

COMMUNITY RECOVERY

AGENCY KEY
CONTACT PACK

2022



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS COMMUNITY RECOVERY?

Queensland is a state of extremes and the disasters we experience can vary from floods, fires, cyclones and disease outbreaks. When disasters strike, the Community Recovery Ready Reserve workforce is deployed to respond.

The response phase occurs directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and to meet basic subsistence needs of the people affected. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is the coordinating department in the response phase and the Ready Reserve is not deployed to commence recovery operations into the disaster area until the first-responders have deemed it safe to do so.

The next phase, recovery, is lead by the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE) who coordinate community recovery services to assist disaster-affected people, including the provision of emotional support, material aid and financial assistance.

WHO ARE READY RESERVES?

The Ready Reserve is a volunteer workforce, made up of public servants who work across all areas of the Queensland state government.

It's extremely important that we have diversity in the Ready Reserve workforce to cover a variety of roles and to provide services to a range of nationalities, religions and cultures effectively. We therefore require a range of skills and volunteers from all position levels i.e. senior staff to entry level administration officers.

READY RESERVE ROLES

JOBS AVAILABLE

Deployment looks different for everyone - Ready Reserves can work on the frontline or behind the scenes. Every role is critical to a successful recovery operation.

Ready Reserves who are deployed to the disaster zone can work directly with clients in a Community Recovery hub or they can work as an Outreach Worker, visiting people in their homes. The Ready Reserve is responsible for providing individuals and families with practical information, connection to support services and access to financial assistance through grant applications.

There is also a **range of roles** available in the District Recovery Event Management Team (DREMT) and State Recovery Event Management Team (SREMT).

These roles are responsible for the coordination of the event.

Roles range from senior management, specialist, and administration roles, within the following areas:

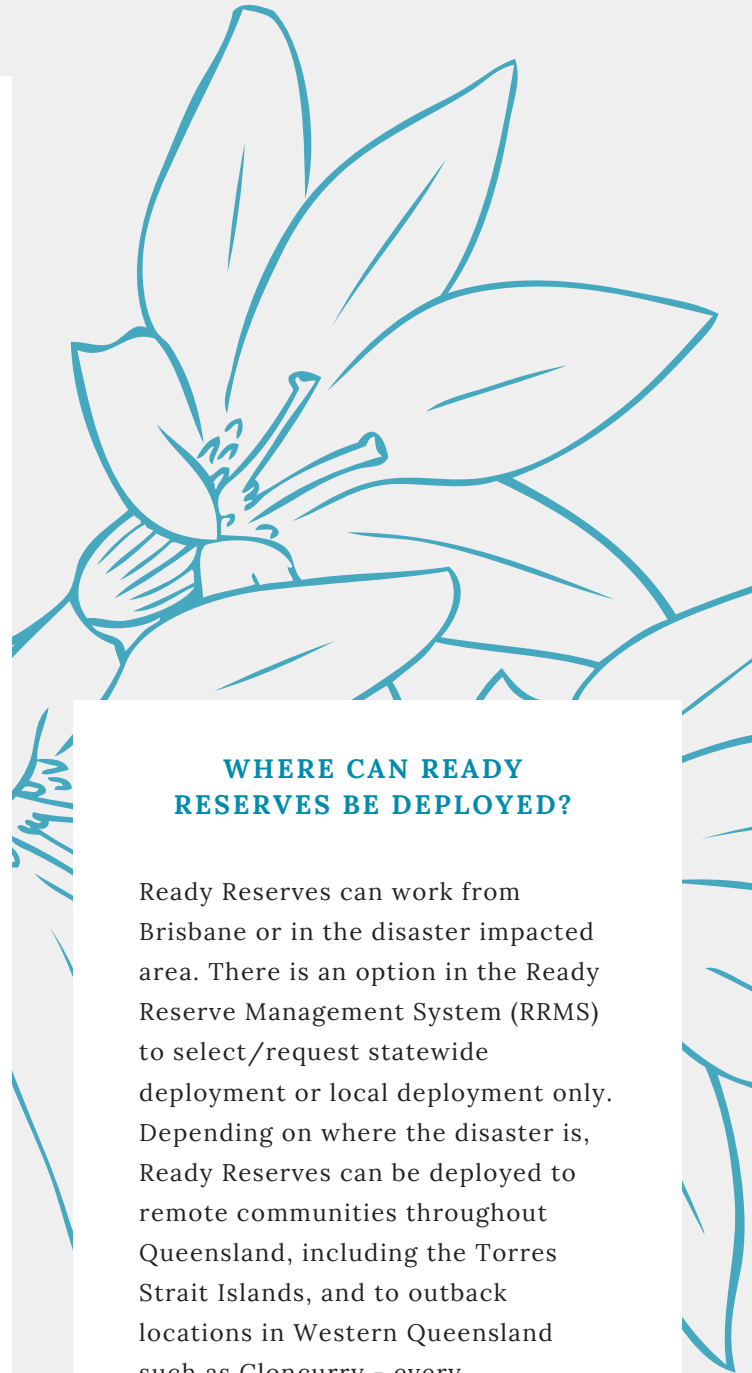
- Workforce development
- Training delivery
- Logistics
- Business support and finance
- Planning and intelligence
- Reporting
- Grant administration
- Marketing and communications

