

5.7. APPOINTMENT OF THE LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP DOUGLAS REGION

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DEPARTMENT Environment and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves:

1. In accordance with sections 33,34 and 35 of the Disaster Management Act 2003, to appoint the following positions as members of the Local Disaster Management Group for the Douglas Shire Council area:

Position	Organisation
Chairperson – Mayor	Douglas Shire Council
Deputy Chairperson – Deputy Mayor	Douglas Shire Council
Local Disaster Coordinator – Manager Environment and Planning	Douglas Shire Council
Chief Executive Officer	Douglas Shire Council
Deputy Local Disaster Coordinator – Disaster Management Officer	Douglas Shire Council
Media Advisor – Media and Communications Officer	Douglas Shire Council
Executive Manager Infrastructure	Douglas Shire Council
Manager People and Community Services	Douglas Shire Council
Manager Water & Wastewater	Douglas Shire Council
Community Support Officer – Team Leader Community & Economic Development	Douglas Shire Council
OIC Port Douglas Station	Queensland Police Service
Inspector, Far North Region	Queensland Fire & Emergency Services
Director of Nursing	Mossman Hospital
Local Controller	State Emergency Service
Emergency Management Coordinator, Far North Region	Queensland Fire & Emergency Services
Executive Officer	Tourism Port Douglas & Daintree
Officer In Charge, Mossman	Queensland Ambulance Service
Senior Advisor Community Recovery, Far North Qld Region	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
Emergency Services Coordinator	Australian Red Cross
Senior Community Recovery Officer (Northern)	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

2. To note the measures that have been undertaken to ensure that Council has a disaster response capability; and
3. To note the report on the 2018/19 disaster year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) are required, under the Act, to be appointed by the Local Government. The list of LDMG Core Members has been updated to reflect changes in positions associated with the LDMG. Appointments are made by positions, rather than names, to help accommodate changes in personnel on the LDMG, which can occur for a variety of reasons. The appointment of the recommended positions as members of the LDMG will help ensure that the LDMG has a diverse range of representatives and skill sets to assist Council in meeting its needs under the Disaster Management Act and ensure that there is effective disaster management for the communities within the Douglas Shire area.

Council is required to ensure it has a disaster response capability under the Act. A summary of actions taken to ensure Council has a satisfactory response capability is provided in the body of this report along with a summary of the 2019 year.

Council's current Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) is currently being reviewed by Council officers incorporating some improvements learnt from the past monsoon season. The revised LDMP will be presented to Council in January for adoption following endorsement by the LDMG.

BACKGROUND

Section 29 of the Act requires a local government to establish a Local Disaster Management Group (local group) for the local government's area.

The functions of a LDMG as outlined in s.30 of the Act include:

- a) to develop effective disaster management, and regularly review and assess the disaster management;
- b) to help the local government for its area to prepare a local disaster management plan;
- c) to identify, and provide advice to the relevant district group about, support services required by the local group to facilitate disaster management and disaster operations in the area;
- d) to ensure the community is aware of ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.

LDMG members are appointed under s. 33 of the Act and LDMG membership includes:

- Chairperson (must be a councillor) appointed by the relevant local government under s.34 of the Act;
- Deputy Chairperson (recommended to be a councillor) appointed by the relevant local government under s.34 of the Act;
- Local Disaster Coordinator appointed by the relevant local government under s.35 of the Act;
- person nominated by the Chief Executive, Department of Community Safety (DCS), normally the responsible Area Director from EMQ appointed by the relevant local government under s. 33 of the Act; and

- other persons appointed by the relevant local government under s. 33 of the Act, which should include:
 - council representatives;
 - local emergency services – QPS, Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES), SES Incident Controller;
 - non-government organisations such as welfare organisations or community groups;
 - other representatives as identified by the local government’s functional requirements.

The majority of the members of the LDMG have been members since de-amalgamation and have been operating collaboratively as an LDMG.

Section 80 of the Act outlines the functions of a local government under this Act and these are as follows: -

- a) to ensure it has a disaster response capability;
- b) to approve its local disaster management plan prepared under part 3;
- c) to ensure information about an event or a disaster in its area is promptly given to the district disaster coordinator for the disaster district in which its area is situated;
- d) to perform other functions given to the local government under this Act.

COMMENT

Members of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) are required, under the Act, to be appointed by the Local Government. The appointment of membership by positions, rather than names, assists in accommodating changes in personnel on the LDMG, which can occur for a variety of reasons.

