

DOUGLAS RECOVERY RESILIENCE SUB PLAN

2026 | This plan is to be read in conjunction with the Douglas Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP)

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

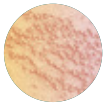
DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT

Disaster Management is everybody's business

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Sub-Plan (DRRSP) features a colour palette inspired by photography that showcases the natural beauty of the region paired with thoughtfully selected textural elements that represent the overarching recovery and resilience theme of the Plan.



The Fan Palm *(Licuala ramsayi)* is a powerful symbol of resilience and recovery. Thriving in monsoonal conditions, weathering cyclones and seasonal floods with graceful strength, the Fan Palm mirrors the enduring spirit of the region—regenerating, adapting, and growing stronger through each challenge faced.



Human and Social: Sand Bubbler Crab pellets found on the sand at Cape Tribulation, an area community often visit to connect with family and friends.



Economic: Coral gardens found in Agincourt Reefs, selected for its tourism link to the largest economic industry in the region—Accommodation and Food services.



Environment: Aerial of Daintree Rainforest, a key environmental ecosystem and natural feature of the Douglas Shire Council area.



Buildings and Infrastructure: Bark of the Red Tulip Oak (Argyrodendron peralatum), a tree found in the Daintree Rainforest and historically used as a building material.



Water and Wastewater: Waves on a beach at Cape Tribulation, depicting the flow and movement of water.



Roads and Transport: Stones on a beach along Captain Cook Highway, their texture mirroring the texture of and materials used in roads.

© Douglas Shire Council, 2026.

Copyright

Douglas Shire Council supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licenced under a ***Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Australia (CC BY) licence.***

Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms. You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

For more information on this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared with all due diligence and care, based on the best available information at the time of publication. Douglas Shire Council holds no responsibility for any errors or omissions within this document. Any decisions made by other parties based on this document are solely the responsibility of those parties. Information contained in this document is from a number of sources and, as such, does not necessarily represent Douglas Shire Council policy.

Interpreting services

Douglas Shire Council is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. If you require a translator, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to call Douglas Shire Council on 07 4099 9444 or 1800 026 318.

Acknowledgment of Country

Douglas Shire Council acknowledges the traditional Country of the Eastern Kuku Yalanjiwarra Bama people and the Djabugay Nation People of the coastal areas and rainforest of the Douglas Shire.

We recognise that these have always been and continue to be places of cultural and spiritual significance.

We acknowledge and cherish the important contribution made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the Douglas Shire community, and pay respects to their Elders – past, present and emerging.



Artwork: *Heart of the Town* by artist Burrumunji (Lalania Tusa)



Foreword

The impacts of significant events are felt across entire communities affecting people, businesses, infrastructure and the social fabric that connects us. Recovery is rarely a linear process and requires collective effort, strong partnerships and a shared commitment to rebuilding and strengthening our communities.

Community led recovery places local people, knowledge and priorities at the centre of recovery and resilience efforts. It recognises that lasting outcomes are achieved when communities are empowered to lead, participate and shape their own capacity to prepare for, withstand and respond to future events.

Community members, businesses, community organisations and government agencies have continued to invest their time and knowledge into the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG). These collective contributions have helped establish a collaborative approach to recovery that is informed by local experience, community priorities and shared responsibility.

The relationships and partnerships developed through the DRRG have become an important foundation for Douglas Shire. As communities navigate increasing disaster risk and climate uncertainty, these networks provide a strong platform to continue working together, strengthen connections across sectors, improve coordination and support initiatives that build community capacity before, during and after disasters. As the network evolves, new voices, perspectives and partners will continue to play an important role in ensuring community needs and aspiration remain at the forefront.

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Sub Plan continues to support a shared approach to recovery and resilience, recognising the collective efforts that have shaped the journey to date and acknowledging that resilience grows over time through collaboration, participation and a willingness to learn from experience.



Annette Plowman

Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator
Chair, Douglas Recovery Resilience Group

The impacts from severe weather events can be devastating to individuals and communities, and recovery, a steep mountain to climb for many.

Since the Douglas Recovery and Resilience Sub Plan was developed, Council, emergency services, government agencies, community organisations, businesses, and residents, have worked together with a shared purpose – to recover stronger and become better prepared for the future.

The weather events associated with Tropical Low 29U and Ex-Tropical Cyclone Narelle demonstrated just how far Douglas Shire has progressed. While these events again brought heavy rainfall, flooding, and disruption, they also provided an opportunity to put into practice many of the lessons learned.

Communities were better informed, response arrangements were more streamlined, and recovery planning commenced earlier, reflecting a growing culture of preparedness rather than reaction.

The Douglas Recovery and Resilience Sub Plan reflects that commitment. It recognises recovery as an ongoing journey and provides a framework that supports not only effective disaster recovery, but the continual strengthening of our community's capacity to prepare for, withstand and recover from future events.

Together, we continue to build a safer, stronger, and more resilient Douglas Shire.



Sara Roberts

Deputy Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator
Deputy Chair, Douglas Recovery Resilience Group



Contents

Acknowledgment of Country 3
Foreword 5
Acronyms 7
Definitions 8
Alignment 10
Working towards our vision and mission 10
Legislation 10
Doctrine 10
Introduction 12
A shared vision for a stronger, safer and more resilient Douglas Shire 12
Foundations of recovery and resilience 12
Disaster recovery principles 16
Disaster resilience principles 17
Recovery stages 20
Response, relief and recovery 20
Stage 1: immediate recovery 21
Stage 2: short to mediumterm recovery 21
Stage 3: medium to long term recovery 21
Disaster recovery journey 22
Recovery and resilience arrangements 23
Locally led 23
Local recovery and Resilience 27
Human and Social Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 30
Economic Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 32
Environment Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 34
Buildings and Infrastructure Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 36
Water and Wastewater Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 38
Roads and Transport (provisional) Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group 40
Activation levels in response and recovery 42
Communications 44
Event-specific Local Recovery Plan 45
Sustainability 46
Funding arrangements 47
Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) 47
State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA) 47
Betterment 47
Appendices 48
Appendix A – DRRG Terms of Reference 48
Appendix B – Reporting templates (FRRG templates) 62
Appendix C – Plan templates 70

Acronyms

BCP	Business Continuity Planning
DCSODSFB	Department of Customer Services, Open Data and Small and Family Business
DRFA	Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements
DRRG	Douglas Recovery Resilience Group
DRRSP	Douglas Recovery Resilience Sub-Plan
FRRG	Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups
LDC	Local Disaster Coordinator
LDCC	Local Disaster Coordination Centre
LDMG	Local Disaster Management Group
LDMP	Local Disaster Management Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LRRAP	Local Recovery Resilience Action Plan
LRRC	Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator
LRP	Local Recovery Plan
PHAS	Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme
PPRR	Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery
QDMA	Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
RFS	Rural Fire Service
SES	State Emergency Service
SDRA	State Disaster Relief Arrangements
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation



Definitions

Community	A group of people with a commonality of association and generally defined by location, shared experiences, culture or function.
Disaster	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic, and environmental losses and impacts. The effect of the disaster can be immediate and localised but is often widespread and could last for a long period of time. The effect may test or exceed the capacity of a community or society to cope using its own resources, and therefore may require assistance from external sources, which could include neighbouring jurisdictions, or those at the national or international levels.
Event	An event may be natural or caused by human acts or omissions, which could include: • A cyclone, earthquake, flood, storm, storm tide, tornado, tsunami, volcanic eruption or other natural happening. • An explosion or fire, a chemical, fuel or oil spill, or a gas leak. • An infestation, plague or biosecurity hazard. • A failure or, or disruption to, an essential service or infrastructure. • An attack against the community.
Hazard	A source of potential harm, or a situation with a potential to cause loss, illness, or injury.
Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC)	A Council officer appointed under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* responsible for coordinating disaster operations for the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG).
Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC)	A dedicated physical or virtual space where a Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) coordinates efforts to manage a disaster event.
Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG)	The group responsible for implementing the requirements of local government with respect to development and implementation of disaster management arrangements for the Local Government Area (LGA).
Local Recovery Resilience Group (LRRG)	A sub-group of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) responsible for developing and implementing recovery and resilience arrangements for the Local Government Area (LGA). In the case of Douglas Shire Council this is Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG).
Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator (LRRC)	A Council officer appointed by the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), responsible for the development and implementation of recovery and resilience arrangements for the Local Government Area (LGA), in conjunction with the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG).
Preparedness	The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters.
Prevention	Activities and measures to avoid existing and new disaster risks. While certain disaster risks cannot be eliminated, prevention aims at reducing vulnerability and exposure in such contexts where, as a result, the risk of disaster is removed.
Recovery	The coordinated process of supporting disaster-affected communities' psychosocial (emotional and social), physical well-being, reconstruction of physical infrastructure, and economic and environmental restoration.

Resilience	A system or community's ability to rapidly accommodate and recover from the impacts of hazards, restore essential structures and desired functionality, and adapt to new circumstances.
Response	Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected. Disaster response is predominantly focused on immediate and short-term needs and is sometimes called disaster relief.
Risk	The chance of something happening that may have an impact on the safety and wellbeing of the community. It includes risk as an opportunity as well as a threat and is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood
Vulnerability	The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards.
QDMA	Queensland's disaster management arrangements are guided by the Queensland State Disaster Management Plan, focusing on Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (PPRR) across local, district, and state levels.



Alignment

Working towards our vision and mission

Working together to enhance our environment, lifestyle, culture and community, and achieving the best outcomes to shape tomorrow by working effectively today.

The *Douglas Recovery Resilience Sub-Plan* (DRRSP) is aligned with the *Douglas Shire Council Operational Plan*, which works towards achieving the commitments set out in the *Douglas Shire Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.

Read more about Council's *Operational and Corporate Plan* online at douglas.qld.gov.au/council-information/annual-budget/

Legislation

Queensland's recovery activities are undertaken in accordance with the *Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003* (DM Act), Disaster Management Regulation 2014 (the Regulation) and the *Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011* (QRA Act).

The *Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011* was recently amended in 2019 and in 2024 to reflect Queensland Reconstruction Authority's (QRA) roles and responsibilities for all hazards and to lead resilience and recovery policy. The fresh inclusion of resilience is a significant milestone, acknowledging the importance of awareness of and preparation for disaster, building back better, and prioritising wellbeing for impacted communities.

Doctrine

The Plan has been informed by relevant doctrine, including:

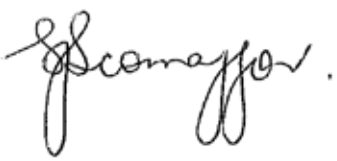
- Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection—Community Recovery
- Cairns District Disaster Management Plan
- Coastal Management Plan
- Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018
- Disaster Risk Reduction (NEMA)
  - National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework
  - National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
  - First National Action Plan
  - Second National Action Plan
- Emergency Management Assurance Framework (IGEM)
- Queensland Interim State Disaster Management Plan 2024-25
- Queensland Disaster Relief and Recovery Guidelines 2018
- Queensland Interim Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline 2024-2025
- Queensland Recovery Plan: Sub-plan to the Queensland State Disaster Management Plan
- Queensland State Resilience and Recovery Plan 2023-24
- Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2022-2027
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
- Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998
- Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020-2030

Endorsement and authority

The Plan is a sub-plan of the Douglas Local Disaster Management Plan and is subject to the same administrative and governance provisions, in accordance with sections 30, 57 and 58 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (DM Act).

The Douglas Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) has endorsed the Plan.

The Plan has been reviewed and accepted by:



Lisa Scomazzon
Chair, Douglas Local Disaster Management Group

October 2026



Annette Plowman
Chair, Douglas Local Recovery and Resilience Group

October 2026



Introduction

A shared vision for a stronger, safer and more resilient Douglas Shire

The aim of the Plan is to detail recovery arrangements in place to support our residents, visitors, businesses, built and natural environments impacted by disaster. These arrangements need to be flexible, adaptable and scalable to meet the evolving needs of communities following an event.

In line with the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA), locally led recovery principles are centric to the successful planning and execution of recovery and resilience activities, acknowledging escalation pathways via district, state and federal government agencies when local capacity is exhausted.

Douglas Shire Council (Council) is committed to ensuring that Douglas Shire communities have a resilient future, and that it approaches recovery from an empathic and inclusive methodology in partnership with the community, external organisations and agencies. The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG), and six Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups (FRRGs), will lead recovery and resilience activities for Council. Seasoned and robust local preparedness, monitoring and early warning systems, and community-led response efforts enhance safety and resilience across Douglas Shire.

Foundations of recovery and resilience

Vibrant and diverse communities

The Douglas area spans 2,445 km^2 bordering Cook Shire Council and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council to the north, Mareeba Shire Council to the west and north, Cairns Regional Council to the south and the Coral Sea.

Home to more than 13,000 residents, the region is concentrated around two main population centres; Port Douglas, the region's tourism gateway and Mossman, the administrative, health, industrial and agricultural hub. Scattered along the coastline are smaller beachside communities including Wonga Beach, Newell Beach and Cooya Beach, while the lush rainforest valleys of the hinterland are home to several smaller, decentralised communities. The region has been home to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for millennia.

Strong social connections, natural beauty and a rich cultural history form the fabric of communities across our shire. Douglas celebrates one of Australia's most unique environments, where two United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage-listed environments meet: the Great Barrier Reef and the Daintree Rainforest. These unique environments support a thriving tourism sector welcoming over 420,000 overnight visitors and more than 260,000 day visitors each year. Tourism is the largest source of employment in the Douglas Shire, making up around 80% of Douglas Shire's $900million Gross Regional Product (GRP), which is roughly 20% of the region's tourism economy.

Communities across the Douglas Shire each possess unique characteristics, strengths and disaster risk profiles. Understanding these community-specific capabilities, resources and vulnerabilities helps inform effective recovery planning and strategic resilience building. This knowledge also guides the development of Event Specific Local Recovery Plans, developed collaboratively by Council and QRA following an event. Council's *Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP)* incorporates details on the influences of geography and landscape, settlement pattern and access, and demography.

Douglas Shire's critical infrastructure is detailed in the LDMP, Section 5.


WUJAL WUJAL
ABORIGINAL SHIRE
COUNCIL AREA
COOK SHIRE
COUNCIL AREA
Degarra
China Camp
Cape Tribulation
Thorton Beach
DOUGLAS SHIRE
COUNCIL AREA
Diwan
Cow Bay
Daintree
Village
Daintree
River Ferry
Crossing
Wonga Beach
Whyanbeel
Rocky Point
Newell Beach
Miallo
MAREEBA SHIRE
COUNCIL AREA
Mossman
Mossman Gorge
Cooya Beach
Port Douglas
Cassowary
Killaloe
Shannonvale
Craiglie
Mowbray
Oak Beach
CAIRNS REGIONAL
COUNCIL AREA

Bloomfield, Degarra and China Camp
Population: 300 (approx)

At the north-eastern fringe of Douglas Shire, these communities have strong social cohesion and are well versed in preparing for and recovering from disasters –with a heightened risk profile of flooding due to their proximity to the Bloomfield River and Woobadda Creek and their tributaries.

Residents are particularly vulnerable to isolation due to landslips and fallen trees impacting road access. Road access from the south is by the Cape Tribulation Bloomfield Road which is frequently impacted during wet season. It is not suitable for heavy vehicles and is mostly unsealed with several creek crossings without causeways.

Cooktown (in the Cook Shire), approximately 60km north, becomes a centre of support when the Bloomfield Track and ferry services are impacted isolating communities from resources south of Daintree River including medical services, fuel, supermarkets and accommodation providers.

Telephone and data connectivity can be intermittent, with many residents hosting satellite systems.

With limited reticulated power north of the Daintree River, many residents live off-grid relying on solar power and battery storage.

Cow Bay Primary Health Centre, opened in 2025, is the closest health service, with residents also accessing critical services in neighbouring Local Government Areas (LGA) to the north, or in Mossman to the south.

Cape Tribulation to Cape Kimberley
Population: 150 (approx)

This chain of small communities hugs the north-eastern coastline of Douglas Shire and has strong connections to their landscape, many serving as stewards for protecting their pristine natural surrounds. Being coastal, high winds, cyclones, monsoonal rainfall, flooding and landslips are the most significant risks to these communities.

These communities are centered around two general stores, the Alexandra Bay Primary School and a significant number of tourist operators and accommodation providers offering camping facilities, lodges, bed and breakfast and eco-retreats.

Limited infrastructure and off-grid living forces residents to be self-reliant in times of extreme weather events, which they are well versed in. While fuel is available in neighbouring towns, it isn't available locally which can be problematic for seasonal travellers passing through the Cape each year. The Daintree Ferry Service connects residents north of the Daintree River to the South but is inoperable in times of flood and extreme weather.

Daintree Village
Population: 100 (approx)

Nestled between the Daintree River and Daintree Valley, this village is rich in history and social connection. This community is frequently impacted by flooding due to monsoonal rains, cyclone activity and severe storms.

Frequently isolated due to road closures, particularly to the south via the Mossman Daintree Road which gets cut by flooding at Barratt Creek, poor connectivity and power outages are also common challenges for residents of the village and surrounds.

The village boasts a state school, community hall, general store incorporating a post office, hotel, and cafes attracting tourists. Crocodile tours operate from the commercial jetty, and a variety of local accommodation options are available ranging from campgrounds to luxury resort villas.

Wonga Beach and Newell Beach
Population 1,300 (approx)

Located in the central east of the shire, residents enjoy a relaxed coastal lifestyle participating in fresh water and saltwater activities accessibly by public jetty at Newell Beach. Flanked by the Daintree River floodplains and low-lying shores of Trinity Bay, flash-flooding from the hills is frequent and can be rapid with minimal warning but rarely forces the closure of local all-weather roads.

Family ties and a sense of local pride unites these communities, enhancing their disaster planning and recovery activities. Wonga Beach is the larger of the two suburbs with a state school, State Emergency Service (SES), Rural Fire Service (RFS) centre and fuel.

Mossman Gorge
Population: 180 (approx)

Mossman Gorge is situated 75 kilometres north of Cairns and 4 kilometres from Mossman Township in Far North Queensland, adjacent to the Daintree National Park. The area is a notable tourist destination, attracting approximately 600,000 visitors annually. The Mossman Gorge community has an estimated permanent population of 180, although this may increase significantly at cultural gatherings such as funerals and weddings. The residents are predominantly from the Eastern Yalanji people (Bama) Clan and Kuku-Yalanji (speakers of Yalanji language)*, whose traditional lands spread to the Wujal Wujal community and the township of Mossman. The community is located on land comprised of an Aboriginal reserve of 27 hectares and a freehold lot of 3,887 hectares within the Douglas Shire Council area. The community is in one of the wettest climates in Australia with a total annual rainfall of over six metres. Maximum temperatures through the wet season range from 27°c to 33°c. There are several dialects of the Yalanji language spoken in the community*.

*Stw: *Family Responsibilities Commission Community Engagement Guidelines.*

Mossman and Cooya Beach
Population: 5,400 (approx)

Mossman celebrates many generational families and is the centre of Douglas Shire maintaining a public library, pool, community hall, hospital and showgrounds. These assets are predominantly attended by the families enrolled in the three local schools.

Council's administration offices, disaster recovery building, infrastructure works depot and nursery are located in Mossman.

Mossman is gateway to the Mossman Gorge and the Daintree Coast from the Captain Cook Highway to the south or via the inland Mossman-Mount Molloy Road. Fuel and grocery options, as well as cafes, hotel, motel and camping accommodation are available.

Agricultural and commercial interests in and around Mossman contribute significant plant assets that can be useful in relief and recovery activities. Police and Ambulance Services are based in Mossman, as well as the Mossman Multi-Purpose Health Service, General Practitioners, pathology and pharmacies, and Apunipima Mossman George Primary Health Care Centre.