Annually Community Recovery will provide an 'expression of interest' to the AKC for distribution to public servants across their department/agency to fill DREMT and SREMT roles.

WHERE CAN READY RESERVES BE DEPLOYED?

Ready Reserves can work from Brisbane or in the disaster impacted area. There is an option in the Ready Reserve Management System (RRMS) to select/request statewide deployment or local deployment only. Depending on where the disaster is, Ready Reserves can be deployed to remote communities throughout Queensland, including the Torres Strait Islands, and to outback locations in Western Queensland such as Cloncurry - every deployment is different.

Please try to manage the expectations of your Ready Reserves. They are traveling to a disaster zone and the accommodation they would expect when travelling for work may not be available. They may need to share a hotel room with another Ready Reserve or be accommodated in a community hall.



FOUR STEPS TO JOIN THE READY RESERVE

1

OBTAIN SUPPORT & ENDORSEMENT FROM THE MANAGER

Before the Agency Key Contact (AKC) endorses their staff member's participation in the Ready Reserve, their manager should consider business continuity and whether the staff member is eligible and capable of performing Community Recovery activities.

Some agencies have implemented a formalised process to obtain management endorsement via a one page [nomination/management endorsement form](#).

2

REGISTER ON THE READY RESERVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Ready Reserve Management System (RRMS) login can be found [here](#).

The staff member will create their own profile by entering their personal and employment information and other useful information to assist the Community Recovery Deployment Team such as their required lead time and special dietary requirements.

3

COMPLETE THE CORE TRAINING COURSES

Once the registration is complete, the staff member will receive an email with their enrolment details to access the online training courses which they must complete to become ready for deployment.

The [Human and Social Recovery and Capability Training Program](#) has been designed to ensure all Ready Reserves are prepared for activation and have the knowledge and skills necessary to undertake the roles assigned to them during disasters.

4

THE AGENCY KEY CONTACT APPROVES THE REGISTRATION & INFORMS COMMUNITY RECOVERY

When a staff member receives endorsement from their manager and is considered suitable and eligible to join the Ready Reserve, the AKC [emails](#) their department/agency's approval to Community Recovery.

During activation it is critical to forward the approval to Community Recovery as soon as possible to enable the staff member to be deployed immediately if and when required.

The Ready Reserve is responsible for maintaining their information in their RRMS profile page and updating it if and when it changes. Maintaining the data will enable the Deployment Team to easily identify Ready Reserve members with the required skills to undertake specific roles during a disaster.

AGENCY KEY CONTACT ROLE

WHAT IS MY ROLE AS AN AGENCY KEY CONTACT?

The Agency Key Contact (AKC) is a crucial support role in community recovery. Due to the HR component of the role the preference is for this role to be located within the HR area of each department/agency. The AKC will also require advanced Excel skills and communication skills.