The appointment of the recommended positions as members of the LDMG will help ensure that the LDMG has a diverse range of representatives and skill sets to assist Council in meeting its needs under the Disaster Management Act and ensure that there is effective disaster management for the communities within the Douglas Shire area.

The Douglas LDMG has endorsed the proposed Core Membership of the LDMG.

Under the Act Council is required to ensure it has a disaster response capability. Douglas' disaster response capability has been continually increasing since de-amalgamation. Over the past 12 months, there has been a continued development of Council's capabilities and a number of actions are underway to further enhance Council's capabilities. A summary of actions undertaken over the past 12 months or in progress is given below: -

MITIGATION/PREVENTION

Completed:

- Public awareness messaging was compiled and actively rolled out in terms of emergency preparedness (e.g. bushfire messaging has been made available online on Douglas Shire’s social media pages and website).
- In July 2019 the Disaster Management Officer (DMO), Jamie Kleinhans, commenced in her role.

- Reviewed Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Education (cyclone shelter use) completed.
- Completed recruitment of new staff for Cyclone Shelter Management Team.
- Development of early warning system for flooding in the Mossman River.

In Progress:

- Mapping of older housing and asbestos constructed buildings.
- Memorandum of Agreement being finalised with the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) on the use of flood cameras.

PREPAREDNESS

Completed:

- On 28 May 2019 Douglas Shire Council formally adopted the Resilient Coast Strategic Plan, committing the organisation to 35 priority actions to reduce the impacts of coastal hazards on communities and natural assets. Douglas Shire Council is the first in Queensland to adopt a Resilient Coast Strategy.
- From July to September 2019 the Douglas LDMG attended QFES training on the following modules: Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA), Inductions; Evacuations; Recovery; Disaster Coordination Centre; and the LDCA Masterclass: Leadership in Disaster, Crisis and Adversity.
- On 26 August 2019 the Douglas LDMG meeting was held as well as the first Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan and Douglas Area Fire Management Group Meeting.
- The DMO represented Douglas Shire at the Mareeba Shire Council Risk Assessment workshop.
- From 02 to 05 September 2019 Douglas Shire participated in the 2019 Guardian User Conference.
- In September 2019 a Community Development officer (CDO) has been appointed. This role is funded by the DCDSS for November 2019 to June 2021. The CDO will provide cross-council support to the Douglas, Wujal Wujal and Cooktown shires. The focus is to build and improve community engagement capability and streamline engagement processes including disaster recovery and planning processes within the communities.
- On 09 – 10 October 2019 the DMO and LDC participated at the Douglas Shire Council at the Indigenous Local Government Disaster Resilience and Recovery Forum.
- On 31 October 2019 Exercise Semper Peratus was affected for testing of communications to and from the District Disaster Coordination Centre including Emergency Alert polygon/messaging campaign tested via the SDCC watch desk.
- On 01 November 2019 exercise for testing of communications to and from the District Disaster Coordination Centre including Satellite phone.
- From 11 – 29 November 2019 Get Ready Douglas Wallet-card USBs were promoted and could be collected from the Mossman Community Centre or Port Douglas Neighbourhood Centre.
- On 26 November 2019 the Places of Refuge and Evacuation Centre Keyholder list was updated to reflect current owner and contact details.
- From 28 to 29 November 2019 the Port Douglas Cyclone Shelter Management Team (CSMT) received formal training and a on 29 November 2019 participated in a functional driven activity. The primary objective was to review the Douglas CSMT and multi-agency state of readiness. This functional exercise of TC Joanne also focused on testing communication between the LDCC and the Cyclone Storm Tide Shelter via landline system, email, mobile phones, two-way system (car mounted, base mounted and portable) and Guardian IMS.

- With the support of the Mossman SES Douglas Shire Council has provided free sandbagging facilities in Mossman and Port Douglas to help residents prepare for the coming storms.
- Specifications have been obtained to purchase a 3-phase mobile generator to deploy to remote communities. This generator will be compatible with the Telstra hardware. It will be added to Council's Fleet Register.
- Critical sites within the Douglas Region has been updated and is in line with the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework.
- The Port Douglas Storm Tide Cyclone Shelter pre-season checks completed by AE Smith.
- Drain cleaning in Port Douglas has been completed to improve drainage and reduce flash flooding.
- Updating of vulnerable persons list was completed by the Community Services programme.
- Completed updating of phone network contacts in remote locations.
- Available staff volunteers and contact lists for the festive season has been completed
- With the support of the LDC, the DMO finalised the Incident Management Team members and recruitment of new members.
- The Douglas LDMG has successfully subscribed for a Twilio account (text and email messaging service)
- The website content has been restructured into the following sections: Before an event, During an event, After and event, and a live link to the Disaster Dashboard.

