

## Frequently asked questions - Ready Reserve members

### I have a question about the nomination process. Who should I contact?

You should speak with your [Agency Key Contact \(AKC\)](#) in the first instance.

If your question cannot be answered, you may be referred to Community Recovery via email [community.recovery@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au](mailto:community.recovery@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au)

### Can I still nominate if I am a part-time or casual employee?

Each agency decides who is eligible to nominate from their agency. There is nothing to prevent part-time or casual staff from participating in the Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve), provided they are Government employees and not contracted staff employed through a temporary recruitment agency. Part-time staff who are deployed for the days they are normally off-duty will be paid for the additional hours they work at their normal hourly rate.

### If my line manager endorses my nomination does it mean I am automatically a member of the Community Recovery Ready Reserve?

No. After your line manager verbally endorses your nomination and you complete your [Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#) registration/profile your Agency Key Contact (AKC) is notified and will provide formal approval or otherwise. Each agency needs to consider their overall business continuity requirements before deciding which staff will be approved to join the Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve).

Once you have completed your RRMS registration/profile you will receive an email from CYJMA (iLearn Program Support) with details on how to access the Community Recovery online training program. Mandatory online training courses must be completed for you to become a member of the Ready Reserve.

Each event you will need to confirm with your line manager that you are able to be deployed at that time.

### What should I do if my registration details have changed?

If your agency or position changes you will need to discuss your Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve) membership with your new line manager and [update your Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\) profile](#).

Your participation in the Ready Reserve is at the discretion of your agency – any change to your employer, or the nature of the work you do, requires you to obtain approval to be a Ready Reserve member again. To do this, you will need to communicate with your new line manager to request their endorsement and advise your Agency Key Contact (AKC). You will not be confirmed as a Ready Reserve member until you have been approved by your line manager and AKC. If you have any questions about this process contact your [AKC](#).

**Phone or email changes:** Your registration details held in RRMS are used to maintain contact with you – whenever these details change please [update your RRMS profile](#).

### How does deployment work?

As a member of the Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve), you are expected to be available for deployment when required. Of course, in a disaster event, not everyone is deployed at the same time. You will have the opportunity to confirm your availability (or otherwise) through [the Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#) when the Ready Reserve is being mobilised. Wherever possible, we will work with agencies to schedule staff release in a way that best meets the needs of both Community Recovery and your workplace.

It is very important, when you receive the email requesting availability for deployment, that you speak with your line manager and respond promptly. If you are not available due to personal or work related reasons, we still ask that you log into your [RRMS profile](#) and indicate the reason/s why you are not available.

Generally, staff needed for a Community Recovery operation will come from the Ready Reserve located close to the affected area/s. If locally based staff are impacted by the disaster, or the scale of the disaster is such that additional support is required, Ready Reserve members located in other areas will be called upon.

If you cannot be away from home overnight just enter 'Local Deployment' on your [RRMS profile](#) and you will only be deployed to undertake activities locally, if required.

There are a range of opportunities based in Brisbane as part of the State Recovery Event Management Team (SREMT) if you do not wish to go into an impacted area.

If you are a member of the District Recovery Event Management Team (DREMT) designated for a particular functional role, and the disaster affected area needs your assistance in this capacity, this would be the priority. If you are not rostered in this capacity, you would be eligible for general deployment as a member of the Ready Reserve.

### What happens if I live a long way from the disaster area?

If you need to travel into the disaster area, the Community Recovery Deployment Team in the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy will take care of any travel, accommodation or meal requirements. As part of the deployment process a member of our team will call you to discuss travel arrangements and ensure you know what is happening, what you need to do, and what will happen when you arrive in the disaster area. Information will also be provided in your Deployment Confirmation Email.

### What happens at the time of a disaster?

When Community Recovery enters the 'Alert' phase (see adjacent table for phase descriptions), we will monitor the situation and either move to the next phase if the situation deteriorates or cease if the situation is no longer a threat.

When recovery operations move to 'Lean Forward' – a heightened state of awareness and operational readiness – you will be asked to confirm your availability for possible deployment during a nominated time period.

You must immediately discuss the possibility of deployment with your line manager before [logging into your Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\) profile](#) and updating your availability or otherwise under the 'Qualifications' tab. You will be asked to provide the following information (select the appropriate option).

**Start date – end date** (time periods will be confirmed at the time of the disaster):

- **Available** during this time period
- **Not available** during this time period
  - Impacted by disaster or anticipation of possible impact
  - Line Manager will not release me for this time period
  - Other work related reason
  - Recreation leave

- Personal
- Sick leave
- **Want to be removed** from the Ready Reserve

Confirming you are available during this period does not mean you will automatically be deployed.

Decisions regarding which Ready Reserve members are scheduled for deployment are based on the need for specific skills or experience, local knowledge of the affected communities, your required lead time and how long it would take to move you into the disaster area.

Fatigue management is also an important consideration, particularly if you have already been deployed for this disaster.

If you are required for deployment, you will receive instructions by phone and email. You will receive a Deployment Confirmation email containing your deployment details and we ask that you forward the email to your line manager. Your Agency Key Contact (AKC) is advised of deployments daily.

### How will I be kept informed of what is going on?

The following table details the communications you will receive during a disaster:

Disaster phase	Ready Reserve member communication
<b>ALERT</b> A heightened level of vigilance due to the possibility of an event requiring human and social recovery operations. The situation is actively monitored.	Nil
<b>LEAN FORWARD</b> A heightened level of situational awareness and a state of operational readiness.	You may receive an email asking you to confirm your deployment availability or otherwise. <u>Please respond promptly!</u>
<b>STAND UP</b> Resources are mobilised, personnel are activated and operational activities commence.	You will receive an email requesting you log into your <a href="#">Ready Reserve Management System (RRMS) profile</a> and indicate your deployment availability or otherwise, <u>Please respond promptly!</u>
<b>STAND DOWN</b> Transitioning back to core business	Nil

If you are available for deployment, please keep your phone at hand. If you are required, we will contact you by phone to confirm your deployment details - this includes on weekends and after hours.