The Mossman and South Mossman rivers, accessible via Council boat ramp in Cooya, are a prominent landscape feature and are the source of flood risk which can cut access to Cooya Beach surrounds.

While low-lying areas of Cooya Beach experience inundation, growth continues with the development of many new dwellings using flood resilience design and materials. Storm surge is also a risk for many areas of this tight knit community.

Port Douglas, Craiglie, Oak Beach, and Wangetti
Population: 5,800 (approx)

These communities are the southern entrance to Douglas Shire, attracting new residents and over 700,000 tourists each year. The renowned tourist centre of Port Douglas is at significant risk of cyclone and coastal hazards and has a purpose-built Storm Tide Cyclone Shelter.

Southern access to Port Douglas is via Captain Cook Highway is vulnerable to landslips following cyclones and heavy rainfall resulting in road closures.

As the second largest centre in Douglas Shire, Port Douglas has a number of key assets including a state school, medical centre, public library and sports complex. The Port Douglas Marina, public pontoon, and private jetties are accessed commercially, for private recreation and by Marine Rescue and SES.

Residents and visitors have access to fuel, groceries and pharmacy supplies, and wide range of cafes, restaurants, accommodation options and resorts. A second Council service counter is located in Port Douglas library, and second depot in close proximity to Police and Fire and Rescue stations.

To the south of Port Douglas, coastal communities face increasing challenges related to coastal erosion, storm tide and permanent inundation. Despite these risks, the diverse cultural backgrounds and shared experiences of these communities foster strong social connections. These communities are known for their solidarity, coming together to support one another - especially in times of disaster.



Disaster recovery principles

Recovery begins once the immediate response to an event is underway. It aims to empower communities to restore or rebuild all aspects of their lives impacted by disaster to lead a life that is valued even if it is different to the life before an event. Recovery encompasses both tangible and intangible aspects of life including housing, infrastructure and services, as well as emotional and psychological wellbeing and the environments that surround people. The most effective recovery outcomes are achieved when communities are actively involved, with recovery informed and led by those impacted. The Plan details the collaborative, coordinated and adaptable framework for individuals, families, community groups, businesses and all levels of government to adopt in all stages of recovery.

Disasters are often complex and protracted, impacting people, infrastructure, and environments differently. As a result, individuals and communities impacted by the same disaster may experience varying needs at different times. Some individuals and communities may be ready to engage in recovery actions while others may still need response or relief support. This makes it difficult to define a linear transition from response to recovery. To address this, a strong functional relationship between the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) is imperative. This collaboration ensures the coordination of concurrent response and recovery activities, and a smooth and informed transition to ongoing recovery once the response phase ends.

The *Queensland Recovery Plan* identifies these nationally recognised recovery principles:

Understanding the context
Understanding community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics.

Recognising complexity
Responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.

Using local, community-led approaches
Community-centred, responsive, and flexible, engaging with the community and supporting them to move forward.

Ensuring coordination of all activities
A collaborative, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Employing effective communication
Built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.

Acknowledging and building capacity
Recognising, supporting, and building on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience to disaster events.

Recovery is not an isolated process, it is interconnected with resilience. Resilience is an integral part of the recovery journey to restoring everyday life and being prepared for future events.

Disaster resilience principles

Resilience is equally important for individuals, families, community groups, businesses and all levels of government. Resilience can be tangible and emotional, impacting built and natural environments and our health and wellbeing. Like the ups and downs of the recovery phases, resilience is often fluid and can vary in different situations.

Acknowledging the variable nature of resilience building, it is important for groups to determine their own priorities and action them accordingly. Council is continually working to increase resilience measures to keep our staff and residents safe. We have business continuity and disruption plans in place to enhance operational capacity in times of disaster, and we look to long-term measures such as infrastructure upgrades, planning parameters and nature-based mitigation solutions with long-term all-hazard resilience in mind. We have also turned our attention to partnering with community to foster collaboration and a sense for us all of belonging.

Identifying and implementing steps to build resilience is important. This effort is supported by our communities' frequent experiences with disasters, which also contributes to high levels of individual resilience.

> *"Addressing resilience priorities and recovery outcomes in one document shines the light on opportunities that emerge in the wake of disaster and leads to more effective use of disaster funding and resources"*
>
> – p9, Queensland State Recovery and Resilience Plan

Building resilience in recovery

Following a disaster, resilience is at the centre of our recovery actions. Social cohesion is a key feature of resilient communities who commonly demonstrate strong social capital. This is characterised by community spirit, trust, interconnectedness and rapport with Council and government agencies.

Recovery activities that encourage the building of social capital by involving the community in identifying their recovery priorities are, collectively preparing for future events by building their skills and knowledge and identifying what could be improved after an event to support resilience building.

Ensuring other pillars of capital are considered is critical to successful recovery planning and resilience building. These pillars can include:

- **Human capital:** wellbeing, education and local knowledge.
- **Physical capital:** houses, vehicles, infrastructure, communications.
- **Natural capital:** access to land, water, flora and fauna.
- **Financial capital:** access to income and credit, savings, and insurance.

Our intrinsic strengths

The greatest asset of Douglas Shire is our people. From Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and generational families to new residents, and those who travel here for work and recreation. Council is especially proud of its dedicated teams who serve communities each and every day and who play a vital role in responding to, recovering from and building resilience to disasters.

As a Council, our thinking has evolved and our internal disaster management capacity matured in all aspects of Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR). We have actively developed strong functional relationships with neighbouring local governments, district support services, and state government stakeholders. We have also invested in resources to improve our communication with individuals, families, communities, and businesses across Douglas Shire to bolster connectedness, promote preparedness, and support ongoing recovery and resilience activities.

Those who live, work and recreate in Douglas Shire are also passionate about the environment. Boasting diverse World Heritage listed natural wonders from the Daintree to the Great Barrier Reef, our region is rich in culture and natural biodiversity ranging from rainforest and wet sclerophyll woodlands to mangrove forests and wetlands, to vegetated sand dunes/ swale systems, reefs, foreshore areas, intertidal seagrass beds and estuarine creek and river systems. This includes critically endangered ecological communities of Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets, the iconic endangered Southern Cassowary *(Casuarius casuarius)*, the endangered Arboreal marsupial Bennett's Tree Kangaroo *(Dendrolagus bennettianus)*, and the endemic Daintree River Ringtail possum *(Pseudochirulus cinereus)*. The way we interact with these natural assets informs our livelihood and lifestyle and is at the heart of our recovery and resilience planning.

Geographically, Douglas Shire is vulnerable to severe weather events. In the past decade, we have experienced impacts from 12 significant disasters, in addition to several weather events in between. While the impacts have had devastating impacts for our people, infrastructure, and environments, our communities consistently band together to recover. Our communities find strength in their collective resilience.

Resilience to future disasters is a priority for Council, as demonstrated in the formation of the DRRG and functional sub-groups, as well as ongoing investment in internal systems, resourcing and training to enhance council's capacity to be leaders in long-term resilience building.

A decade of severe weather events in Douglas Shire

Figure: Timeline of events





Tropical Cyclone Tiffany
– 11 January 2022



Northern and Central Queensland Monsoon and Flooding
20 December 2022 – 30 April 2023



Northern and Central Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding
21 April – 12 May 2022



Tropical Cyclone Jasper, Associated Rainfall and Flooding
13 – 28 December 2023



North and Far North Tropical Low Pressure System
29 January – 28 February 2025



North Queensland monsoon trough, ex-Tropical Cyclone Koji and severe weather
9–10 January 2026



Tropical Low 29U and related flooding
2–8 March 2026



Tropical Cyclone Narelle
6–28 March 2026

2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026

Recovery stages

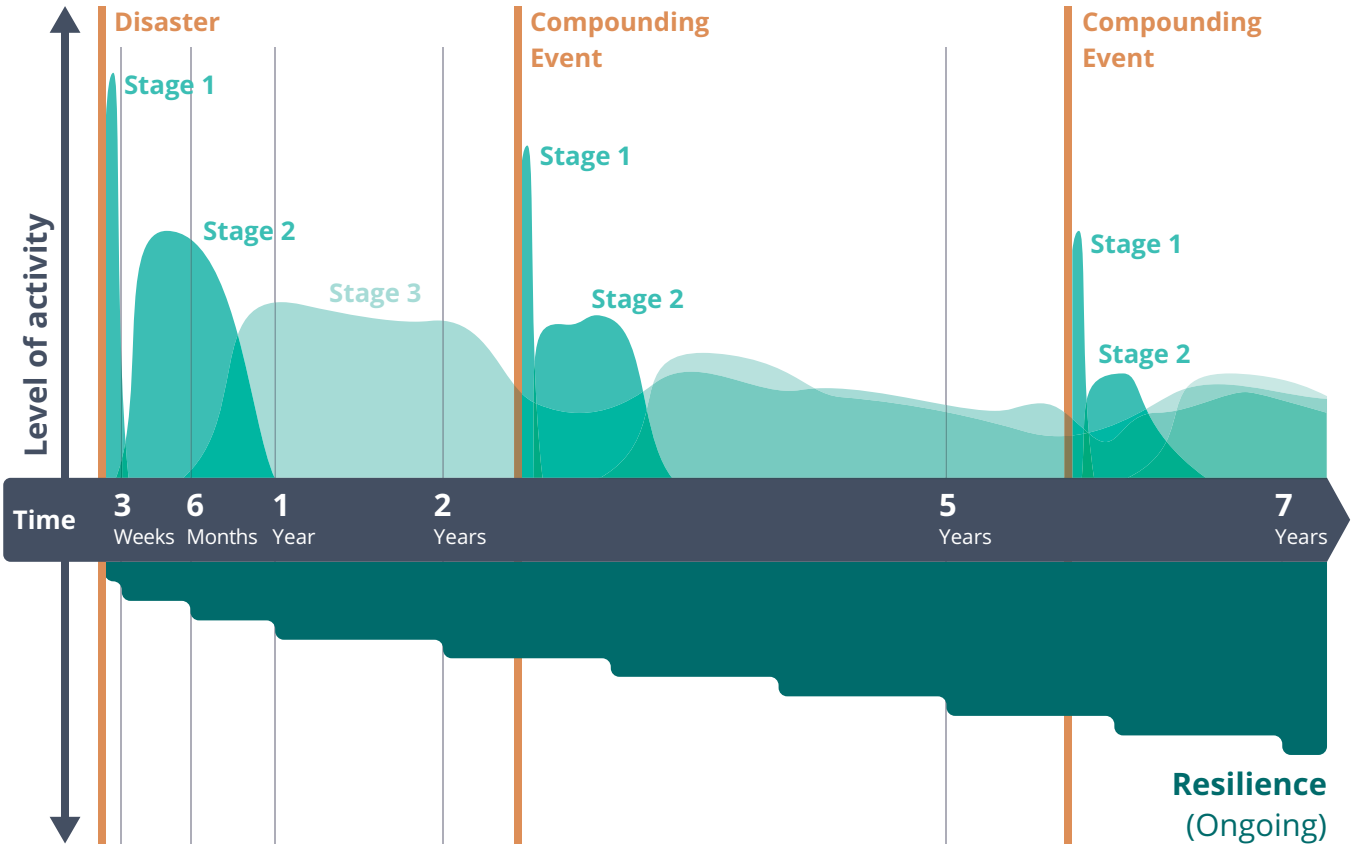
Response, relief and recovery

Recovery can be complex and often takes years. Recovery can be further complicated by compounding events, with many communities being impacted a second or third time by new events before they have fully recovered from a previous disaster.

While no two recovery journeys are the same, there are similarities in experience patterns that have been observed following significant disasters across Australia and the world which inform our expectations and planning.

Formal studies have demonstrated that most communities do recover from disasters without long-term specialised support. Many recover well and some may find meaning in the experience.

Figure: Disaster recovery time frames with compounding events



Adapted from Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection (Handbook 2: Community Recovery) by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, on behalf of the Australian Government.

Stage 1: immediate recovery

Post-impact relief and emergency repairs

Immediate recovery is often concurrent with ongoing response activities, as disasters can be protracted and impacts people, infrastructure, and environments differently.

This can be a busy and challenging time with many competing and emerging priorities, which can include:

- Undertaking impact and need assessments.
- Operation of shelters and places of refuge.
- Restoration of essential services and utilities.
- Road clearing and reopening.
- Distribution of emergency food, clothing, and medical support.
- Provision of psychological supports.
- Management of spontaneous volunteers and unsolicited donations.

Examples of resilience in the immediate recovery stage may look different for individuals, local services enacting BCP and council activating DRRG and FRRGs.

Stage 2: short to medium term recovery

Re-establishment, rehabilitation and reconstruction

Once response efforts have concluded, short to medium recovery involves more focused efforts on rebuilding infrastructure, the re-establishment of local services and businesses, and rehabilitation for people and the environment. The emotional, social and physical wellbeing of those impacted is important to enhance and expedite recovery and long-term resilience building.

Recovery activities at this time may include:

- Significant infrastructure repairs commence.
- Environmental restoration and biosecurity activities underway.
- Community wellbeing and connectedness activities prioritised.
- Recommencement of normal day-to-day activities such as education, employment and recreation including community events.
- Distribution of state government funding to support impacted people and businesses.
- Council advocacy for state and federal funding for long-term recovery needs.
- Consideration of anniversary events and formal memorials.

While this stage can feel slow in progress, looking back communities can often see a significant shift in their collective resilience.

Stage 3: medium to long term recovery

Restoration, rebuilding, reshaping and sustainability

It is important to acknowledge that recovery can take years, often 7-10 years. Medium term recovery is centred around rebuilding infrastructure and restoring a sense of normality and day-to-day social function, with long term recovery weaving recovery efforts into social structures to foster long-term resilience. Led by emerging and evolving community need, recovery activities can include:

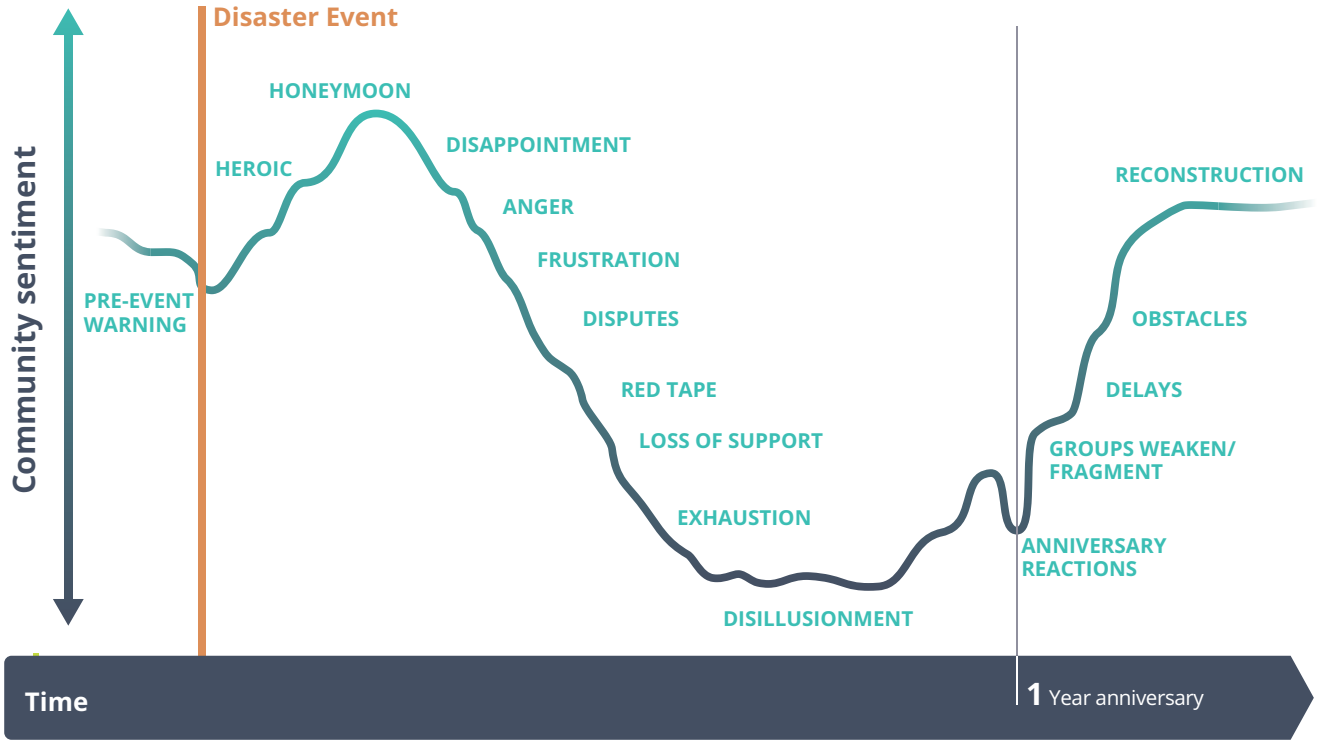
- Targeted community programming to foster connectedness and social capital.
- Long term support for affected community members.
- Realising environmental restoration and regeneration projects.
- Achieving progress with significant infrastructure works.
- Building back better to reduce future risks and increase resilience.
- Ongoing psychological needs and wellbeing.
- Enhancing the communities PPRR awareness and literacy.
- Working with community partners to design and implement recovery interventions to ensure they meet community needs.
- Withdrawal of formal recovery activities, replaced by organic community function.
- Renewed economic opportunities for business and households.
- Strengthening capacity of local government and local organisations to coordinate recovery efforts.

Long-term resilience looks at significant behavioural changes, which can include legal shifts in planning laws and building standards.

Disaster recovery journey

These recovery stages aren't lineal and can vary in timing and complexity for different people, infrastructure, and environments. This can also be complicated by cascading events including subsequent disasters, or personal changes in situation and trauma. Ongoing assessment of evolving community needs is vital across the recovery journey.

Figure: Disaster recovery journey



Adapted from Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection (Handbook 2: Community Recovery) by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, on behalf of the Australian Government.

Recovery and resilience arrangements

Locally led

Successful recovery and resilience building needs to be informed by those impacted. Community-led recovery builds on community resilience, intrinsic strengths and local knowledge, and can foster valuable relationships between people, businesses and governments supporting recovery.

In Queensland, the state government works with local councils to develop Regional Resilience Strategies that foster locally-led, regionally-coordinated and state-facilitated disaster resilience coordination, planning and delivery. This work is delivered as a commitment under the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Sendai Framework.

Within the Douglas Shire, we recognise that each community is different, which is why we adopt a place-based approach to recovery and resilience planning, and value working collaboratively to share knowledge, address local risks, and identify what matters most to our people. Empowering communities to develop their own recovery solutions is at the centre of Council's recovery model and ethos.