In Progress:

- In November 2019 Douglas Shire appointed a consultant, via the Vendor Panel for Daintree Flood Forecasting. The objective the Daintree Flood Forecasting includes: Performing catchment delineation; developing an URBS hydrology model – adopting standard parameters from the Mossman calibration; and undertaking performance testing for recent events, using BoM rainfall forecasts.
- During December 2019 community engagements will be held with the Mossman Community Centre and the Port Douglas Neighbourhood Centre.
- During December 2019 the LDMP and EA Requests will be reviewed and amended as deemed necessary.
- A functional exercise for Guardian IMS and the Douglas LDCC is being organized for January 2020.
- Consideration is being given to apply for funding (Department of Communities: Monsoon Recovery Trough Grant) in March 2020 to have a robust pre-feasibility study compiled for building a multi-purpose community education and disaster coordination center.
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority has introduced interactive mapping to be utilized during community based risk assessment workshops. The Douglas LDC and DMO are investigating the cost.

RESPONSE

Completed:

- From 19 February to 21 August 2019 the Douglas Shire Council has been actively applying for DRFA and Betterment Funding to address damages caused to infrastructure and assets.
- To date the Red Cross/CWA advised that 20 short-term financial assistance grants was accessed in Douglas in relation to the January Monsoon event.
- The DCDSS have assisted 190 people (97 approved applications) in Douglas via four grants (EHA, EHCG, SAG and ESSRS) to the value of \$94,245-00.

- To date the QRIDA have assisted 63 Primary Producers in Douglas with \$3,02M in Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grant funding.
- After ten months the CREB Track has been re-opened in August 2019.
- 15 tonnes household waste removed, including debris from the floods.
- Preliminary damage assessments have been completed. Only saturation damage submission outstanding.
- Geotechnical investigations commenced on three major landslips. Rectification of Alexandra Range has been completed. Concept designs completed for all slips. Progressing to detailed design phase.
- Bairds Crossing repaired and opened in early August, allowing access to Bairds Alert River Gauge, Upper Daintree.
- Temporary river height monitoring station in place (Bairds Alert Upper Daintree). Re-installation of permanent gauge is dependent on riverbank repairs.
- Five inundated bridges have all been reopened.
- Upper Daintree preliminary works have been completed. Geotechnical investigations commenced.
- Funding applications approved for additional rain gauges, road closure signage and two-way portable radio base.
- The Guardian Incident Management System (IMS) software has been procured. Familiarisation and training to staff took place on 14 to 15 November 2019.

In Progress:

- Remediation works underway on significant (Raintree) tree at Daintree Village River Precinct.
- Clean-up of Daintree Boat Ramp area and Ferry precinct is ongoing.
- A grant application has been approved for a Disaster Recovery Resilience program for \$25,000 in funding. This FNQ & NQ Monsoon Trough-Category C Flexible Funding Grant will be able to strengthen the resilience of Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD) in the development of a regional Disaster Tourism Management Response Plan (the Plan). As the Douglas Shire region is dependent on tourism this Plan will incorporate communications and marketing activities for relevant bodies and individuals in the Douglas region.
- Visit to Boolbun (Daintree River) scheduled for December 2019 to address issues of site location, hardware capability of rain gauge, etc.

RECOVERY

Completed:

- At the end of August 2019 Douglas Shire's 2019 Monsoon Trough Recovery Plan was updated. Douglas Shire Council is carrying \$3,37M in emergent recovery costs. The current damage estimate is approximately \$17M.
- The DMO participated as an evaluator at the Cairns functional exercise (Exercise Phoenix: Sub-Recovery Group) on 22 November 2019.
- Queensland Government's Back on Track roadshow was held at the Port Douglas Market on Sunday, 24 November 2019. The roadshow was a hub for information sharing, networking and community events, and included information on loans and grants, disaster preparedness, and mental health services for small businesses. Douglas Shire Council and the State Emergency Services (SES) Mossman was present to assist businesses and the community ahead of the cyclone season.