If deployed, we will send you a Deployment Confirmation email with instructions, including a Deployment Guide and advice of the days you will be absent from your normal workplace. You must forward this email to your line manager.

After your deployment you will receive a post-event survey to complete. Each deployment is different, and the survey provides you with an opportunity to provide feedback on your deployment experience. You will receive this survey link when you return from deployment. We value your feedback and encourage you to tell us what is working well and what needs improvement.

### **What will I need to know if I am deployed?**

If you are scheduled for deployment, the Deployment Guide, gives you comprehensive information on your conditions and entitlements, the briefings that will be provided and what will be expected of you on deployment. This document will be included in your Deployment Confirmation email. You need to forward this email to your manager.

If your travel and accommodation has been arranged, you will also receive an email, to your work and home email address, confirming these bookings.

### **Do I still get my normal pay when I am deployed for a disaster?**

You remain an employee of your home agency and will be paid at the salary level of the position you normally occupy. For example, if you are normally engaged as a Senior Project Officer at classification level AO6 at the time you are deployed for Community Recovery, you will continue to be paid at the AO6 level for the period of your deployment regardless of the role you undertake.

If you are on higher duties at your normal workplace at the time you are deployed, you will continue to be paid at the higher rate. If your higher duties cease during the deployment period, your hourly rate will be adjusted accordingly.

You will be paid for your time working in Community Recovery, including any overtime entitlements, through your normal departmental payroll system. As a guide, staff should receive any overtime entitlements four to six weeks after deployment.

### **Are there other conditions and entitlements that apply?**

If there is a significant disaster and the Critical Incident Entitlements and Conditions Directive is activated, staff up to level AO8.4 (or equivalent) will

be paid overtime for any additional hours working in excess of their ordinary hours. While the Critical Incident Directive is activated, staff deployed for Community Recovery do not accrue flex hours.

### **If I am deployed, how long will I be away from normal duties?**

If you need to travel into a disaster area a normal deployment period is usually nine days – this allows 1 day for your travel into the disaster area, 5 days continuous work in Community Recovery, 1 day for your travel home, and 2 fatigue days to recuperate. You may be required to work on your travel days.

If you are locally based, and no significant travel is required, your deployment period would normally last seven days – 5 days continuous work in community recovery and 2 fatigue days to recuperate.

Critical Incident (Special) Leave must be taken immediately upon your return home. Depending on the days of the week, the two recuperation days may be a weekend, that is, Saturday and Sunday.

When you are deployed, you will be advised of your scheduled return to work date. Of course, in a significant disaster Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve) members may be required for multiple deployment periods.

In addition to general Community Recovery worker roles, there are a number of key District Recovery Event Management Team (DREMT) functional roles where consistency in staffing over the course of the disaster event is extremely important. These roles include Team Leaders and Managers for the following functional areas:

- Ready Reserve Management
- Deployment
- Training
- Logistics
- Recovery Hub, Outreach and Grants
- Client Support, and Partner Relations
- Finance
- Planning and Intelligence, and
- Reporting.

Members of the Ready Reserve assigned to undertake these key functional roles will be required to complete specific leadership online training courses as well as role specific courses, prior to the commencement of disaster season, to develop the knowledge and skills needed to perform these roles.

If you are identified for these DREMT specialist positions, you must discuss longer-term deployment periods with your line manager and obtain their support and endorsement.

## **Is Community Recovery work stressful?**

Community Recovery work, whilst extremely rewarding can potentially be emotionally draining and challenging for staff involved. You will be provided with information related to Community Recovery prior to deployment. It is important to take the time to absorb this information to reduce uncertainty around your role responsibilities and what to expect, as this will assist you to adjust to the Community Recovery environment.

It is important you get adequate sleep, take regular breaks, eat nutritious meals and attend all briefing and debriefing sessions. Watch out for signs of stress within yourself and your co-workers and do not be afraid to ask for a break or further assistance.

You are encouraged to contact your Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provider if you are in need of emotional or psychological support and/or personal counselling. Please contact your human resources area for details of the EAS provider for your agency.

If you are experiencing any issues in the workplace, you can also speak with your local management team (District Recovery Event Management Team – DREMT) or the state operations team (State Recovery Event Management Team – SREMT), or you can contact the Community Recovery Workforce Support, Wellbeing and Safety (WSWS) Team for advice, support and suggestions via email [CRWorkforceSupport@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au](mailto:CRWorkforceSupport@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au)

## **What if I experience difficulties adjusting following the event?**

It is not uncommon for people to experience an impact on their emotional wellbeing following a traumatic event or critical incident, such as a natural disaster. A disruption to an individual's emotional state can occur immediately after the event, or a few days, weeks or even months after an incident.

Your agency's Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provider is available to all government employees and their families for support and counselling services. Please contact your human resources area for details of the EAS provider for your agency.

## **What happens if I cannot continue in the Community Recovery Ready Reserve?**

We understand that your circumstances may change. If you need to withdraw from the Community Recovery Ready Reserve (Ready Reserve), it is important you advise your Agency Key Contact (AKC) via email so a replacement can be found.

If you would like to re-join the Ready Reserve, discuss this with your line manager before registering again in the [Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#).