Disaster recovery and resilience in Queensland is undertaken in accordance with the *Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003* (DM Act). Section 4A (c,d) of the DM Act states:

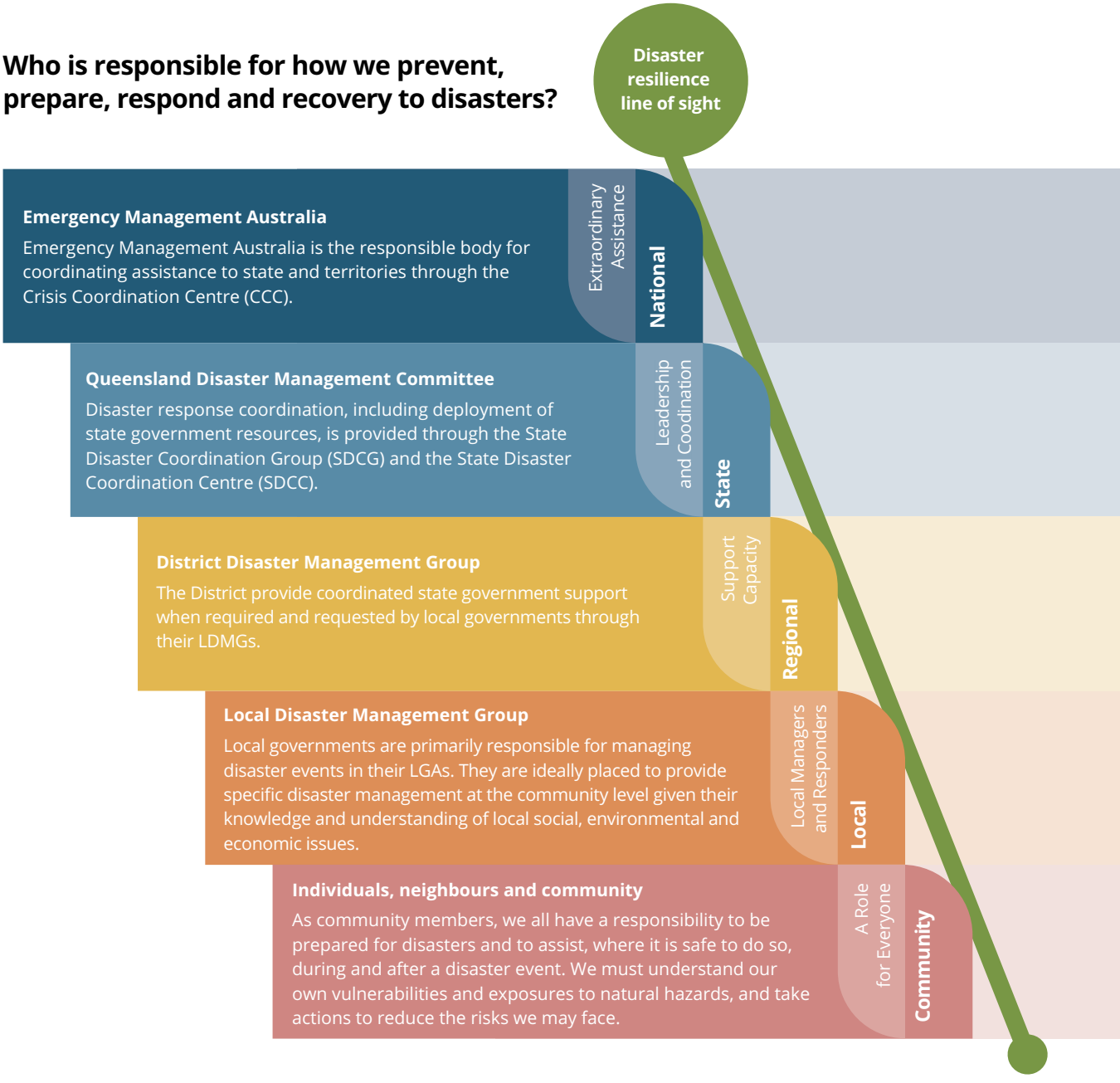
> *"local governments should primarily be responsible for managing events in their local government area"... [and that]... "district groups and the State Group should provide local governments with the appropriate resources and support to help the local government carry out disaster operations".*

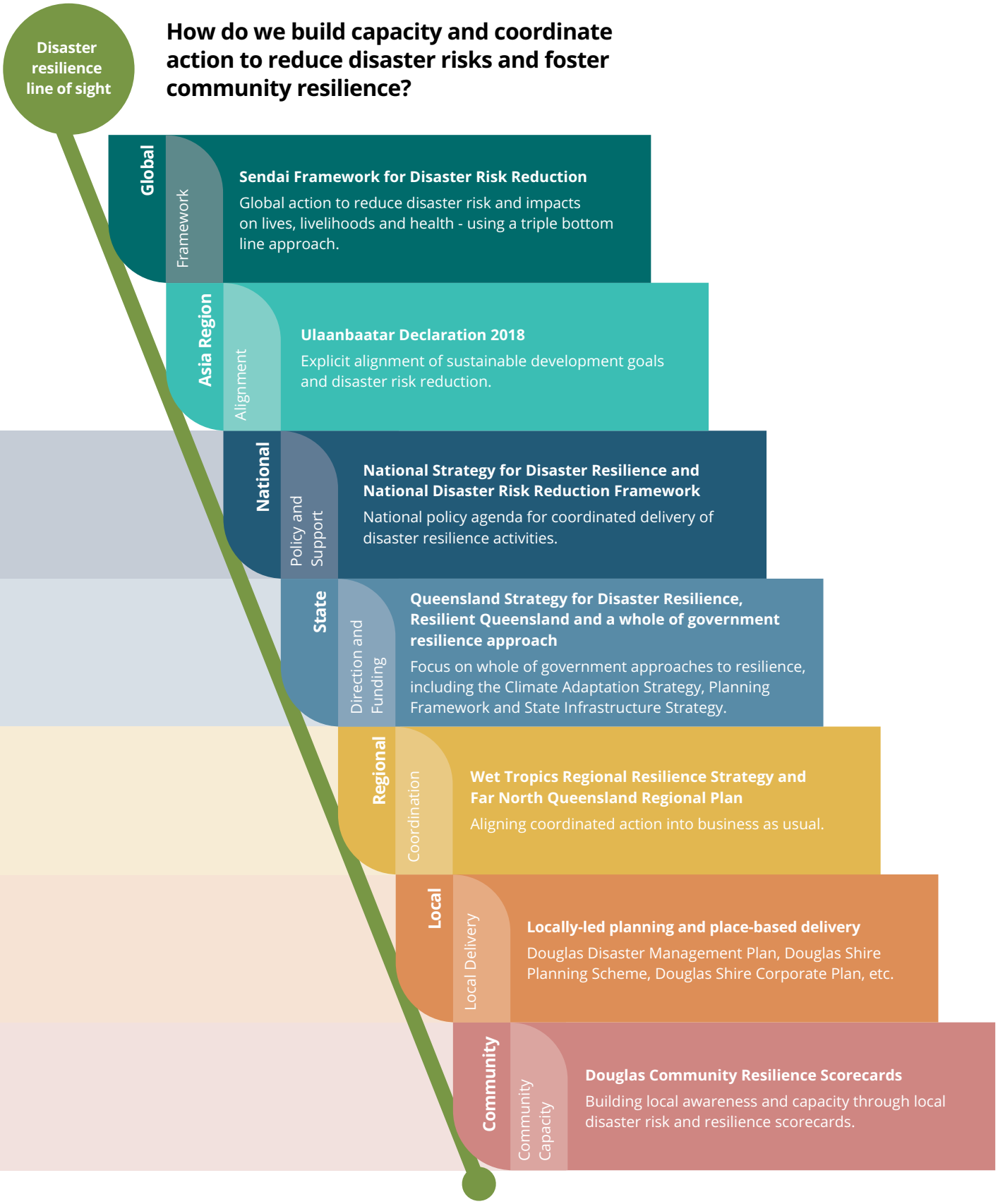


Disaster recovery and resilience line of sight

Figure: Disaster recovery and resilience line of sight

Adapted from Disaster Resilience Line of Sight diagram, produced by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, Queensland Government.




Disaster resilience line of sight
How do we build capacity and coordinate action to reduce disaster risks and foster community resilience?
Global
Framework
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
Global action to reduce disaster risk and impacts on lives, livelihoods and health - using a triple bottom line approach.
Asia Region
Alignment
Ulaanbaatar Declaration 2018
Explicit alignment of sustainable development goals and disaster risk reduction.
National
Policy and Support
National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework
National policy agenda for coordinated delivery of disaster resilience activities.
State
Direction and Funding
Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience, Resilient Queensland and a whole of government resilience approach
Focus on whole of government approaches to resilience, including the Climate Adaptation Strategy, Planning Framework and State Infrastructure Strategy.
Regional
Coordination
Wet Tropics Regional Resilience Strategy and Far North Queensland Regional Plan
Aligning coordinated action into business as usual.
Local
Local Delivery
Locally-led planning and place-based delivery
Douglas Disaster Management Plan, Douglas Shire Planning Scheme, Douglas Shire Corporate Plan, etc.
Community
Community Capacity
Douglas Community Resilience Scorecards
Building local awareness and capacity through local disaster risk and resilience scorecards.

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG)

The DRRG strengthens and streamlines interoperability between Council, community and all tiers of government. Its purpose, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (*Appendix A),* is to:

> *"coordinate recovery at the local level for specific events and provide long-term strategic resilience planning for the Douglas Shire including community participation"... [with a commitment to]... "ensuring that Douglas Shire communities have a resilient future, and that the Douglas Shire Council approaches recovery from an empathic and inclusive methodology in partnership with the community, external organisations, and agencies."*

The Chair of the DRRG works collaboratively with the Chair of the LDMG and the Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) to ensure the recovery needs of each functional group are identified during response and immediate relief efforts, to inform swift and appropriate recovery planning. This planning is achieved by the FRRGs of the DRRG.

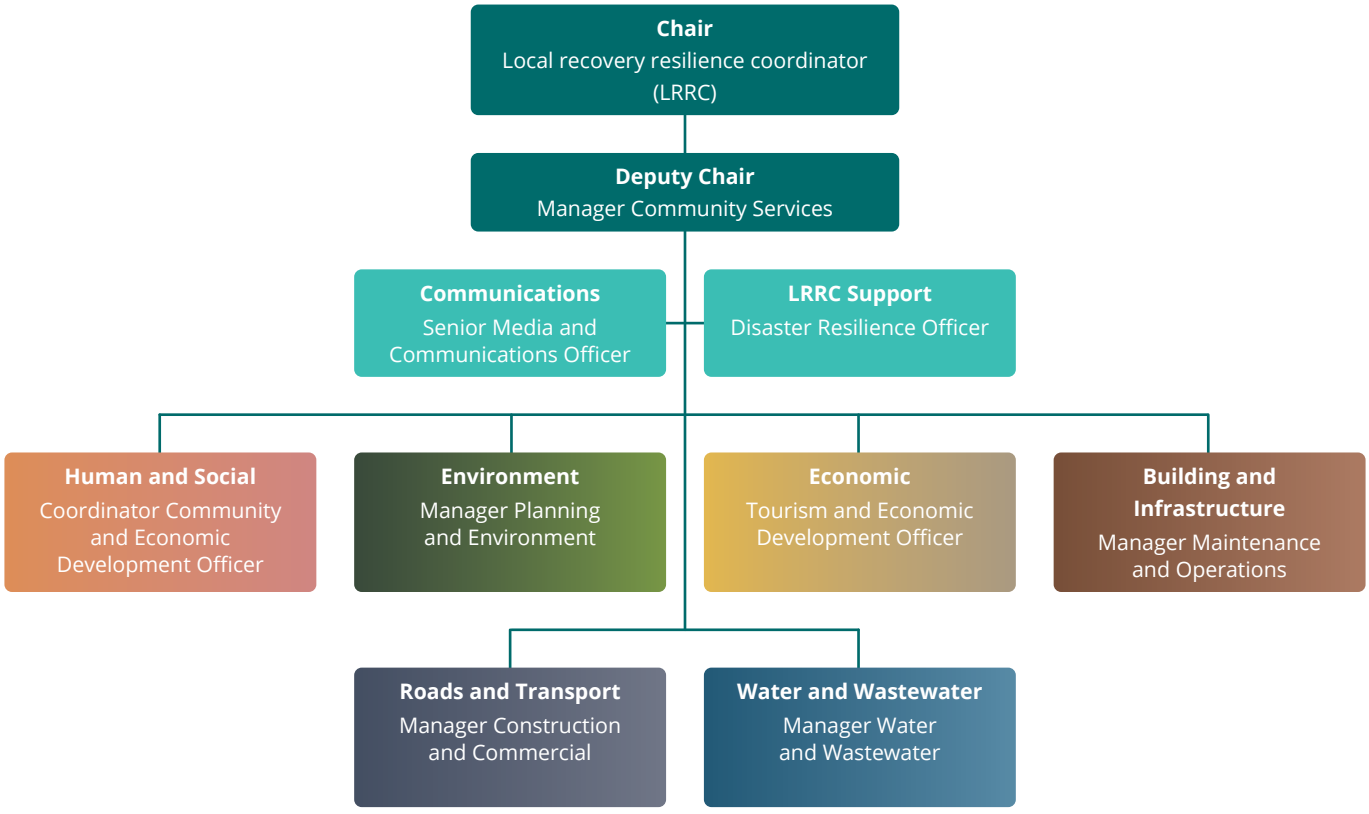
The DRRG may be stood up by the Chair when:

- A disaster is anticipated to have complex and ongoing impacts requiring a coordinated and collaborative multi-agency approach to recovery.
- A disaster causes significant damage impacting community, businesses, infrastructure and/or the environment.
- A disaster causes significant disruption to communities impacting transport, power, communications or the supply of critical resources (water, food, medication, etc.).
- Directed by the LDMG, district or state.

Outside of disaster, the DRRG is responsible for maintaining awareness of potential risks and influences on local recovery and resilience measures. This includes staying up to date with relevant training and keeping informed of emerging best-practice principles in recovery and resilience. The DRRG also plays a key role in ensuring FRRGs remain aligned and well-coordinated across all phases of the disaster cycle.

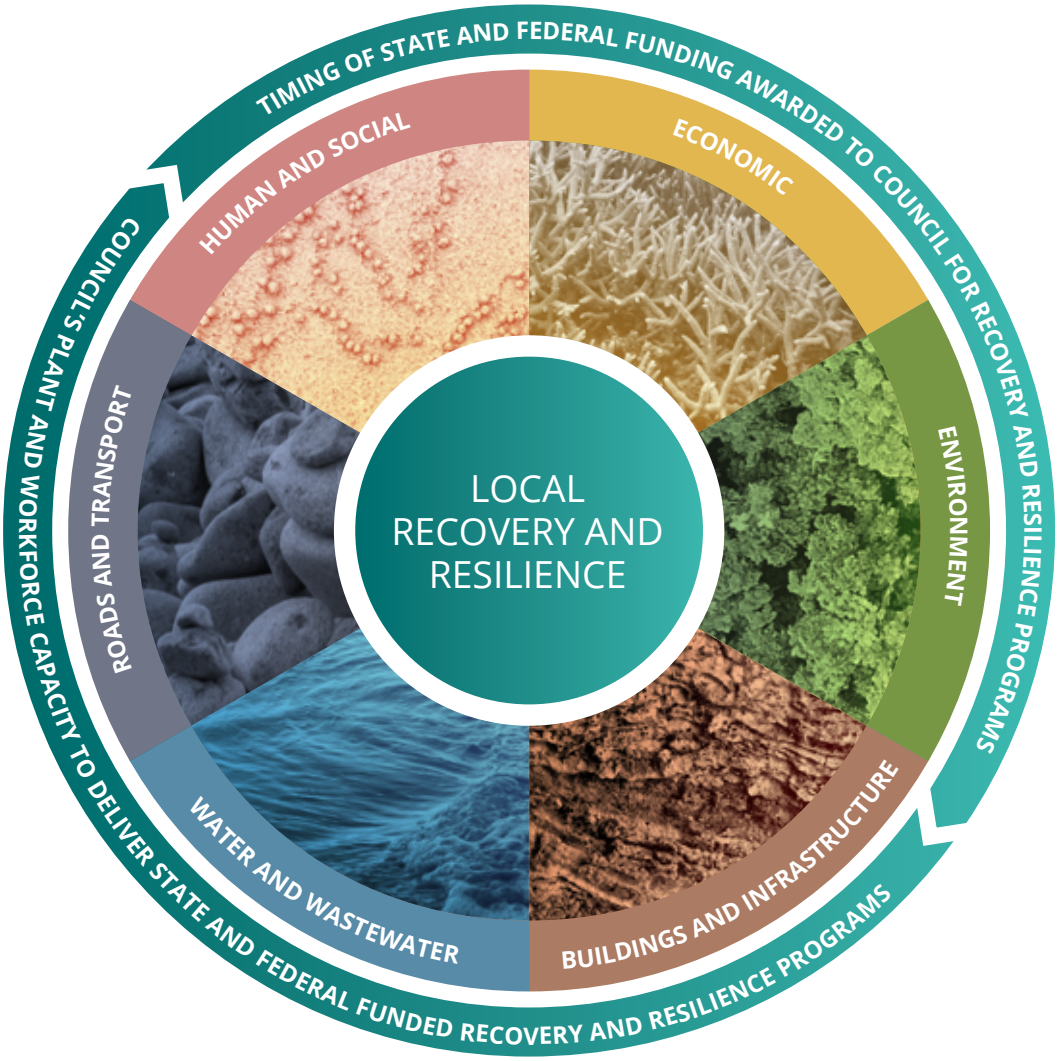
Additionally, the DRRG works with members to promote business continuity planning with local service providers and agencies to strengthen local recovery and resilience capacity of the region.

Figure: DRRG structure



Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups (FRRG)

The DRRG has six FRRGs, each with a different purpose as defined in their Terms of Reference (ToR) (Appendix A). The six FRRGs are:



Human and Social

Responsible for ensuring that affected individuals, families, and communities have access to timely information, psychosocial support, basic needs, and the ability to reconnect and recover in a safe and inclusive way.

Economic

Responsible for restoring and strengthening the local economy following a disaster, reduce the disruption to businesses and employment, and support economic betterment by aligning recovery with future resilience.

Environment

Responsible for minimising the adverse impacts of disasters on natural systems and ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and long-term sustainability of the region's unique environmental values.

Buildings and Infrastructure

Responsible for reinstating damaged and disrupted built assets that influence essential services and facilities.

Water and Wastewater

Responsible for identifying and addressing all water-related impacts to water quality and supply.

Roads and Transport (provisional)

Responsible for the restoration of transport networks including road, rail, aviation and maritime which hinder or halt community movements and critical supply chain.

Depending on the disaster impacts, the core DRRG may activate one, some, or all the FRRGs. To respond to the impacts of a disaster, temporary or specialist FRRGs may be established. For example, following Ex Tropical Cyclone Jasper, a provisional Roads and Transport FRRG was established to support the enormous amount of recovery works needing to be undertaken.

FRRGs may stand-down at various times, with approval from the DRRG.

Vulnerabilities of each FRRG to be considered include:

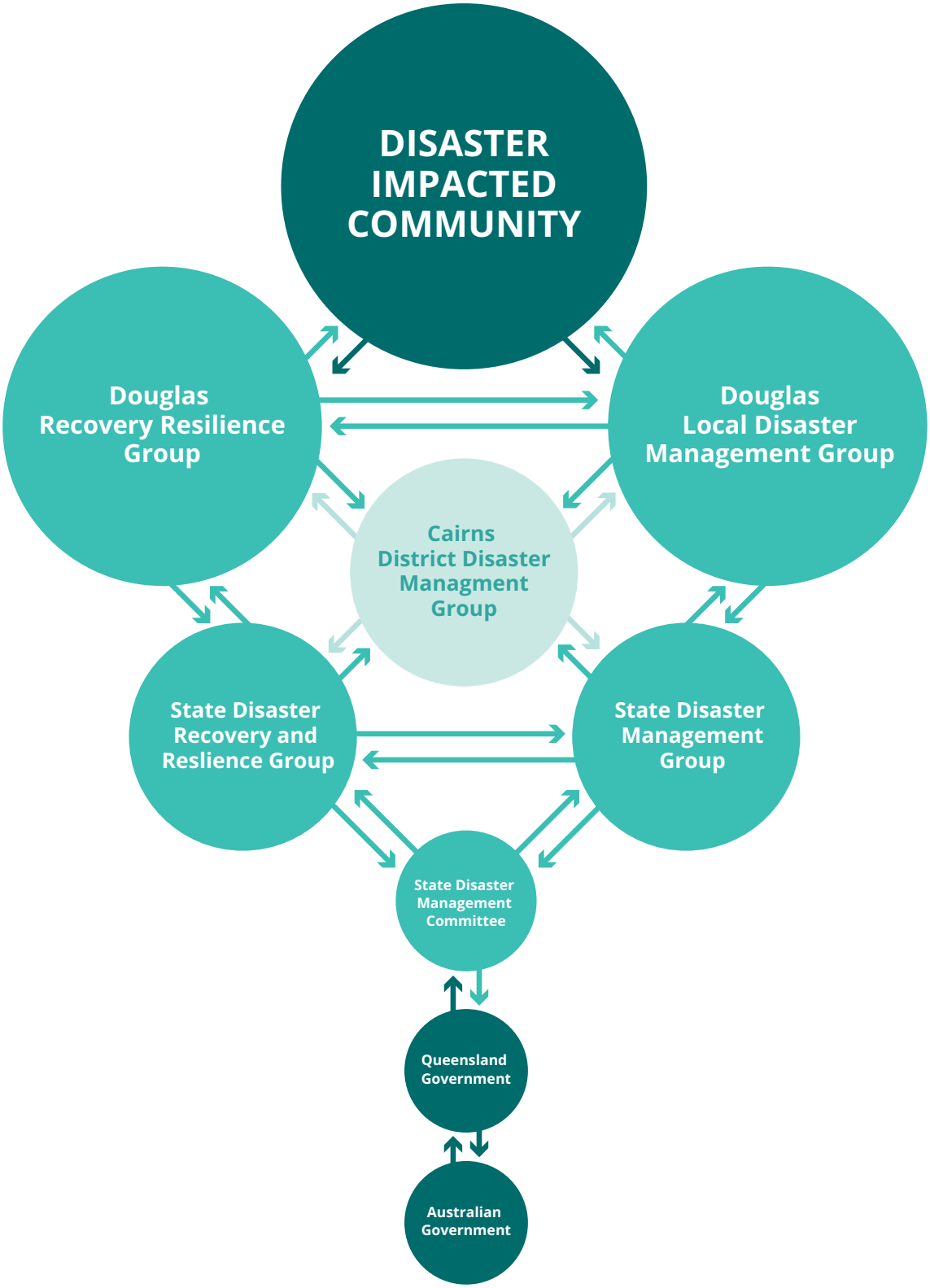
- Local membership may become impacted by disasters personally, or as an organisation.
- Limited resources of regional organisations may become stretched by recovery actions while maintaining standard service delivery.
- Members supporting the greater Far North Queensland region, not just Douglas Shire which may reduce capacity in large-scale events.

Similar to the unique profiles of our communities, each FRRG has its own strengths and capabilities, and specific resilience goals to work towards.



Locally led, district supported, state coordinated

Figure: Locally led disaster management escalation chain



Adapted from Queensland's disaster recovery arrangements diagram, page 14 of the Queensland Recovery Plan: Sub-plan to the Queensland State Disaster Management Plan, produced by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, Queensland Government.

Human and Social Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our community

Embedded locally working with individuals, families, and communities each day, members of the Human and Social FRRG define Douglas Shire as a socially connected, environmentally conscious, and supportive community.

Diverse natural environments encourage unique lifestyles, with most people working close to home which affords them time to get involved in charitable and recreational activities.

Our tropical climate fosters an active outdoor way of life for many.

Douglas celebrates a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population which plays a key role in the rhythm of our shire.

Seasonal and multicultural workers bring with them experiences from across the globe that enhances the generational knowledge of long-standing families and traditional owners.

Being community minded is a way of life in the Shire, we pull together when times are tough, and we help each other.

Strengths and capabilities

Local membership representing diverse organisations, many working and living in the Shire

- Deep-rooted understanding of the community to inform local solutions.
- Connected to and trusted by community and stakeholders fostering collaborative outcomes.
- Extensive local knowledge and experience working with communities in the region.
- Members include:
  - Douglas Shire Council's Community Services team,
  - Queensland Health and Mental Health Services,
  - Non-government organisations and community leaders, and
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives and organisations.

Historic engagement

- They know what has worked and has not worked in the past, and can build upon known strategies to maximise and expedite recovery and resilience building.

Broad backgrounds

- Members represent diverse ages, interests, and experiences of the community.

Collaborative

- By nature of working in a role centric to human and social outcomes, the attitude of the cohort is caring, nurturing and driven by collaboration.

Resilience goals

Driving PPRR awareness and education.

Promoting a community-led recovery approach that prioritises vulnerable populations.

Ongoing collaboration with community to understand emerging recovery needs and opportunities to enhance disaster resilience.

Continuing to strengthen local, district and state relationships to support emerging community needs following disaster.



Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.

Liveability

1.1 Deliver community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities.

1.4 Promote inclusivity, connection and accessibility for individuals/people of all abilities.

1.9 In accordance with Queensland Disaster Management doctrine, continuously review and enhance Council's disaster management prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in collaboration with community and agencies.

Prosperity

2.5 Pursue opportunities to improve housing outcomes.

2.7 Build strong local, State and Federal relations.

Service Delivery

3.3 Focus on safety and wellbeing – of the community and employees.

3.7 Identify and manage risk.

Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).

Economic Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our economy

Douglas Shire's tropical climate supports tourism and agriculture as the main two economic drivers. Both celebrate the community's affinity with the outdoors, leveraging natural beauty and abundance of the Shire to support tourism operations, accommodation providers, producers and many associated small businesses.

Almost every business in Douglas Shire is linked to tourism in some way.

Many local generational businesses remain in the shire, with an increasing influence of new owners and operators, alongside increasing diversification of business activities.

The economic community in Douglas Shire is collaborative and often works together, particularly in times of disaster where these networks become informal pathways for resources and information.

The lifestyle and liveability of Douglas Shire is a strength of the economy and offers significant commercial opportunities and uniquely boasts globally recognised UNESCO World Heritage sites; the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef.

Strengths and capabilities

Engaged and growing local membership

- Membership includes:
  - Council's Tourism and Economic Development and Community Services teams,
  - Department of Customer Services, Open Data and Small and Family Business (CDSB),
  - local Chamber of Commerce and tourism/economic bodies, and
  - far north Queensland business and industry networks.

Broad scale of experience

- Members represent local businesses and various government agencies.

A rising tide floats all boats

- A genuine desire to work collaboratively to bolster Douglas Shire as a destination for recreation and investment.

Carnivale
Destination marketing event

12,000
attendees

14
days

$5 million
towards our local economy

Resilience goals

Driving uptake of business continuity, redevelopment, and betterment planning with local businesses.

Advocacy with governments to increase grant accessibility, and the insurance sector to address barriers in appropriate coverage.

Support long-term economic development and diversification strategies that build disaster resilience.

Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.

Prosperity

2.2 Support local business through local procurement.

2.3 Advocate for/promote economic growth opportunities and economic transition.

2.6 Recognise the contribution of established local industries.

2.7 Build strong local, State and Federal relations.

Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).



Environment Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our environment

The environment is the foundation of everything in the shire – liveability, lifestyle and livelihoods.

Our natural biodiversity ranges from rainforest and wet sclerophyll woodlands to mangrove forests and wetlands, to vegetated sand dunes and swale systems, reefs, foreshore areas, intertidal seagrass beds and estuarine creek and river systems; the air and water, as well as the mammals, birds, fish, insects, reptiles, and amphibians that call it home. These diverse natural environments enhance the liveability of the shire, supporting lifestyles and livelihoods. Because of their intrinsic connection, the Human and Social, Economic and Environmental FRRGs work collaboratively in recovery and resilience planning.

Traditional Owners and locals are deeply aware of environmental changes to the local environment and impacts on how they engage with land and sea. This awareness of the influence of environmental changes on liveability is shared by local, state and federal government agencies, and UNESCO.

Our community shares a strong commitment to valuing and stewarding these natural surroundings and often seeks to take an active role in restoration efforts following an event.

Disaster management of Australian UNESCO World Heritage sites focuses on building resilience, especially against climate change, through local site-specific recovery and resilience planning, state and federal policies, and international collaboration.

Strengths and capabilities

Local membership is made up of local government and non-government organisations

- First-hand exposure to a changing climate and the evolving impacts of more frequent and more intense disasters.
- Membership includes:
  - Council's Environment and Planning Team,
  - local environmental services, rangers and cultural partners, and
  - World Heritage Conservation authorities.

Scientific backgrounds and expertise

- Bringing together experience, education and emerging technologies and practices.

Future-focused

- An unwavering commitment to sustainability of our precious pristine environment to support our lifestyle and livelihoods.

Resilience goals

Benchmark environmental values via the identification, assessment and monitoring of environmental impacts (e.g. erosion and habitat loss).

Support ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation strategies.

Promote the use of green infrastructure and environmentally sustainable design in recovery.

Continue to strengthen local, district and state relationships to support emerging environmental needs following an event.

Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030.*

Liveability

1.7 Investigate and promote environmental, green, eco-friendly and nature focused initiatives.

Service Delivery

3.9 Preserve, protect and improve our unique environment.

Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).



Buildings and Infrastructure Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our built environment

Council's built assets total $468.3 million (as at 30 June 2024) and are as diverse in construction and utility as the environments they stand within. This includes roads and bridges, water treatment facilities, marine infrastructure and buildings such as community halls, libraries and amenity blocks, and open spaces including ovals, parks and gardens.

Strengths and capabilities

Strong specialised development acumen

- Extensive operational knowledge of complex legislative environments with varied interests such as state land and reserves, native title, and UNESCO World Heritage international treaty.

Localised expertise

- Diverse experience and capability working in remote naturally and culturally significant environments.

Shared vision for Douglas

- Dynamic membership with extensive development and maintenance experience.
- Membership includes:
  - Council's Infrastructure team,
  - QRA,
  - utility providers, and
  - relevant government agencies and governing bodies.

Resilience goals*

Monitor and report damage and disruption across buildings, transport networks, and utility systems.

Facilitate restoration of services such as water supply, wastewater, council buildings and access routes.

Provide technical and regulatory advice to the DRRG and impacted community members.

Promote betterment and resilient design in reconstruction efforts.

** Due to the interoperability of the Buildings and Infrastructure, Water and Wastewater, and Roads and Transport Function Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups, their resilience goals are unified.*



Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.



Liveability

1.3 Be culturally sensitive, inclusive and improve Council's cultural competency.

1.4 Promote inclusivity, connection and accessibility for individuals/people of all abilities.

1.6 Create and maintain parks and open spaces to preserve, protect and sustain our natural assets.



Service Delivery

3.1 Deliver the Corporate Plan, Operational Plan and Budget.

3.4 Ensure capital and maintenance programs for infrastructure/open spaces are prioritised and delivered on time.

3.5 Employ a proactive and preventative approach to asset management.

3.6 Deliver Council services to meet community expectations.

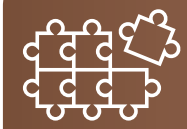


Prosperity

2.1 Deliver a new Daintree ferry.

2.4 Assess developments against the planning scheme.

2.7 Build strong local, State and Federal relations.



Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).

Water and Wastewater Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our water and wastewater systems

Council owns and operates all local water and wastewater infrastructure. Water and sewage assets total $179.6 million (as at 30 June 2024), with a further $38.6 million (as at 30 June 2024) invested in drainage infrastructure.

Operating in a highly valuable natural environment with some of the most biodiverse and sensitive natural environments in Australia, Council's successful management of water and wastewater is centric to a healthy population, and the sustained protection of cultural and world heritage land and waterways, including the Daintree Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef.

Respecting the pristine waters of the region, strategic and sustainable operational practices are in constant review to bring worldclass technologies to our people, businesses and natural environments, including UNESCO World Heritage sites.



Diversified approach to water security

Council has implemented both short and long term water supply security solutions which consider planning, current infrastructure, demand management and additional new infrastructure. These demand management measures have seen an approximate reduction in observed usage across the Port Douglas and Mossman areas of 12% in 2024, relative to previous years. This gives us confidence in the achivements of our efforts.

Strengths and capabilities

Technical excellence

- National best-practice and international emerging technologies are adopted to manage this infrastructure in a highly valuable and sensitive natural environment.
- Membership includes:
  - Council's Water and Wastewater Team,
  - QRA, and
  - other integral planning partners.

Sustainability and conservation

- Technical excellence held within Council's teams actively work to reduce processing wastage and minimise the operational footprint of all water and wastewater infrastructure.

Commitment to community and the environment

- Strategic long-term planning ensures the continued supply of potable water for residents well into the future, achieving financial efficiencies across all areas of operation and supply.

Resilience goals*

Monitor and report damage and disruption across buildings, transport networks, and utility systems.

Facilitate restoration of services such as water supply, wastewater, council buildings and access routes.

Provide technical and regulatory advice to the DRRG and impacted community members.

Promote betterment and resilient design in reconstruction efforts.

** Due to the interoperability of the Buildings and Infrastructure, Water and Wastewater, and Roads and Transport Function Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups, their resilience goals are unified.*



Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.

Liveability

1.8 Provide safe, efficient and reliable water and wastewater services.

Prosperity

2.7 Build strong local, State and Federal relations.

Service Delivery

3.1 Deliver the Corporate Plan, Operational Plan and Budget.

3.5 Employ a proactive and preventative approach to asset management.

3.6 Deliver Council services to meet community expectations.

3.8 Deliver safe and reliable drinking water.

Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).

Roads and Transport (provisional) Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group

Our transport infrastructure and network

The Douglas Shire is responsible for the maintenance of almost 500 kilometres of roads and, including 217km unsealed and 10km of concrete causeway roads, valued at $199.7 million (as at 30 June 2024). Extended periods of inundation, floodwater velocity, flood borne debris, and landslips frequently impact the accessibility of these roads following a disaster, with Council commonly engaging local plant and operators to assist in critical restoration and repair works.

Council has fostered a strong working relationship with the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads through Road Maintenance Performance Contracts with the State.

The safe and consistent access to road networks is imperative for the lifestyle and livelihoods of residents, especially those living and working in remote pockets of the shire north of the Daintree River.

Strengths and capabilities

Local skilled workforce

- Dedicated and longstanding council employees and a strong cohort of local contractors with intimate local knowledge and first-hand experience working within highly complex and remote environments.

High-value stakeholders

- Members from local, state and federal agencies inform planning and funding of works.

Sustainable futures

- Dedicated focus on rebuilding infrastructure and assets to be more resilient against future events to sustain and enhance liveability and livelihood functions in the Douglas Shire.

Resilience goals*

Monitor and report damage and disruption across buildings, transport networks, and utility systems.

Facilitate restoration of services such as water supply, wastewater, council buildings and access routes.

Provide technical and regulatory advice to the DRRG and impacted community members.

Promote betterment and resilient design in reconstruction efforts.

** Due to the interoperability of the Buildings and Infrastructure, Water and Wastewater, and Roads and Transport Function Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups, their resilience goals are unified.*





Strategic alignment

Working towards Council's vision, mission and values detailed in the *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*.

Liveability

1.4 Promote inclusivity, connection and accessibility for individuals/people of all abilities.

Prosperity

2.7 Build strong local, State and Federal relations.

Service Delivery

3.1 Deliver the Corporate Plan, Operational Plan and Budget.

3.5 Employ a proactive and preventative approach to asset management.

3.6 Deliver Council services to meet community expectations.

Recovery and Resilience

4.1 Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.2 Deliver infrastructure asset restoration and betterment.

4.3 Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.4 Implement the local recovery and resilience action plan.

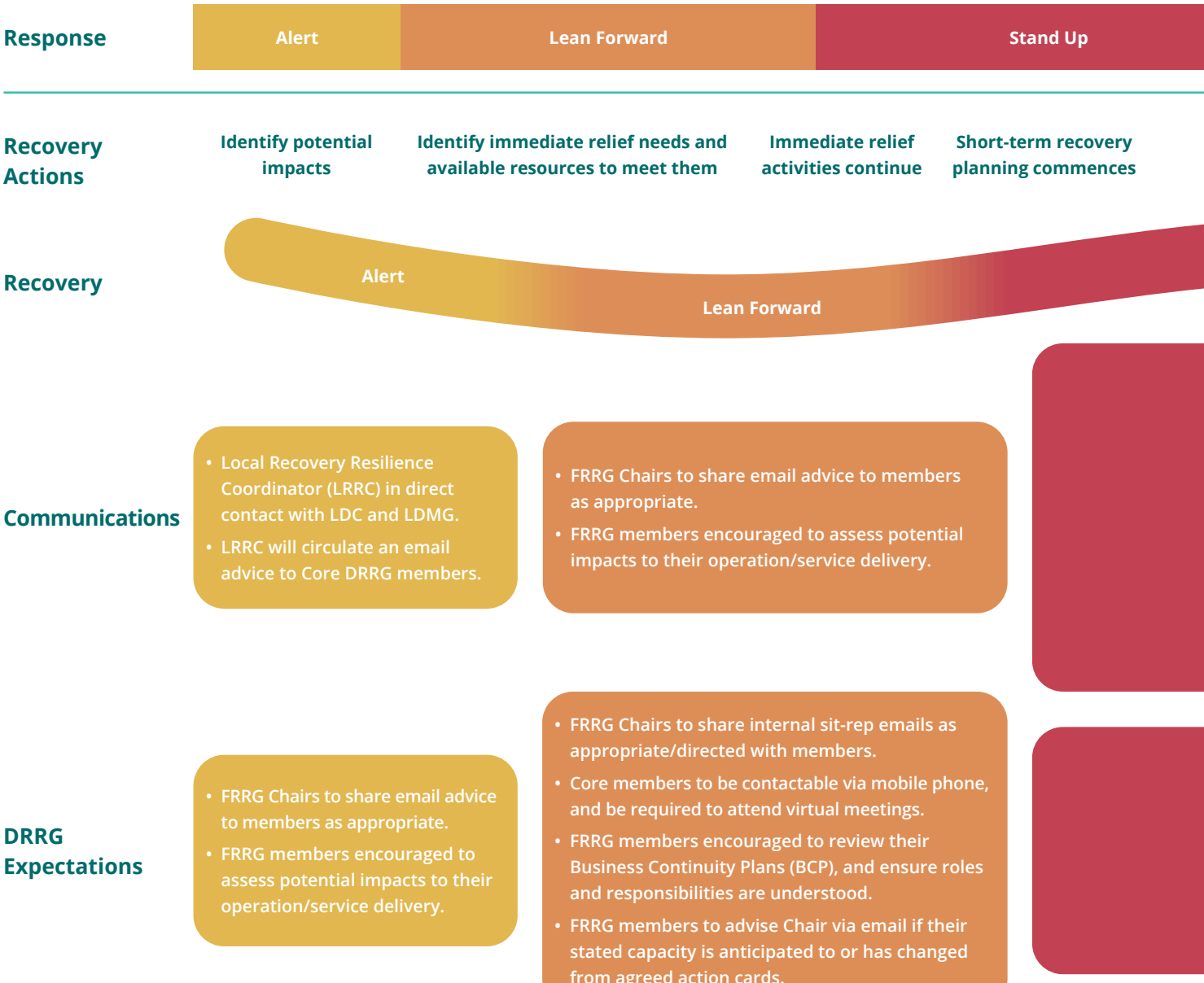
4.5 Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).

Activation levels in response and recovery

The timing of recovery activation follows closely response activation levels to ensure recovery planning is swift to best support impacts.

Members of the DRRG and FRRG follow these protocols and acknowledge the associated expectations as part of their membership to the respective group.

The diagram below outlines Council's activation of recovery phases and associated actions, communications and expectations of members in activation. Activation of Council's response arrangements are detailed in section 8.1 of the *Local Disaster Management Plan* (LDMP).



Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC)

A Council officer appointed under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* responsible for coordinating disaster operations for the LDMG.

Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator (LRRC)

A Council officer appointed by the LDMG, responsible for the development and implementation of recovery and resilience arrangements for the local government, in conjunction with the DRRG.

Stand Down

Short-term recovery actions commence

Medium-long term recovery planning commences

Long-term recovery actions commence

All parties resume standard business, with ongoing and emerging recovery needs to be transferred to functional leads for continuation

Stand Up

Stand Down

- DRRG activated.
- Virtual DRRG meetings being held daily—or as directed by the Chair.
- Appropriate FRRG meetings held virtually—timing determined by the DRRG Chair in consultation with the respective FRRG Chairs.
- Daily sit-rep compiled and distributed via email or as determined by the Chair.
- Participate in response debrief/s.
- Transition from 'response and recovery' to 'recovery'.
- LDC to 'handover' to LRRC

- DRRG meetings return to tri-annual.
- Event Specific Local Recovery Plan developed and presented to DRRG before being submitted to LDMG for endorsement.

- DRRG sit-rep contributed to and distributed via email.
- FRRG Chairs to manage two-way information flow between DRRG and FRRG, and between the DRRG and LDCC.
- FRRG action cards activated as appropriate and communicated to Chair to report to DRRG, who reports to the LDMG.

- DRRG core and FRRG members to participate in face-to-face activation debrief and DRRSP review:
  - review action card commitment vs contribution,
  - BCP reviews undertaken, and
  - share lessons learned.
- DRRG core and FRRG members resume standard business.

! *One, some or all FRRGs may be activated under the DRRG, standing up and standing down at different times informed by recovery needs.*

! *Ongoing reporting on recovery and resilience progress contributed via standard DRRG and FRRG meetings.*

Communications

Maintaining information flow between impacted communities, council and stakeholders supporting recovery helps to ensure the evolving needs of those impacted are identified and can be addressed. Council's Disaster Management Unit (DMU) has a Communications Strategy that supports the collection and sharing of internal and external messaging and is managed jointly by the DMU and council's Media and Communications Team.

The DMU Communications Strategy includes locally specific intelligence to best inform the community, and information transfer protocols which are used by elected officials, community services and other government agencies supporting recovery activities. It also prescribes the most suitable channels and messaging styles to enhance engagement and understanding of important recovery messaging.

While activated, the DRRG will determine the schedule of situational reporting (sitreps), aligned with the reporting needs of District and State Recovery Groups. A reporting template is included in Appendix B.

In stages of medium to long term recovery and resilience building, it is also important to acknowledge fresh challenges and communicate achievements to those impacted and the services supporting them.

Power supply and connectivity often become challenges in times of disaster, with outages being frequent and sometimes protracted in Douglas Shire. Council continues to invest in infrastructure, hardware and systems to become more resilient to these outages, however, sometimes they cannot be mitigated. Members of the DRRG and FRRGs will continue to work with their stakeholders to encourage individuals, families and communities to reduce their vulnerability to outages, as well as with service providers, businesses and government agencies to continually review and strengthen their business continuity plans to reduce outage impacts.

Section 5 of the LDMP details critical infrastructure across the region and associated potential impacts to operation and supply.



Event-specific Local Recovery Plan

Even a small event can have a big impact that communities will require support to recover from, requiring a Local Recovery Plan (LRP) Following a disaster, Council will collaborate with QRA to develop a LRP focused on that specific event.

Douglas Recovery Resilience Core Group will develop a Local Recovery and Resilience Action Plan (LRRAP) that will provide disaster impact summaries, recovery aims and objectives, and focus on a community-led approach to implementation.

Templates for these plans are included in Appendix C, along with an example of a recent LRP.



Non-government support

Council will lead community informed recovery and resilience activities, often with the support and resourcing of non-government organisations (NGO), such as: local services, faith-based organisations, charities, businesses and non-government agencies. Arrangements for this support vary, with some formalised in memorandum of understandings (MOU), while others will be organic and reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the DRRG Chair in consultation with the LRRC. Commonly, these supports include:

- catering and food hampers,
- management of donated goods,
- spontaneous volunteers, and
- unofficial anniversary and memorial planning.

FRRGs are responsible for the identification of key NGO supports and drafting MOUs to clearly define expectations, responsibilities and any agreed resourcing or attributed costs and funding arrangements, for the LRRC to approve in consultation with the LDC.

Escalation for additional support and advocacy

In line with the QDMA, locally led recovery principles are centric to the successful planning and execution of recovery and resilience activities, acknowledging escalation pathways via district, state and federal government agencies when local capacity is exhausted.

Sustainability

The National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs provides a consistent approach to evaluating individual recovery programs for their effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes and providing valuable learnings to improve the design and delivery of subsequent programs.

Following the activation of the DRRG, an independent review of actions taken and the success of them in addressing impact needs is imperative. Being undertaken by an independent party will encourage frank input and enhance community trust of council and other stakeholders supporting recovery and resilience activities.

Tangible recovery and resilience measures such as infrastructure and environmental rehabilitation are easier to identify and evaluate compared to intangible aspects such as social cohesion, safety sentiments, and wellbeing. Findings will be shared with the DRRG and FRRG members to identify improvements in recovery and resilience planning.

Local Recovery Action Plan

From the impacts and consequences identified in a Local Recovery Plan, Council will review and update it's Local Recovery Action Plan (LRAP) that details specific actions to be undertaken to enhance resilience to reduce potential impacts of future events.

Developed in collaboration with community and stakeholders, actions are categorised by the FRRG Chairs. Ranging in priority, complexity and required investment, the LRAP provides a clear, concise roadmap for how Council can work toward Disaster Risk Reduction for the shire.

In Queensland, across Australia and around the globe, disasters and severe weather events are becoming more frequent and severe due to the impacts of climate change.



Funding arrangements

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

Recovery activities following a disaster are often costly, and can significantly impact people, businesses and councils.

The cost of these recovery activities may be eligible to be recovered through DRFA or State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA).

The DRFA is joint Commonwealth and State government funding, providing financial assistance to help communities recover from eligible disasters. In Queensland this program is managed on a whole-of-government basis by QRA.

Eligible disasters include:

- bushfire,
- cyclone and storm surge,
- storm,
- earthquake,
- landslip,
- flood,
- tsunami,
- terrorist act,
- tornado, and
- meteor strike.

There are four categories of funding councils can apply for:

Category A—Counter Disaster Operations

DRFA Category A is assistance to individuals to alleviate personal hardship or distress arising as a direct result of a disaster. This can include:

- Counter Disaster Operations.
- Emergency Hardship Assistance.
- Essential Services Hardship Assistance.
- Essential Household Contents Grant.
- Structural Assistance Grant.

Category B—Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA) including Immediate Reconstruction Works (IRW) and Emergency Works (EW)

DRFA Category B is for assistance for restoration of essential public assets, certain counter-disaster operations, small businesses, primary producers, not-for-profit organisations and individuals through concessional loans, subsidies or grants.

Category C—Special disaster assistance grants

DRFA Category C relief measures may be made available where the community is severely affected by an eligible disaster and existing standard DRFA relief measures are insufficient to support community recovery. Category C is only available in exceptional circumstances and includes clean-up and recovery grants for small business and primary producers and/or the establishment of a Community Recovery Fund following a severe event.

Category D—Extraordinary special assistance.

DFRA Category D is for exceptional circumstances assistance beyond Categories A, B, and C. Category D is generally considered once the impact of the disaster has been assessed and specific recovery gaps identified.

State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA)

SDRA addresses personal hardship and community needs for disaster events where DRFA is unable to be activated.

SDRA relief measures for the Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) and Counter Disaster Operations are the same relief measures that are activated under the DRFA.

The Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines, and additional information about DRFA and SDRA can be found on the QRA website: qra.qld.gov.au/funding.

Betterment

Betterment funding allows local governments and state agencies to rebuild essential public assets to a more resilient standard to help them withstand the impacts of future natural disasters.

Examples include improvements to vital infrastructure such as roads, bridges and floodways. These can vary from stabilisation of low-lying roads to reduce erosion and scouring, upgrades to drainage structures to increase capacity or replacing gravel with reinforced concrete to improve resilience.

Appendices

Appendix A – DRRG Terms of Reference

- Douglas Recovery Resilience Group, September 2026
- Human and Social Functional Recovery Resilience Sub Group, August 2025
- Economic Functional Recovery Resilience Sub Group, August 2025
- Environmental Functional Recovery Resilience Sub Group, August 2025
- Infrastructure Functional Recovery Resilience Sub Group, August 2025



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group

2026

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT

Disaster Management is everybody's business

Contents

1. Background 3
2. Purpose 3
3. Accountability 3
4. Functions 5
5. Membership 5
6. Chair 6
7. Member responsibilities 6
8. Meetings 6
9. Evaluation 7
10. Functional Recovery Resilience Groups – Responsibilities 7

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group

1. Background

Disaster management within Douglas Shire is undertaken in accordance with the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA). The QDMA comprises statutory direction, guidance and policy relating to key reference documents that lead management, operations, approaches and actions in disaster management.

The Douglas Shire Council (DSC) Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) is established by the Douglas Shire Council under section 29 of the *Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003* (the Act).

The Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guidelines recommends the creation of sub-groups to assist the LDMG in the delivery of effective disaster management. The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) is established in accordance with this recommendation.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the DRRG is to assist the LDMG to coordinate recovery at a local level for specific events and provide long-term strategic resilience planning for the Douglas Shire including community participation.

The DRRG is committed to ensuring that Douglas Shire communities have a resilient future, and that the DSC approaches recovery and resilience activities from an empathic and inclusive methodology in partnership with the community, external organisations, and agencies.

3. Accountability

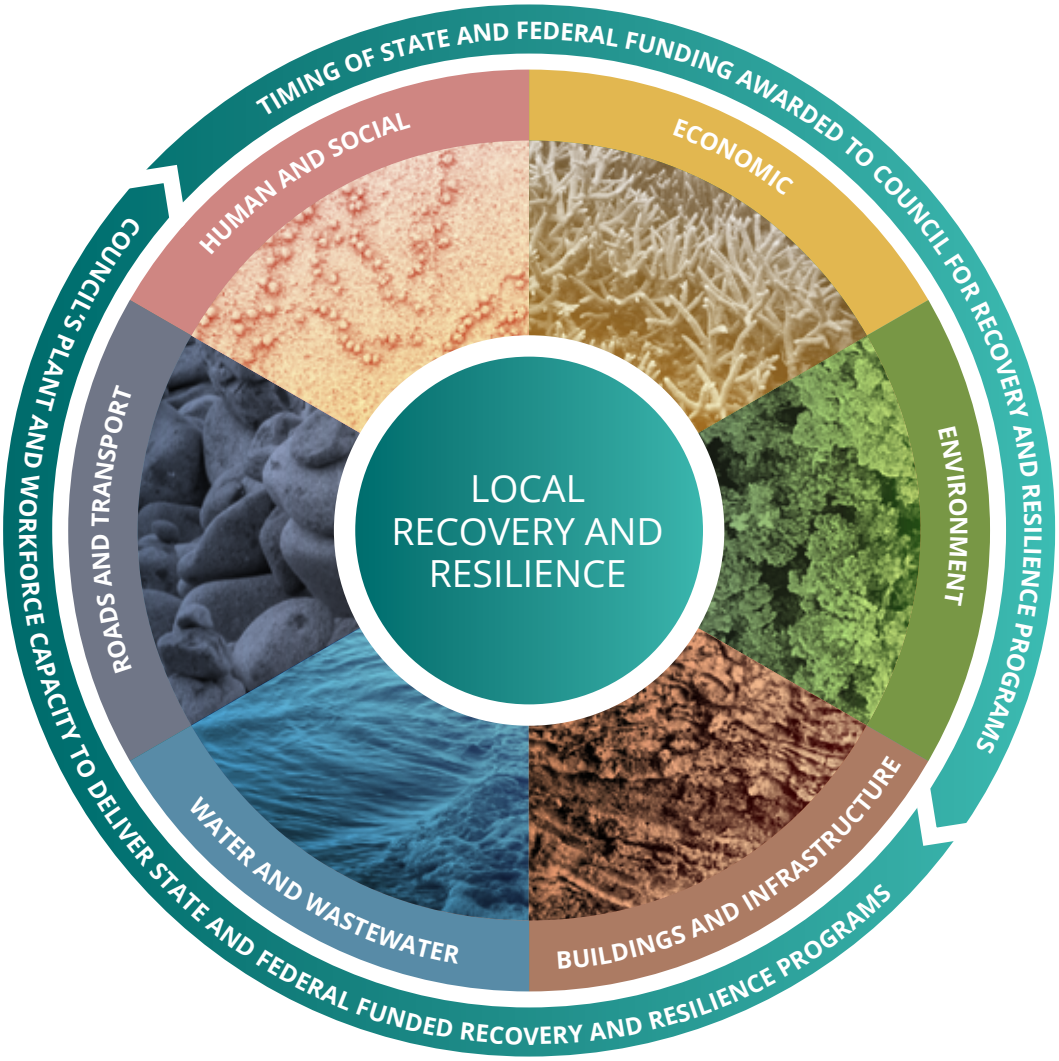
The DRRG is accountable to the DSC LDMG.

4. Functions

The function of the DRRG is to:

- Develop and maintain the Douglas Recovery and Resilience Sub Plan on behalf of the Douglas Shire Council (DSC) Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG).
- Identify and implement Climate Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives to strengthen resilience in the Douglas Shire.
- Review, update and prioritise resilience projects and priorities within the DSC Local Resilience Action Plan at six monthly cycles for council approval, to take advantage of funding opportunities as they arise.
- Prepare the organisation to absorb the impact of future disasters.

Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Groups (FRRG)



Human and Social

Responsible for ensuring that affected individuals, families, and communities have access to timely information, psychosocial support, basic needs, and the ability to reconnect and recover in a safe and inclusive way.

Economic

Responsible for restoring and strengthening the local economy following a disaster, reduce the disruption to businesses and employment, and support economic betterment by aligning recovery with future resilience.

Environment

Responsible for minimising the adverse impacts of disasters on natural systems and ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and long-term sustainability of the region's unique environmental values.

Buildings and Infrastructure

Responsible for reinstating damaged and disrupted built assets that influence essential services and facilities

Water and Wastewater

Responsible for identifying and addressing all water-related impacts to water quality and supply

Roads and Transport (provisional)

Responsible for the restoration of transport networks including road, rail, aviation and maritime which hinder or halt community movements and critical supply chain.

4.1. Event Specific

- Liaise with the LDMG to plan for, and mitigate potential adverse effects.
- Develop an event-specific recovery plan:
  - Coordinate support to assist persons affected by the event who do not have the resources or capacity to provide for their own personal wellbeing.
  - Support community development activities to restore resilience at the individual, household and community level.
  - Coordinate the provision of economic support to affected business and/or industries.
  - Coordinate restoration of the environment in areas affected by the event.
  - Coordinate restoration of essential infrastructure in the area or areas affected by the event (buildings, roads, water).
  - Identify betterment projects to invest in stronger and more resilient assets for the future.
  - Ensure the ongoing needs of the community are met and continued through agency core business.
  - Monitor and report the progress of recovery objectives to the community and other relevant stakeholders.

5. Membership

Douglas Shire Council role	Role
Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator	**Chair**
Manager Community Services	**Deputy Chair**
Team Leader Community and Economic Development	Human and Social FRRG Lead
Manager Planning and Environment	Environment FRRG Lead
Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Economic FRRG Lead
Manager Maintenance and Operations	Buildings and Infrastructure FRRG Lead
Manager Construction and Commercial	Roads and Transport FRRG Lead
Manager Water and Wastewater	Water and Wastewater FRRG Lead

Subject matter experts, advisors and technical specialists will be invited to attend the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) as required.

The Chair reserves the right to invite other attendees to the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG).

6. Chair

The Chair shall convene the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG).

If the Chair is not available, the Deputy Chair will be delegated responsibility for convening the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG).

7. Member responsibilities

DRRG members will undertake their assigned roles and responsibilities during disaster response and recovery operations and must nominate a proxy if they are unable to attend to ensure continuity of operations. Members are expected to act professionally and respectfully at all times and within alignment to Council's Code of Conduct.

Members are responsible for:

- acting in the best interests of the DSC,
- embracing and enabling the Vision, Mission and Values of the DSC,
- engaging in open and professional debate,
- allowing for diverse perspectives and encourage constructive enquiry,
- holding one another accountable to commitments, actions and behaviours,
- concluding meetings with clear and specific agreement, recommendations, decisions and actions,
- retaining a single and unified voice in any internal or external communication,
- timely reporting to actively monitor progress of recovery and resilience objectives,
- contribute to funding opportunities and maintain a current LRAP,
- providing feedback and communicate decisions to staff as appropriate and encourage two-way communication; and
- respecting the confidentiality of information.

8. Meetings

8.1. Frequency

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) will meet at least three times per year.

Event specific meeting cadence, or additional meetings will be at the discretion of the Chair.

8.2. Quorum

A quorum is:

- Half of the core membership, plus one.
- A member that is unable to attend is to send a proxy and notify the Support Officer.
- A proxy will have voting rights.

8.3. Decision Making

Decisions are made by the consensus of the quorum members.

- Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Unresolved issues escalated to the LDMG

8.4. Agenda

The Support Officer will prepare a standing agenda in consultation with the Chair including:

- agenda items will be called at least 5 days prior to the meeting, and
- agendas and meeting papers will be made available two working days prior to the meeting.

Note: during a disaster, event agenda timelines are subject to change.

8.5. Minutes

Minutes and actions will be distributed within one week of the meeting.

8.6. Use of AI

Council is committed to creating a safe, respectful and engaging environment for everyone attending meetings whether in person or online.

To protect participant trust, privacy and the integrity of our content, the use of AI notetakers (e.g. Otter.ai, Fireflies, Zoom transcription bots, etc.) is not permitted in any hybrid or online DRRG meetings unless explicitly authorised by the Chair.

During online meetings, attendees are requested to use their cameras when participating in online events along with providing their name and email address so we can accurately record attendance and provide follow up information. Attendees we cannot identify will be removed from online events to protect the privacy of other attendees.

These requirements are in accordance with Local Government Managers Australia's policy.

9. Evaluation

The Chair will initiate annual review of the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) TORs.

The review will be conducted on a self-assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Chair.

10. Functional Recovery Resilience Groups – Responsibilities

Functional Recovery and Resilience Groups (FRRGs) coordinate and support the planning and implementation of DSC's whole-of-community recovery activities across the six pillars of the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG), being Human and Social, Economic, Environment, Buildings & Infrastructure, Roads and Transport and Water and Wastewater. These pillars support Douglas Shire Council to fulfill its recovery and resilience objectives.

FRRGs leverage strong existing partnerships between all levels of government to ensure close collaboration and coordination during the management of recovery activities. Activities are in accordance with the needs and priorities identified by communities and include those outlined in event specific recovery resilience plans.

The FRRGs coordinate, link and facilitate recovery planning, resilience building and issues management at the local level across their different functional group areas.

State FRRGs through their representation on the District Disaster Management Groups (DDMGs) establish a formal reporting relationship with Local Recovery Groups such as the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) to ensure effective information sharing.

The communication loop between Local Recovery Groups (LRG), District Disaster Groups (DRGs) and state level FRRGs is a crucial element of the recovery governance arrangements.

During and on completion of recovery operations Functional Recovery and Resilience Group (FRRG) Leads will provide timely reports to the Chair of the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) regarding delivering of recovery services, detailing activities undertaken and recommendations for improvement of recovery services for future events.

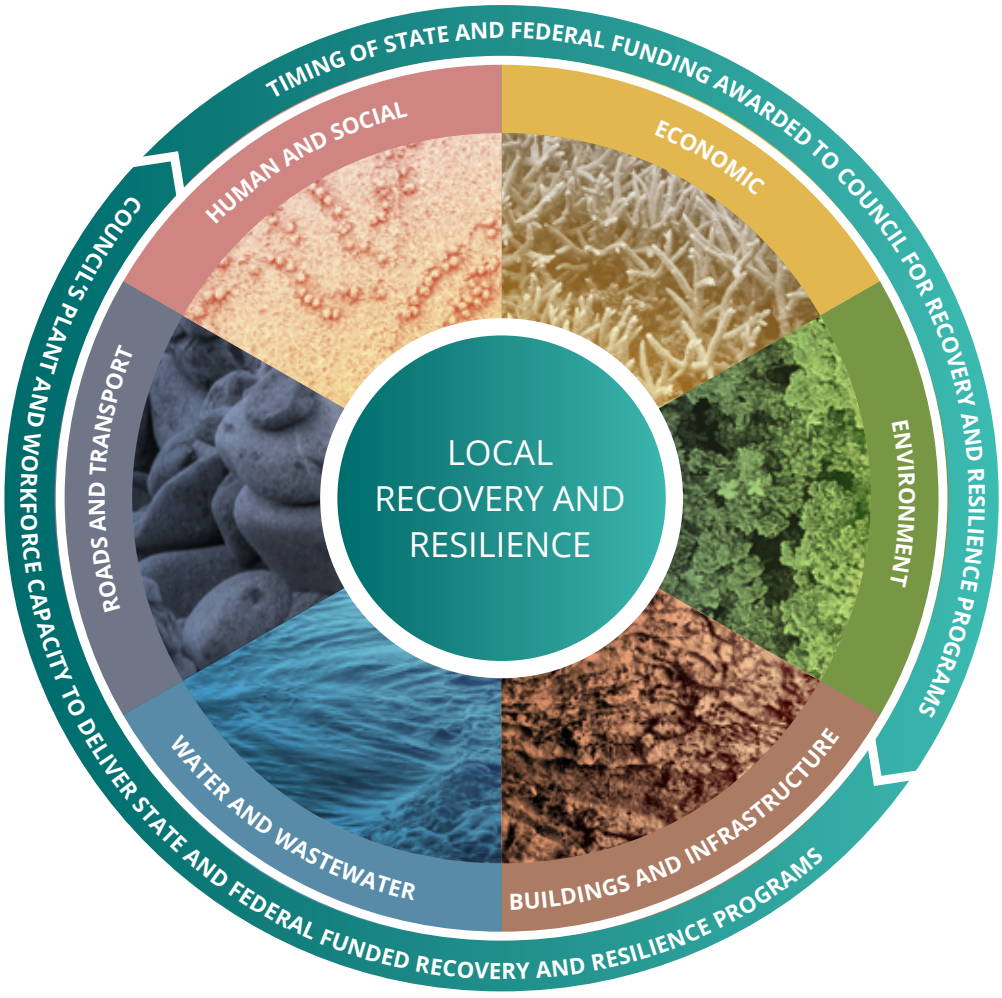
Human and Social

Recovery Resilience Functional Group

1. Purpose

The Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Functional Group supports the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) in planning, coordinating and implementing human and social recovery and long-term resilience strategies for the Douglas Shire.

This includes ensuring that affected individuals, families, and communities have access to timely information, psychosocial support, basic needs, and the ability to reconnect and recover in a safe and inclusive way.



Human and Social

Responsible for ensuring that affected individuals, families, and communities have access to timely information, psychosocial support, basic needs, and the ability to reconnect and recover in a safe and inclusive way.

2. Functions

The Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Functional Group will:

- Support the development and maintenance of the Douglas Recovery Sub-Plan.
- Coordinate the delivery of community recovery services during and following disaster events.
- Monitor and address wellbeing and social cohesion issues arising from disasters.
- Promote a community-led recovery approach that prioritises vulnerable populations.
- Liaise with service providers, networks, and government to mobilise and coordinate support.
- Identify emerging issues and report progress and gaps to the DRRG.
- Facilitate access to emergency and temporary accommodation and psychosocial support.
- Leverage recovery funding and resources, including partnerships with GIVIT and local organisations.
- Support integration of human and social initiatives within broader recovery functions (e.g. infrastructure, environment, economic).

3. Membership

Membership includes representatives from:

- Douglas Shire Council (Community Services).
- Queensland Health and Mental Health Services .
- Non-government organisations.
- Community leaders and First Nations representatives and organisations.
- Other organisations and specialists may be invited by the Chair as needed.

4. Governance and Reporting

The Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Functional Group is a functional subgroup of the DRRG. It is chaired by the Team Leader, Community and Economic Development (or delegate), and reports directly to the DRRG Chair.

The Chair may nominate a deputy or acting chair as required.

All correspondence should be directed through:
humanandsocial.recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au

5. Meetings

- Minimum of two meetings annually (e.g. before and after disaster season).
- Additional meetings convened during recovery operations.
- Minutes and action items maintained by a nominated Secretariat and circulated within 7 days.
- The group will seek to make decisions by consensus of members present. Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Unresolved issues escalated to the DRRG Chair.

6. Principles

The Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Functional Group operates in accordance with the **National Principles for Disaster Recovery:**

- Understand the Context.
- Recognise Complexity.
- Use Community-led Approaches.
- Coordinate all Activities.
- Communicate Effectively.
- Recognise and Build Capacity.

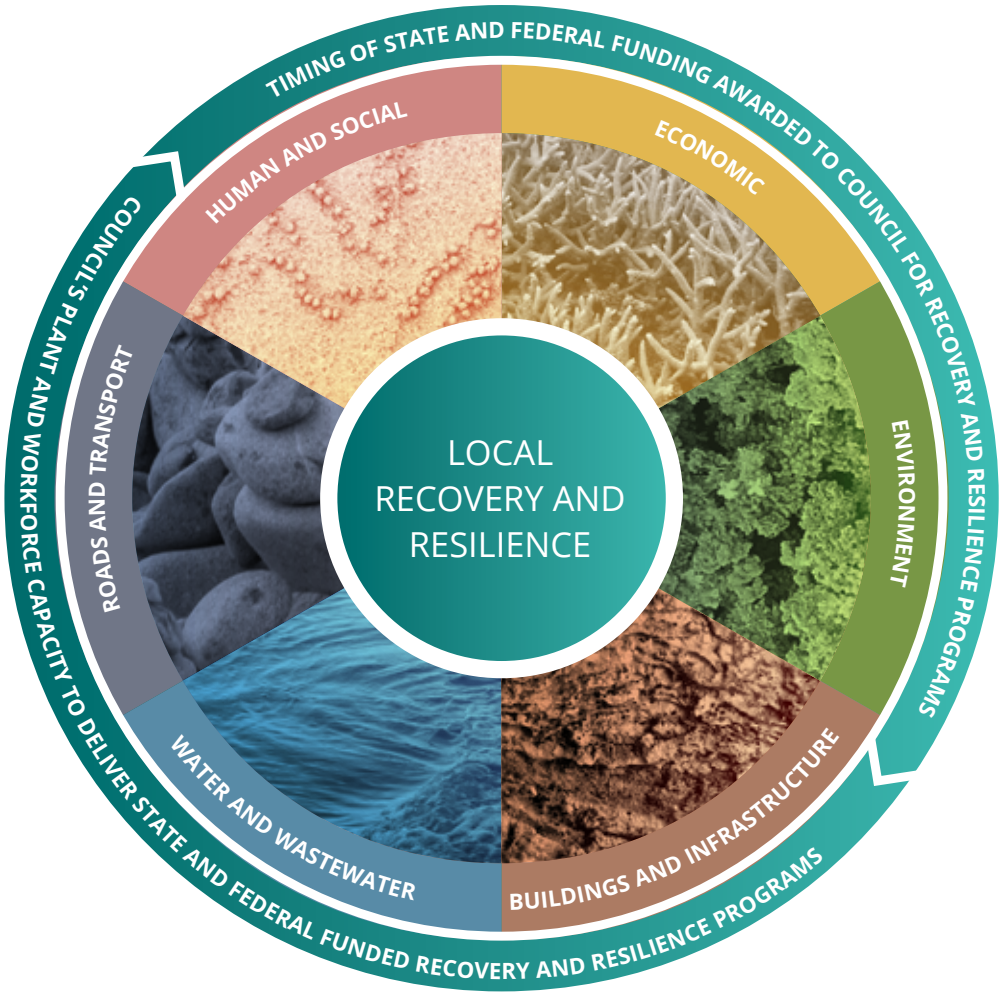
Economic

Recovery Resilience Functional Group

1. Purpose

The Economic Recovery and Resilience Functional Group supports the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) by planning, coordinating, and monitoring economic recovery and resilience activities across the Douglas Shire.

The Economic Recovery and Resilience Functional Group aims to restore and strengthen the local economy following a disaster, reduce the disruption to businesses and employment, and support economic betterment by aligning recovery with future resilience.



Economic
Responsible for restoring and strengthening the local economy following a disaster, reduce the disruption to businesses and employment, and support economic betterment by aligning recovery with future resilience.

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT

Disaster Management is everybody's business

2. Functions

The Economic Recovery and Resilience Functional Group will:

- Support the development and maintenance of the Douglas Recovery Sub-Plan.
- Support impacted businesses and industries with recovery information, grants, and services.
- Monitor and report on the impacts to economic activity, supply chains, tourism, and employment.
- Coordinate economic recovery activities with government, peak industry bodies, and business networks.
- Contribute to business continuity, redevelopment, and betterment planning.
- Advocate for and facilitate access to state/federal financial assistance and recovery programs.
- Align economic recovery with infrastructure, environmental and human social recovery efforts.
- Engage with insurers and support services to reduce barriers to economic reactivation.
- Support long-term economic development strategies that build disaster resilience.

3. Membership

Core members include representatives from:

- Douglas Shire Council (Tourism and Economic Development, Community Services).
- Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).
- Local Chamber of Commerce and tourism/economic bodies.
- FNQ business and industry networks.
- Additional stakeholders may be invited by the Chair based on the event type and scope.

4. Governance and Reporting

The Economic Recovery and Resilience Functional Group is a functional subgroup of the DRRG. It is chaired by the Tourism and Economic Development Officer (or delegate) and reports directly to the DRRG Chair.

The Chair may nominate a deputy or acting chair as required.

All correspondence should be directed to:
economic.recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au

5. Meetings

- Minimum of two meetings annually (pre and post wet season).
- Additional meetings convened during recovery operations.
- Minutes and action items maintained by a nominated Secretariat and circulated within 7 days.
- The group will seek to make decisions by consensus of members present. Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Unresolved issues escalated to the DRRG Chair.

6. Principles

The Economic Recovery and Resilience Functional Group will operate in in accordance with the **National Principles for Disaster Recovery**:

- Understand the Context.
- Recognise Complexity.
- Use Community-led Approaches.
- Coordinate all Activities.
- Communicate Effectively.
- Recognise and Build Capacity.

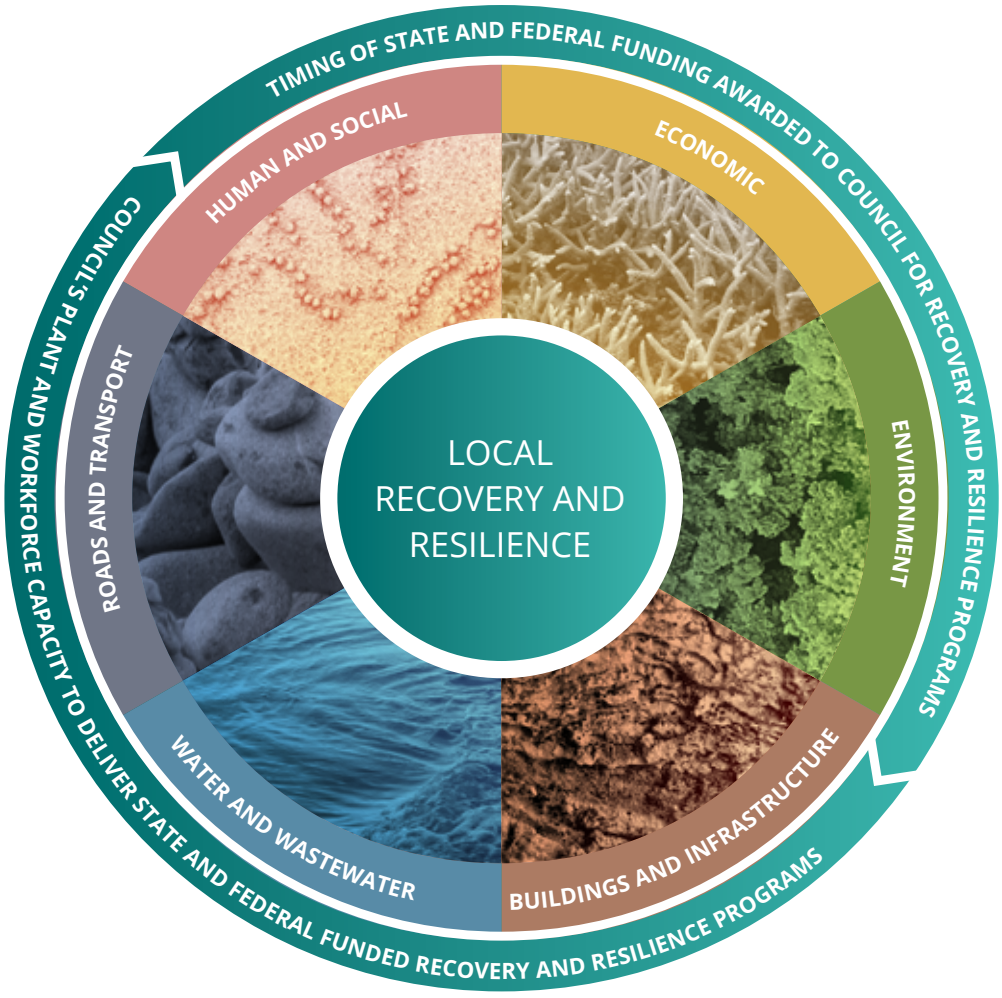
Environment

Recovery Resilience Functional Group

1. Purpose

The Environment Recovery and Resilience Functional Group supports the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) by coordinating disaster recovery operations and strategic planning for environmental resilience across the Douglas Shire.

The Environment Recovery and Resilience Functional Group aims to minimise the adverse impacts of disasters on natural systems and ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and long-term sustainability of the region's unique environmental values.



Environment
Responsible for minimising the adverse impacts of disasters on natural systems and ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and long-term sustainability of the region's unique environmental values.

2. Functions

The Environment Recovery and Resilience Functional Group will:

- Support the development and maintenance of the Douglas Recovery Sub-Plan.
- Coordinate local environmental recovery operations during and following disaster events.
- Identify, assess, and monitor environmental impacts (e.g. erosion and habitat loss).
- Liaise with key agencies and networks to advocate for restoration efforts.
- Support ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation strategies.
- Promote the use of green infrastructure and environmentally sustainable design in recovery.
- Involve local communities, Traditional Owners, and environmental groups in planning and delivery.
- Support integration of environmental initiatives within broader recovery functions (e.g. infrastructure, economic, human and social).

3. Membership

Core membership may include representatives from:

- Douglas Shire Council (Environment and Planning).
- Local organisations who deliver environmental services (e.g. rangers).
- Relevant government agencies and governing bodies.
- Supporting members may be invited by the Chair as required, based on the type and scale of the event.

4. Governance and Reporting

The Environment Recovery and Resilience Functional Group is a functional subgroup of the DRRG. It is chaired by the Manager Planning and Environment (or delegate) and reports directly to the DRRG Chair.

The Chair may nominate a deputy or acting chair as required.

All correspondence should be directed through:
environment.recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au

5. Meetings

- Minimum of two meetings annually (e.g. before and after disaster season).
- Additional meetings convened during recovery operations.
- Minutes and action items maintained by a nominated Secretariat and circulated within 7 days.
- The group will seek to make decisions by consensus of members present. Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Unresolved issues escalated to the DRRG Chair.

6. Principles

The Environment Recovery and Resilience Functional Group will operate in accordance with the **National Principles for Disaster Recovery:**

- Understand the Context.
- Recognise Complexity.
- Use Community-led Approaches.
- Coordinate all Activities.
- Communicate Effectively.
- Recognise and Build Capacity.

Infrastructure

Recovery Resilience Functional Group

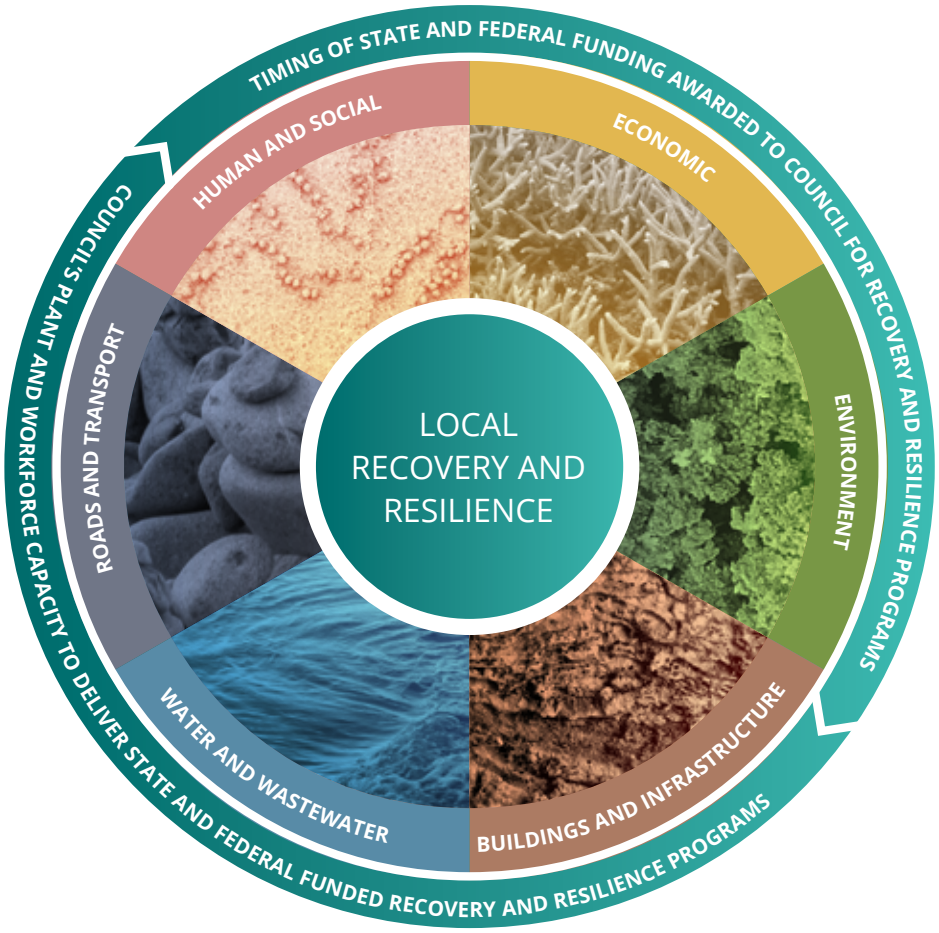
Incorporates

- Buildings and Infrastructure
- Roads and Transport
- Water and Wastewater

1. Purpose

The Infrastructure Recovery and Resilience Functional Groups support the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) by planning, coordinating, and monitoring the recovery and long-term resilience of the built environment, roads and transport systems, water and wastewater following disaster events.

The group ensures that infrastructure recovery is efficient, sustainable, and aligned with community needs and includes future-proofing objectives.



Buildings and Infrastructure

Responsible for reinstating damaged and disrupted built assets that influence essential services and facilities.

Water and Wastewater

Responsible for identifying and addressing all water-related impacts to water quality and supply.

Roads and Transport (provisional)

Responsible for the restoration of transport networks including road, rail, aviation and maritime which hinder or halt community movements and critical supply chain.

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT

Disaster Management is everybody's business

2. Functions

The Infrastructure Recovery and Resilience Functional Groups will:

- Support the development and maintenance of the Douglas Recovery Sub-Plan.
- Coordinate post-disaster assessments, repairs, and reconstruction of council and public assets.
- Monitor and report damage and disruption across buildings, transport networks, and utility systems.
- Facilitate restoration of services such as water supply, wastewater, council buildings and access routes.
- Engage with infrastructure stakeholders (e.g. QRA, TMR, Ergon, Telstra and regulatory bodies).
- Provide technical and regulatory advice to the DRRG and impacted community members.
- Liaise with insurance providers and regulators (e.g. QBCC, ICA) to accelerate rebuilding.
- Promote betterment and resilient design in reconstruction efforts.
- Integrate infrastructure recovery into broader recovery functions (e.g. economic, environmental, human and social).

3. Membership

Core membership may include:

- Douglas Shire Council (Infrastructure, Water and Wastewater, Roads and Transport Teams).
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).
- Relevant government agencies and governing bodies.
- Utility providers.
- Supporting members may be invited by the Chair based on the nature and impact of specific events.

4. Governance and Reporting

The Infrastructure Recovery and Resilience Functional Groups are functional subgroups of the DRRG. Focus area specific groups are chaired by the Manager Maintenance and Operations, Manager Construction and Commercial or Manager Water and Wastewater (as appropriate) and reports to the DRRG Chair.

The Chair may nominate a deputy or acting chair as required.

All correspondence should be directed through:
infrastructure.recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au

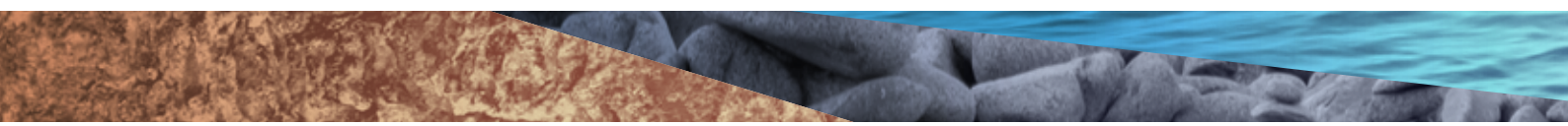
5. Meetings

- Minimum of two meetings annually (e.g. before and after disaster season).
- Additional meetings convened during recovery operations
- Minutes and action items maintained by a nominated Secretariat and circulated within 7 days.
- The group will seek to make decisions by consensus of members present. Where consensus cannot be reached, the chair will determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Unresolved issues escalated to the DRRG Chair.

6. Principles

The Infrastructure Recovery and Resilience Functional Groups will operate in accordance with the **National Principles for Disaster Recovery:**

- Understand the Contex.t
- Recognise Complexity.
- Use Community-led Approaches.
- Coordinate all Activities.
- Communicate Effectively.
- Recognise and Build Capacity.



Appendices

Appendix B – Reporting templates (FRRG templates)

- Douglas Recovery Resilience Group Agenda Template
- Douglas Recovery Resilience Group Minute Template
- Douglas Recovery Resilience Group SitRep Template
- Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group Meeting Agenda Template
- Functional Recovery Resilience Sub-Group Meeting Minutes Template

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG)

Meeting Agenda

The DRRG is committed to ensuring that Douglas Shire communities have a resilient future, and that the DSC approaches recovery from an empathic and inclusive methodology in partnership with the community, external organisations, and agencies.

Date:

Time:

Venue: Douglas Shire Council

1	Welcome and acknowledgement	
2	Apologies	
3	Minutes, resolution statement and business arising from previous meeting	
4	Douglas Shire Council Disaster Management Unit update	
5	Presentations from special speakers or members	
6	FRRG Chair Updates	
7	DRRG external member updates by exception	
8	Any other business	
9	Next meeting:	
10	Meeting closed:	

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG)

Minutes

The purpose of the DRRG is to assist the LDMG to coordinate recovery at a local level for specific events and provide long-term strategic resilience planning for the Douglas Shire including community participation.

Date:

Time:

Venue: Douglas Shire Council

1	Welcome and acknowledgement	
2	Apologies	
3	Introductions, Minutes, Resolution Statement and business arising from previous meeting	
4	Douglas Shire Council Update	
5	Presentation:	
	Presentation:	
	Presentation:	
6	DRRG external member updates by exception	
7	Other business Action Items	
8	Next meeting	
9	Meeting closed	

SITREP

Douglas Recovery Resilience Group

Event		
XXXXXX		
Situation Report No.	**Date:**	**Time:**
#	Monday, XX September XXXX	00:00
Distribution:		
Local Disaster Management Group / DRRG Functional Recovery Resilience Groups		
DRFA assistance measures (activated by the Queensland Government)		
• EXAMPLE: Counter Disaster Operations • EXAMPLE: Essential Services Safety Reconnection Scheme • EXAMPLE: Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme • EXAMPLE: Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets		

Management / Coordination Summary:

LDMG Status: **ALERT** **LEAN FORWARD** **STAND UP** **STAND DOWN**

DDMG Status: **ALERT** **LEAN FORWARD** **STAND UP** **STAND DOWN**

SDCC Status: **ALERT** **LEAN FORWARD** **STAND UP** **STAND DOWN**

DRRG Status: **ALERT** **LEAN FORWARD** **STAND UP** **STAND DOWN**

Key Updates: Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator

Situational Overview

Latest updates are highlighted

Weather (Observations)

Projected activities for next 24/ 48 hours

Impacts

Rapid damage assessments

Forward Planning

Recovery Hubs

Functional Recovery Resilience Group Updates

Human & Social

Economic

Environment

Buildings and Infrastructure

Roads and Transport

Water and Wastewater

Agency Updates

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (Community Recovery)

Queensland Reconstruction Authority

Department of Housing and Public Works

QLD Health - Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Services (CHHHS)

Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (Parks and Forests)

Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (Environmental Services and Regulation)

Queensland Rural and Industry Development (QRIDA)

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Department of Customer Services, Open Data and Small and Family Business

Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism.

Emerging Issues

Internal

External

Next Meeting

XX/XX/XXX 00:00

Reports by Exception and a Daily SITREP will be distributed between XX/XX/XXXX – XX/XX/XXXX

DRRG Contacts XX/XX/XXXX – XX/XX/XXXX

Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator	**recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au**
DRRG Deputy Chair	**xxxxxxxx@douglas.qld.gov.au**
DRRG Support Officer	**xxxxxxxx@douglas.qld.gov.au**

Author: DRRG Support Officer	**Date:**	Tuesday, XX December XXX	**Approval:** Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator	**Date:**	Tuesday, XX December XXXX
	Time:	00:00		**Time:**	00:00
Signature	**Email Approval**		**Signature**		

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT
Disaster Management is everybody's business

Sub Group

Meeting Agenda

Date:

Time:

Venue:

1	Welcome and acknowledgement	
2	Apologies	
3	Actions arising from previous meeting	
4	Community Sentiment (general sense of how the 'community' are feeling/attitudes in relation to 'disaster preparedness, recovery/resilience)	
5	Emerging issues/opportunities	
6	Funding - Current/future needs & opportunities	
7.	Actions (what, who & by when)	
8.	Next meeting:	
9.	Meeting closed	

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

DOUGLAS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNIT
Disaster Management is everybody's business

Recovery Resilience Sub Group

Meeting Minutes

Date:
Time:
Venue:

1	Welcome and acknowledgement	
2	Apologies	
3	Business arising from previous meeting	
4	Community Sentiment	
5	Emerging issues/opportunities	
6	Funding – Current/future needs & opportunities	
7	Actions (what, who & by when)	
8	Next Meeting	
9	Meeting Closed:	

Appendices

Appendix C – Plan templates

- QRA Local Recovery Plan Template 2025
- Recent example: Tropical Cyclone Jasper Local Recovery Plan, July 2025
- Recent example: 2025-2026 Severe Weather Season Local Recovery Plan

Council name
Event name Local Recovery Plan

Approved by XXX on XXX

Place council logo here

Recovery narrative

About our community
Insert text here

About the disaster event
Insert text here

Local Recovery Group
Chaired by: name and role title

Key stakeholders
Insert text here (local or state stakeholders who are key to local recovery)

Measures of success

Human and social
- Insert text here

Building
- Insert text here

Economic
- Insert text here

Roads and transport
- Insert text here

Environment
- Insert text here

Recovery objectives

1. Insert text here
2. Insert text here
3. Insert text here
4. Insert text here
5. Insert text here
6. Insert text here
7. Insert text here
8. Insert text here
9. Insert text here
10. Insert text here
11. Insert text here
12. Insert text here
13. Insert text here
14. Insert text here
15. Insert text here
16. Insert text here
17. Insert text here
18. Insert text here
19. Insert text here
20. Insert text here

Recovery timeframes

	Short term	Medium/long term	Ongoing	
Human and social	1 2 3 4			Insert text here
Economic	5 6 7 8			Insert text here
Environment	9 10 11 12			Insert text here
Building	13 14 15 16			Insert text here
Roads and transport	17 18 19 20			Insert text here

Council name

Damage and impacts

Human and social
- Insert text here

Building
- Insert text here

Economic
- Insert text here

Roads and transport
- Insert text here

Environment
- Insert text here

Recovery tasks

Human and social
- Insert text here

Building
- Insert text here

Economic
- Insert text here

Roads and transport
- Insert text here

Environment
- Insert text here

Douglas Shire Council

Tropical Cyclone Jasper Local Recovery Plan

Approved by Paul Hoye (LDC) on 1 July 2025

Recovery narrative

About our community

The Douglas Shire (the Shire) covers an area of 2,445km^2 from Wangetti Beach in the south to the Bloomfield River in the north. The economy of the Shire depends mainly on agriculture and tourism, welcoming an average of 426,000 overnight visitors and 262,000 day visitors each year, generating $574 million while supporting more than 2,500 jobs.

The Shire is home to over 12,000 residents, with almost 60% living in the two main population centres of Port Douglas and Mossman. Port Douglas is the tourist gateway to the Shire, while Mossman is the administrative, health, industrial and agricultural hub. Other principal urban centres include the beachside communities of Wonga Beach, Newell Beach and Cooya Beach. The remaining residents live in small, decentralised communities scattered along the 100km stretch of coast road; tucked into the rainforest or in small rural townships in the valleys of the Shire's hinterland.

The Shire is home to both the Eastern Kuku Yalanjiwarra Bama people and Djabugay Nations. Both tribes work closely within their respective groups to care for their land, sea, and country through their identity, culture, traditions, customary knowledge, practices and lores.

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) is committed to ensuring that our communities have a successful and resilient future and will approach recovery from an empathic and inclusive approach in partnership with the community, other organisations, and agencies.



About the disaster event

Tropical Cyclone Jasper kicked off Australia's 2023-2024 cyclone season and was the wettest tropical cyclone in Australian history, surpassing Cyclone Peter in 1979. The event's impact on the community is significant and should not be overlooked including loss of life and injury.

TC Jasper and subsequent rainfall event resulted in severe destruction to homes, businesses, vehicles, properties, livestock, and people's means of earning a living. Riverbanks and riparian areas were eroded or destroyed, and entire trees ripped from the ground and carried downstream.

Countless major landslips occurred at various locations across the Shire. Roads and bridges were inundated, major water treatment plants and power infrastructure had to be taken temporarily offline, and the Daintree River burst its banks at 16 metres. Significant tourism locations were damaged.

The ongoing impacts of long-term displacement of people and families, uninhabitable homes and loss of income and livelihoods will be key features of recovery efforts going forward.





Local Recovery Group

2023/2024 Chaired by Local Recovery Coordinator Sara Roberts, supported by LDMG Chair Mayor Lisa Scomazzon.

Due to the scale and complexity of TC Jasper the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group was established in 2025. This is chaired by the Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator Annette Plowman and supported by Deputy Chair Sara Roberts.



Key stakeholders

Disaster recovery is a whole of government, whole of community responsibility and these groups and agencies are Douglas Shire Council's (Council) partners in recovery from this event:

- Department of Primary Industries (Biosecurity)
- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM)
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Department of the Environment, Science and Innovation (Parks and Forests)
- Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (Environment)
- Department of Housing and Public Works (HPW)
- Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWV)
- Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
- Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR)
- Douglas Cluster of Schools
- Douglas Shire Council (DSC)
- Ergon Energy
- Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety
- GIVIT
- Insurance Council of Australia
- Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
- Kubirriwarra Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
- Lifeline
- Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)
- Mossman Support Services
- National Broadband Network (NBN)
- Port Douglas Community Service Network
- Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS)
- Queensland Fire Department
- Queensland Health
- Queensland Police Service (QPS)
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA)
- Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA)
- Australian Red Cross
- Regional Development Australia (RDA)
- Rural Fire Services Queensland (RFS)
- Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia
- The Salvation Army
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- State Emergency Service
- Telstra
- Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD)
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ)
- And other local services, industry bodies and non-government organisations

Recovery objectives (at June 2025)

Council has worked tirelessly to progress the initial 27 objectives, and subsequent 58 actions identified in our Local Recovery and Resilience Action Plan which was first tabled to the LDMG in May 2024.

In 2025, more than 18 month since ex-TC Jasper made landfall in the Shire, Council is continuing to engage with impacted communities to identify and address their evolving recovery needs.

Having dramatically increased their internal Disaster Management capability, Council continues to collaborate with residents, businesses, community services, First Nations Peoples, and all levels of government to build response capability and increase community resilience for future events.

1. Coordinate community support services to meet the emerging needs of impacted residents; specifically individualised case management for eligible Structural Assistance Grant (SGA) recipients.
2. Ongoing identification and promotion of community-led recovery and resilience-building initiatives across all recovery pillars, and continued monitoring and evaluation of community recovery and resilience outcomes.
3. Strengthen Douglas Recovery Resilience Group stakeholder interoperability.
4. Ensure impacted tourism, hospitality, and primary producers have access to financial support to rebuild businesses; and restore confidence in impacted sectors.
5. Identify and promote opportunities to strengthen the region's recovery and resilience capability, and to mitigate potential public safety risks in future disasters.
6. Ongoing management of flood-impacted waste.
7. Implement effective and efficient processes to identify and address disaster-related animal welfare concerns.
8. Continue to source funding to implement and monitor environmental restoration and protection programs.
9. Continue to prioritise the identification and protection of sites of cultural significance to First Nations Peoples impacted by ex TC Jasper.
10. Secure Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) funding to restore essential infrastructure; water and drainage.
11. Continue Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA) works to rebuild impacted roads and bridges.
12. Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure cultural protocol is followed, and cultural consultation is conducted to protect Native Title Land.

Measures of success

Human and social

- Positive cyclone safety sentiment is felt within community.
- Active and trusted community/council engagement.
- Community routine returns to pre-event rhythm.
- All impacted residents achieve permanent accommodation solutions.
- Cohesive, trusted Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) memberships.

Economic

- Productive and profitable business sector achieving pre-cyclone GRP outputs.
- Business continuity measures adopted widely by business sector to increase resilience to future events.
- Shire is front of mind with local, interstate and international tourists.

Environment

- Culturally significant sites are valued by government, business and the community.
- Environmental resilience is enhanced to ensure ongoing connection to Country for First Nations peoples.
- The environment and ecosystems are restored to their pre-event condition, ensuring ecological integrity and sustainability.
- Environmental restoration projects are effectively delivered, enhancing ecosystem resilience to future events.
- Enhanced animal management frameworks achieve increased safety for native and domestic animals in future weather events.
- All cyclone waste and debris is managed

Buildings and Infrastructure

- QRA Funding secured and restoration of infrastructure projects underway

Roads and Transport

- Restoration of roads and bridges achieved under REPA funding
- QRA Funding secured and restoration of infrastructure projects underway

Water and Wastewater

Due to the significant impact to our water infrastructure from this event the Douglas Recovery Resilience Group includes a sixth recovery pillar 'Water and Wastewater'

- QRA Funding secured and restoration of infrastructure projects underway

Recovery timeframes

Ongoing »»

Human and social	1 2 3 5 »»
Economic	4 »»
Environment	5 6 7 8 »»
Building and Infrastructure	5 »»
Water and Wastewater	5 9 10 »»
Roads and transport	5 9 11 »»



Damage and impacts

Human and social

- One resident lost their life in floodwaters.
- Residents sustained injuries from landslides.
- Destruction of community Cultural Heritage space for First Nations communities, and extensive acute psychological impacts for residents - extensive and ongoing related health concerns including increased drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and self-harm.
- Prolonged isolation for some communities causing acute psychological impacts, including the degradation of connection to Country and belonging; and associated reliance on resupply.
- Extended Displacement due to damage to homes, and associated anxiety over housing repairs and security.
- Heightened community anxiety in response to intermittent and delayed communication from Council and other emergency services.
- Disruption to access of services (health, power, water, telecommunications).
- Suspended community connectedness and engagement in organised activities (sporting, social, cultural, faith based, etc.)
- Interruption to childcare and education
- Extended power outages resulted in significant food spoil and loss.
- Loss of income for casual workforce.
- Impact across the shire to mental health and well-being of residents claiming insurances on damaged properties and impact to businesses.

Economic

- A vast majority of businesses in Douglas Shire were financially impacted; of note a reduction of $56.3 million lost in FY23/24 GRP
- Loss of trade for local businesses and service providers due to direct damage, indirect infrastructure closures, and high-profile media coverage urging people to avoid the region.
- Business continuity impacted by extensive freight and transportation outages and delays.
- Primary production impacted by land degradation, feed and stock losses.
- Loss of income for residents employed in casual and seasonal positions.
- Loss of income for residents who were isolated and could not reach their places of work.
- Financial implications for those under-insured or not insured; and increased premiums across impacted areas.
- Many businesses were deemed ineligible for financial supports due to their business structure.
- Associated costs of mitigating post-flood environmental and biohazard concerns.

Environment

- Public health concerns, predominantly in response to water contamination and food spoil.
- Water quality compromised by erosion along creeks and waterways, and contamination of water catchment areas and riparian habitats.
- Significant loss of native vegetation and coastal erosion.
- Sediment loads carried from river systems on the Great Barrier Reef; associated widening of natural waterways.
- Maritime and environmental hazards in waterways.
- Damage to Natural Heritage sites, culturally significant lands and waterways, and National Parks.
- Extensive damage to Council land assets including parks and green spaces, beaches and road verges.
- Implications of waste service interruption and damage to waste facilities, exacerbated by significance of flood waste (household, food and vegetation).
- Significant degradation and loss of agricultural assets (stock, feed, crops).

Buildings and Infrastructure

- Intermittent connectivity of mobile and internet services
- Multiple high voltage power lines damaged and destroyed
- Extensive damage to council-owned building infrastructure; waste facilities,, building, parks and playgrounds
- Significant drainage blockages across the Shire.
- Degradation of river gauges, monitoring cameras and other flood network infrastructure
- Unapproved dwellings ineligible for State recovery grants.

Roads and Transport

- 95 Council-controlled roads closed due to impacts of landslides, debris (fallen trees) and flooding; extensive associated pavement and bridge damage.
- >100 landslips impacted local and state roads, many requiring Geotechnical engineer expertise to assess.
- Significant loss and damage to Shire signage.
- Extensive damage sustained to council retaining embankments, recreation infrastructure, beach access and footpaths.
- Land ferry infrastructure, several boat ramps and pontoons washed away or compromised

Water and Wastewater

- Extensive damage to council-owned water treatment and distribution systems
- Reduced performance and community levels of service of water supply systems due to long lasting source water catchment changes
- Flood related damage to low lying wastewater assets



Recovery actions

Human and social

- Financial rate relief for impacted residents.
- Joint State and council case management of SAGs.
- Deliver a variety of community-led events to foster social connectedness.
- Establish a Community Disaster Resilience Cache.
- Improve public flood resilience tools and communications.
- Ongoing review and delivery of DSC Resilience Strategy measures.
- Delivery community-based risk assessment workshops to inform the LDMP.
- Achieve a whole-of-shire hazard study to inform future development and disaster planning.
- Strengthen operational relationship with neighbouring LGAs.
- Appoint a Disaster Support Officer to assist the recovery efforts and LDMG function.
- Encourage community wellbeing via creative recovery activities.

Economic

- Deliver an ongoing economic impact assessment.
- Continue to advocate for regional recovery and resilience funding.
- Maintain advocacy for telecommunications upgrades within the Shire.
- Develop and deliver destination marketing campaigns.
- Foster partnerships with industry to achieve tourism diversification.
- Develop a Housing Action Plan to accommodate skilled, essential and seasonal workers affordably.

Environment

- Continue surveys to identify and remediate sites impacted by flood waste and debris.
- Commence Natural Environment Damage Assessments once funding package is releases.
- Develop a Livestock Management Framework.
- Develop an Environmental Restoration Framework to respond to disaster-born weeds and pests.
- Explore commercial opportunities to manage green waste.
- Actively contribute to the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Strategy.
- Develop and implement Site Management Plans to protect and preserve culturally significant sites.

Buildings and Infrastructure

- Deliver flood resilience infrastructure works using Betterment Funding.
- Deliver community safety infrastructure projects at Cape Tribulation.

Roads and Transport

- Progress works under Restoration of Essential Public Assets (REPA) funding.
- Ongoing development of Cape Tribulation Road Community Reference Group.
- Progress Daintree Ferry Infrastructure project works.
- Ongoing consultation with First Nations Peoples regarding landslip clearing on cultural lands.

Water and Wastewater

- Achieve repairs and renewal to the Shire's water and wastewater infrastructure network damaged by TC Jasper
- Upgrade critical water and wastewater infrastructure to better protect against future climate events





Douglas Shire Council

2025-2026 Severe Weather Season Local Recovery Plan

Approved by Paul Hoye (LDC) on 22 June 2026

Recovery narrative

About our community

The Douglas Shire (the Shire) covers an area of 2,445km^2 from Wangetti Beach in the south to the Bloomfield River in the north. The economy of the Shire depends mainly on agriculture and tourism, welcoming an average of 426,000 overnight visitors and 262,000 day visitors each year, generating $574 million while supporting more than 2,500 jobs.

The Shire is home to over 13,000 residents, with almost 60% living in the two main population centres of Port Douglas and Mossman. Port Douglas is the tourist gateway to the Shire, while Mossman is the administrative, health, industrial and agricultural hub.

Other principal urban centres include the beachside communities of Wonga Beach, Newell Beach and Cooya Beach. The remaining residents live in small, decentralised communities scattered along the 100km stretch of coast road; tucked into the rainforest or in small rural townships in the valleys of the Shire's hinterland.

The Shire is home to both the Eastern Kuku Yalanjiwarra Bama people and Djabugay Nations. Both groups work to care for their land, sea, and country through their identity, culture, traditions, customary knowledge, practices and lores.



About the disaster event

Significant severe weather was experienced across Douglas Shire during the 2025-26 wet season, with multiple consecutive disaster events occurring in rapid succession. Three key events impacted the region, including Tropical Low 12U (Tropical Cyclone Koji) (8–9 January), Tropical Low 29U (5-8 March), and Tropical Cyclone Narelle (18–23 March), resulting in cumulative and compounding impacts to communities, businesses and infrastructure. Heavy rainfall associated with the North Queensland Monsoon Trough also impacted the Shire on 28 December 2025, leading to the Douglas LDMG to move to Alert between 28-31 December 2025.

Tropical Low 12U (Tropical Cyclone Koji) triggered the first activation of the Douglas LDMG for 2026. Debris and tree obstructions affected the Daintree River and local road network, resulting in community isolation.

In early March, Tropical Low 29U approached the coast of Far North Queensland from the Coral Sea. Although earlier cyclone watch alerts had been cancelled by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), by 5 March there was a severe weather warning in place for regions north of Cairns. In particular the BoM were warning of "heavy showers and thunderstorms extending along the monsoon trough through the Daintree".

Rainfall totals up to 500mm were recorded in the following 24-hour period across the Daintree and Cape Tribulation areas which caused rapid river rises and flooding. The Daintree River peaked about two metres above major flood levels of 13-14 metres. The floods inundated local roads, farms, infrastructure and some businesses. Crucially a concrete pontoon on the southern bank of the Daintree River broke free which impacted the Daintree River Ferry, damaging the vessel and causing it to break its moorings. This resulted in businesses, residents and tourists north of the Daintree River being cut off, with alternate access via the 4WD Bloomfield Track to Wujal Wujal also being impacted by flooding.

On 17 March Douglas Shire was placed under a cyclone watch by BoM for Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle, which made landfall as a Category 4 system near Coen on 20 March. As a result of heavy rainfall and river levels rising, a Flood Watch was issued for the North Tropical Coast and Cape York Peninsula and a minor flood warning was issued for Daintree Village on 19 March.



Douglas Recovery Resilience Group

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) was activated on 9 January 2026 and remained stood up until 6 May 2026, in response to subsequent events and compounding impacts.

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) is committed to ensuring that our communities have a successful resilient future and will approach recovery from an empathic and inclusive methodology in partnership with the community, other organisations, and agencies.

The Douglas Recovery Resilience Group (DRRG) is chaired by the Local Recovery Resilience Coordinator (LRRC) Annette Plowman and supported by Deputy LRRC Sara Roberts with six Functional Recovery Resilience Sub Groups

- Human and Social
- Environment
- Economic
- Building and Infrastructure
- Roads and Transport
- Water and Wastewater

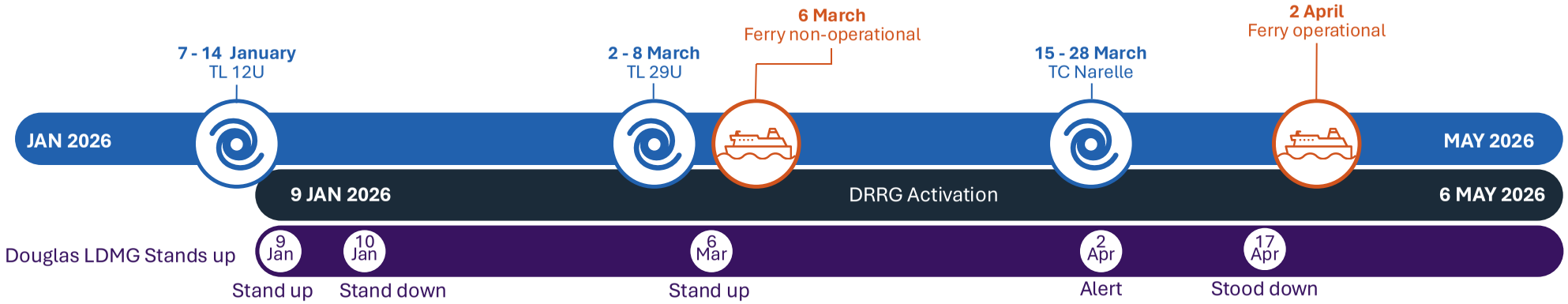


Download the Douglas Recovery Resilience Sub Plan here

Key stakeholders

Disaster recovery is a whole-of-government and whole-of-community responsibility. The following groups and agencies are Douglas Shire Council's (Council) recovery partners:

- Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM)
- Department of Customer Services, Open Data, Small and Family Business
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Department of the Environment, Science and Innovation (Parks and Forests)
- Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (Environment)
- Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety
- Department of Housing and Public Works (HPW)
- Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWV)
- Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR)
- Douglas Cluster of Schools
- Ergon Energy
- GIVIT
- Insurance Council of Australia
- Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
- Kubirriwarra Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
- Lifeline
- Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)
- Mossman Multi-Purpose Health Service
- Mossman Support Services
- National Broadband Network (NBN)
- Port Douglas Community Service Network
- Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS)
- Queensland Fire Department
- Queensland Health
- Queensland Police Service (QPS)
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA)
- Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA)
- Australian Red Cross
- Regional Development Australia (RDA)
- Rural Fire Services Queensland (RFS)
- Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia
- The Salvation Army
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- State Emergency Service
- Telstra
- Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD)
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ)
- And other local services, industry bodies and non-government organisations





Measures of success

Human and social

- Impacted community members have access to, and are aware of, disaster recovery assistance, including mental health support.
- Families and communities accessed supports through respectful, community-informed engagement.
- Community members have timely, reliable access to essential supplies and services, and report that their basic needs are consistently met during and after disruptions.
- Community-led, holistic recovery activities and initiatives have been implemented and are being monitored.
- Community infrastructure and facilities are fit-for-purpose, accessible, and able to effectively support recovery activities and essential services during and after disruptions.
- Communities, particularly vulnerable groups, and recovery personnel are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to prepare for, respond to and recover from future events through accessible training and sustained capacity-building efforts.

Economic

- Business community members have access to, and are aware of, sufficient disaster recovery assistance, including mental health support.
- Planned supply chain resilience initiatives are in place and functioning, reducing disruption to the availability and distribution of essential goods.
- Efforts to improve understanding of insurance options and constraints are implemented, supporting more informed decision-making before and after events.
- Businesses are educated in disaster preparedness and resilience.
- Ferry infrastructure is upgraded and fit-for-purpose, reliably supporting community needs and reducing future isolation during disruption events.
- Grant programs increasingly recognise diverse community needs, enabling more equitable access for groups previously excluded or underrepresented.

Environment

- Environmental impacts have been assessed, with mitigation strategies developed and implemented.
- Systems and technology are strengthened to enable timely, accurate tracking of damage and impacts, supporting informed decision-making in future events.

Infrastructure

- Restoration of essential public assets achieved under DRFA funding.
- Essential services and utilities (e.g. power, water, telecommunications) are restored.
- Ferry infrastructure is upgraded and fit-for-purpose, reliably supporting community needs and reducing future isolation during disruption events.
- Access is restored to priority road and transport network.
- Design, planning and construction for betterment of roads and transport infrastructure is implemented under available funding arrangements.
- Grant programs increasingly recognise diverse community needs, enabling more equitable access for groups previously excluded or underrepresented.

Recovery objectives

1. Establish community support services to meet the immediate needs of the community.
2. Strengthen supports to impacted communities and build social ties through active and trusted community Council engagement.
3. Address resupply issues identified during community isolation.
4. Encourage community wellbeing via creative recovery activities.
5. Strengthen the Douglas Shire community's resilience to future events through the advocacy, development and implementation of recovery programs and resilience building initiatives.
6. Continue to engage with the Human Social Recovery and Resilience Sub-Group members to determine needs and opportunities for collaboration.
7. Identify and promote opportunities for the business community to be prepared for future disruptions and disasters.
8. Prioritise the collection of impact data from environmental agencies to quantify damages to cultural heritage values and support restoration works.
9. Identify impacts and conduct restoration works to Daintree River crossing access.
10. Facilitate the recovery and restoration of roads, bridges and critical infrastructure.
11. Establish and implement a program of works to restore and strengthen essential public assets and seek opportunities to enhance their resilience.

Recovery timeframes

	Short term	Medium/long term	Ongoing
Human and social	1, 2, 3	4	5, 6
Economic	1	7	5
Environment		8	5
Infrastructure	9, 10	11	5



Damage and impacts

Human and social

- Prolonged community isolation, with some communities being impacted consecutively through Tropical Low 12U, Tropical Low 29U and Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle.
- Extensive acute psychological impacts and related health concerns across communities, including heightened stress, anxiety, suicide and emotional fatigue.
- Tourists stranded north of Daintree River requiring evacuation via boat to Port Douglas.
- Interruption to education with school closures and isolation of students north of Daintree River.
- Daily travel for work, school, extracurricular activities, medical needs and essential supplies disrupted due to Daintree Ferry out of service and road closures.
- Ongoing weather led to the repeated suspension of critical transport and resupply services, including the temporary ferry and bus connections relied upon for essential travel, access to supplies, and school transport. This resulted in disrupted access to basic needs and heightened stress, uncertainty and fatigue among residents.
- A high demand for child anxiety and wellbeing support was identified following consecutive disaster events.
- Community and business dependence on coordinated agency support and timely public information was high.
- Mental health impacts emerged in communities, exacerbated by compounding factors from cost-of-living pressures, isolation and ongoing disaster events. Royal Flying Doctor Service saw an increase in referrals during this time.
- Heightened community anxiety in response to intermittent and delayed ferry closure communications, creating uncertainty for businesses trying to make timely operational decisions.
- Loss of income for casual, part-time and full-time workforce.
- Psychological and emotional impacts were experienced across all communities due to consecutive disaster events with no recovery time between them, compounded by the still ongoing recovery from Tropical Cyclone Jasper.
- Elevated levels of community distress due to uncertainties regarding funding, grants and income support eligibility.

Economic

- Estimated Weekly GVA (Gross Value Added) loss of $324,003 - $343,142 following Daintree Ferry impacts.
- With the Daintree Ferry out of operation from Thursday 5 March to Thursday 2 April, it can be estimated that losses would have accumulated to approximately $1.3 million GVA.
- Significant damage to assets such as boats, vehicles, buildings, fencing, tourism vessels and roads.
- Businesses suffered asset, stock and infrastructure loss.
- Primary producers reported extensive damage to fencing, stock loss and flow on access impacts from road closures.
- Near total cessation of tourism activity north of the Daintree River and impacts on other tourism operators in the area including possible long-term impacts on confidence and the areas reputation within the sector.
- Compounding impacts of cumulative weather events resulted in businesses not fully recovered from Tropical Cyclone Jasper being impacted again, eroding financial reserves and deepening uncertainty.
- The ferry closure and subsequent extended community isolation directly resulted in significant business losses and broader economic disruption. It disrupted supply chains, increased costs and created fuel access constraints that directly affected business operations. River-based operators were unable to resume operations until safe passenger access was restored due to impacts affecting the TMR pontoonon the southern bank.
- Contractor income loss due to access disruptions.
- Business sentiment indicates a reluctance to reinvest in expansion and business operational improvements until infrastructure vulnerabilities are addressed, posing a significant risk to long-term economic development in the region.
- Effective insurance cover near absent for businesses in the area

Environment

- Increased debris on Daintree River.
- Land, creek and vegetation degradation caused by coastal erosion.
- Increased feral pig breeding and subsequent activity leading to potential impacts on vegetation, erosion, water pollution and impacts to native wildlife.
- Closure of Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre and National Park.
- Damage to culturally significant species, water quality, disturbance to sacred sites and riparian vegetation.
- Significant flooding with Daintree River reaching Major levels resulting in sediment and erosion concerns and major vegetation loss at the Daintree Village Boat Ramp.
- Implications of waste service interruption for over 2 weeks leading to waste acceptance restrictions for communities.

Infrastructure

- Daintree Ferry broke free off its moorings. An upstream concrete pontoon and tourist vessel collided and attached to Daintree Ferry causing damage.
- Damage to Daintree Ferry land infrastructure on both sides of the Daintree River
- Woobadda Creek Causeway camera washed away.
- Multiple power and telecommunication outages across Douglas Shire communities.
- Damage or impacts to approximately 80% of Council-controlled roads and bridges, with some minor landslips in Upper Daintree, debris and flooding with repair efforts continuing over multiple events.

Recovery tasks

Human and social

- Establishment and operation of Community Recovery Hubs at 4 locations.
- Advocacy and activation of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements for Douglas Shire communities.
- Ensure mental health support is available and promoted to those in need.
- Build on support for children in Douglas Shire through the Little Birdie program and other initiatives.
- Advocate for a new Community Resilience and Recovery Officer to assist with delivery of recovery and resilience tasks.
- Reframe the conversation around disaster recovery and resilience.
- Establish additional community food storage capacity within the Douglas Shire to support vulnerable residents during wet season isolation events.
- Deliver a variety of community led events around wellbeing and recovery.
- Investigate funding opportunities to uplift Daintree Village Community Hall to ensure it meets the needs of the community during and following disaster events.
- Release of resilience funding for community led initiatives.
- Partner with Neighbourhood Centres in the delivery of Person-Centred Planning (P-CEP) for vulnerable/remote members of the community (partnership with Port Douglas Neighbourhood Centre (PDNC) and Mossman Support Services).
- Capacity building to strengthen the DRRG. Provide a suite of training and programs for direct assistance post event.
- Strengthening local sporting facilities infrastructure for greater access for women, all abilities and access to safe spaces for disasters and providing recovery / resilience hubs.

Environment

- Identify impacts and activities to support environmental recovery of the natural environment.
- Understand damage to cultural heritage values in the region.
- Reopen National Parks.
- Undertake environmental remediation works.
- Develop drone surveying capability to monitor beaches and erosion prone areas, pre and post season.
- Explore funding opportunities to support environmental resilience initiatives.

Economic

- Advocacy and activation of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements for the Douglas Shire communities.
- Conduct economic impact assessment to identify support needs and funding advocacy opportunities.
- Investigate energy & supply chain resilience including commercial quantity supply.
- Investigate options for appropriate insurance coverage and cost effectiveness.
- Support businesses in their future disaster preparedness and business continuity planning through a range of education and awareness activities.
- ‘Redundancy’ in Daintree Ferry service to be considered to support future resilience.
- Establish a framework for a coordinated advocacy approach in partnership with other agencies e.g. TPDD, TTNQ.
- Advocate for Primary Producers to be included in Small Business Grant Programs.
- Advocate with Local Government Authorities or (FNQROC) for a permanent indirect grant program for all small businesses including primary producers that can be rolled out more effectively.

Infrastructure

- Daintree Ferry Pontoon salvage.
- Daintree Ferry salvage.
- Restoration of essential services and utilities.
- Road clearing and reopening.
- Damage assessments and submissions.
- Detailed design & scope development.
- Procurement and contractor engagement.
- Understand long-term infrastructure requirements.
- Advocate for Betterment funding to ensure future disaster proofing of public assets.
- Rehabilitation of environmental infrastructure assets.
- Ensure compliance with governance requirements for secured funding.
- ‘Redundancy’ in Daintree Ferry service to be considered to support future resilience.



Version control and record of amendments

Version	Date issued	Amendment content	Date approved by LDMG
V1.0	August 2023	Initial DRAFT	August 2023
	December 2024	Second Draft post stakeholder workshops	
V1.1	August 2025	Full review and amendment	September 2025
V1.2	October 2026	Review and amendment	October 2026

The Plan is maintained by the Douglas Shire Council Disaster Management Unit (DMU) on behalf of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG).

Inconsequential amendments may be made at any time to this document. Any significant amendments or updates to this document will be submitted to the LDMG for review endorsement prior to approval by Council.

Any proposed amendments to this document must be received in writing for consideration:

Post Douglas Disaster Management Unit
Attn: Local Recovery and Resilience Coordinator
PO Box 723
MOSSMAN QLD 4873

Email dmu@douglas.qld.gov.au