In progress:

- The DMO will participate on 05 December 2019 as evaluator for Tablelands Regional Council's functional.
- Two projects (bore water standby and rooftop catchment) in the process of being licensed to address Daintree Intake blockages.
- A 200-page narrative is currently being finalised. It tells of the stories and experiences of local communities during the monsoon trough in their own words and with relevant photographs.
- Disaster Business Continuity Planning Workshop planned for March 2020 for community organisations and small businesses.

2018/19 DISASTER YEAR

The 2018/19 year was dominated by a number of periods of very intense rainfall, some of which was not predicted. This heavy rainfall resulted in the flooding of many roads, landslips and disruption in Douglas communities. Herewith a chronological overview of the disasters affecting the Douglas region:

- 22 November to 5 December 2018 the Douglas region experienced a heatwave.
- 09 December to 17 December 2018: the Douglas region impacted on by Tropical Cyclone Owen.
- 24 December 2018 to 10 January 2019: the Douglas region impacted on by Tropical Cyclone Penny with the Daintree Ferry temporarily closed as heavy rain and high tides cause flooding along the Daintree River.
- 25 January – 4 March Far north Queensland Monsoon Event resulting in record flooding in the Bloomfield and Daintree Rivers, damage to properties, crops and stock losses.
- Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor and associated low pressure system, 19 - 27 March 2019

During December 2018 ex Tropical Cyclone Owen was a powerful system with strong to very strong northerly winds, thunderstorms and heavy rainfall. Ex Tropical Cyclone Penny contributed to oversaturated conditions and caused major flooding in the Mossman River and close to major flood levels in the Daintree River.

Significant flooding of roads caused widespread disruption to transportation networks and Douglas was isolated due to landslips and flooding. The Daintree ferry was taken out of service due to flooding in the Daintree River.

The Far North Queensland Monsoon, particularly around Australia Day, caused significant flooding throughout the Shire with record levels recorded on the Bloomfield and Daintree Rivers. Many communities were isolated, properties inundated and significant damage to crops and stock losses were recorded. A number of roads were damaged and affected by landslips, with the most significant being on the Alexandra Range. Damage resulting from these events to essential public assets was approximately \$15.6Million and reconstruction works are continuing.

The FN DDMG and Douglas LDMG meetings continue to be well-attended. The Douglas Dashboard proved invaluable during the year for providing advice and information to users including the Douglas communities and various agencies (QPS, QAS, TMR, etc). The Douglas Dashboard will continue to be enhanced to provide relevant and up to date information to assist the LDMG and communities in Douglas to make timely decisions.

PROPOSAL

1. That Council, in accordance with sections 33, 34 and 35 of the Disaster Management Act 2003, appoint the submitted positions as members of the Local Disaster Management Group for the Douglas Shire Council area; and
2. Council note the recent measures that have been undertaken to ensure that Council has a disaster response capability; and
3. That Council notes the report on the 2018/19 disaster year.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The matters outlined in this report and the recommendations do not have a financial or resource implication.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

To comply with the requirements of the Act and to help ensure that the communities of Douglas Shire are informed and protected the Council needs a functional Local Disaster Management Plan, a functioning Local Disaster Management Group and a response capacity. Following review of the current LDMP and endorsement by the LDMG the revised LDMP will be presented to Council for adoption in January 2020.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Disasters can have a significant economic impact and adequate planning, preparation, response and recovery actions help limit this impact.

Environmental: Disasters can have a significant environmental impact and adequate planning, preparation, response and recovery actions help limit the environmental impact.

Social: Disasters can have a very significant social impact and adequate planning, preparation, response and recovery actions can help limit this impact by ensuring communities are well informed, resilient and given the necessary services to recover.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 5 - Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

Strong governance and financial management are the foundations of the way in which Council will conduct its business and implement the initiatives of the Corporate Plan.

Goal 4 - *We will work with our communities to ensure they are informed, empowered and supported so that they are resilient to the impacts of disaster events. Through our leadership and capabilities we will plan, prepare, respond and recover from events so as to minimise the impact on people, property, the environment, and our economic stability.*

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Regulator Council has a number of statutory obligations detailed in numerous regulations and legislative Acts. Council also makes local laws to ensure that the Shire is well governed. In fulfilling its role as regulator, Council will utilise an outcomes based approach that balances the needs of the community with social and natural justice.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Council LDMG Members

External: LDMG members, Executive Officer DDMG

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement occurs as part of the entire disaster management process through Planning, Preparation, Response and Recovery.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil