fire breaks to defend dwellings and property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine impact and extent of lost fencing. If required, investigate support options for rural landholders to rebuild fences. If required, seek community support to fund BlazeAid to visit the region. 	DAF NBRC	M/L	6
14.	Human & Social	Preparedness messaging shared with community on being bush fire ready in both electronic and physical form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community messaging via media channels including website and as part of the yearly Get Ready Queensland campaign. Provide access to physical material at frequently visited locations (e.g. Libraries) and mailout through the Rural Fire Service (RFS) community education program. 	NBRC RFS	S and ongoing	4, 8
15.	Environment	Review fire management plans and fire mitigation mapping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop NBRC Bushfire hazard management strategy for Council and Community assets. 	NBRC	Ongoing	8,9
16.	Human, Social & economic	Agricultural Industry is empowered to improve their resilience to natural disasters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out disaster proof your business campaign and program across the North Burnett including messaging via media channels. 	NBRC	Ongoing	9

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Business	Means a person, partnership or organisation which is not a community organisation and is engaged in a profit-seeking enterprise or activity.
Community purpose	Means a purpose that is in the public interest to residents of the North Burnett region.
Council	Means the North Burnett Regional Council
Culture	Culture considers the impact that local disaster events have on our Aboriginal communities, the unique needs and attributes of individuals, families, communities, and businesses as the traditional owners in our region.
Economic	The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts an event may have on business, industry, primary producers, and the broader economy.
Environment	The natural environment considers the impact an event may have on a healthy and functioning environment, which underpins the economy and society. It includes air and water quality, land degradation and contamination, plant and wildlife damage and loss, and national parks, cultural and heritage sites. Recovery initiatives may address specific elements of one recovery environment or operate across multiple environments.
DAF	Means the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
DES	Means the Department of Environment and Science
DFRA	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
DSDILGP	Means the State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
DoC	Means the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts
Human & Social	The social environment considers the impact an event may have on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities. This environment is primarily concerned with safety, security and shelter, health, and psychosocial wellbeing.
Infrastructure	The built environment considers the impacts an event may have on essential physical infrastructure, including essential services, commercial and industrial facilities, public buildings, assets, and housing.
North Burnett region	Means the North Burnett Regional Council Local Government Area.
NBCS	Means the North Burnett Community Services
Public interest	The matter needs to affect more than a private or personal interest, it needs to affect a significant part of the public community.
QRA	Means Queensland Reconstruction Authority
QH	Means Queensland Health
RFCS	Means Rural Financial Counselling Service Southern Queensland
RFS	Rural Fire Service