Responsibilities of the AKC include:

- Promoting and recruiting eligible staff from the department/agency to join the Ready Reserve
- Approving new staff members to become Ready Reserve members
- Encouraging Ready Reserves to complete the mandatory training
- Providing regular information to managers
- Facilitating the Expression of Interest (EOI) process for District Recovery Event Management Team (DREMT) structure and State Recovery Event Management Team (SREMT) structure applications
- Informing Community Recovery of changes to their department/agency structure
- Informing Community Recovery when there is a change of AKC
- Informing Community Recovery when the status of a Ready Reserve changes
- Providing regular reports to their senior management team
- Providing advice to Ready Reserves
- Submitting Community Recovery timesheets and other relevant allowances claim forms to payroll for processing e.g. *Hardship Allowance*, *Overtime Meal Allowance* and *Private Vehicle Allowance* forms
- Be aware of the **Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement Recouple Costs Guide** relating to staffing expenses e.g. backfilling and regular invoicing for recoupment of expenses.
- Submitting any recoupable cost invoices on a monthly basis via **email** to Community Recovery Business Services.

AGENCY DEPLOYMENT COORDINATOR

A Senior Executive Officer has been appointed to the role of Agency Deployment Coordinator in each department/agency.

The Agency Deployment Coordinator is responsible for:

- Establishing deployment targets and ensuring business continuity
- Identifying suitable candidates for key functional roles
- Securing line manager release of staff including long term release
- Surge recruitment activities within the agency

AGREED QUOTAS

Most departments/agencies have an agreed quota of staff, that will be made available to participate in the Ready Reserve during a disaster event, which has been agreed by the Director General. This number takes into consideration the amount of front line staff and essential roles required to continue business as usual activities within your department/agency.

To find out more about the department/agency deployment quotas please contact us via **email**.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

To assist with promoting and recruiting eligible staff from your department/agency we have provided you with a range of promotional materials.

You can download the promotional catalogue directly from the [ForGov](#) website.

Promotional material includes:

- Posters
- Brochures
- Web banners
- Email signature blocks
- Screen savers
- Memes
- Videos
- PowerPoint

RECRUITMENT IDEAS

To attract public servants to become Ready Reserves try some of the following techniques:

- Send an all staff email using one of our video packages
- Post a message or meme on internal communication platforms
- Use one of our feature articles on your intranet
- Organise a lunch box information session
- Attend your department/agency's orientation days

SPECIALIST ROLES

To be a member of the District or State Recovery Event Management Team (DREMT/SREMT) the public servant must complete an expression of interest. Annually Community Recovery will provide the EOI documentation to the AKC for distribution across their department/agency.

Training pathways have been developed for all staff with a designated recovery role in the Ready Reserve workforce. All DREMT and SREMT members will be advised by Community Recovery which courses they will need to complete. For more details regarding roles available please see the SREMT and DREMT [structures](#).

APPROVE NEW STAFF TO BECOME READY RESERVES

New staff members can **join** the Ready Reserve after obtaining support and endorsement from their manager and completing their registration via the Ready Reserve Management System (RRMS). Community Recovery will provide a report to the AKC detailing staff who have recently nominated to join the Ready Reserve. The AKC reviews the registration and eligibility of the staff member before **emailing** their approval to Community Recovery.

During the review process the AKC should consider the following:

- Is the staff member vaccinated against COVID-19?
- Is the staff member undergoing a performance review?
- Is the staff member on a return to work program?
- Is the staff member suitable for Community Recovery work?
- Does the staff member have any pre-existing medical conditions that may prevent them from performing Community Recovery activities?
- Is the staff member employed as a frontline officer or in a critical area of the department/agency that will impact critical service delivery (e.g. Police Officer or Child Safety Officer)?
- Will the staff member be deployed within their own department/agency to respond to the disaster event?

You may not know the answer to some of the above questions so we encourage each department/agency to implement an internal approval process to obtain written approval from the staff member's manager. The **nomination/management endorsement form** will assist you with this process. The approval process should also include liaising with work units to ensure business continuity plans are in place to support the Ready Reserves availability for deployment when required.

If the staff member is not eligible or suitable to join the Ready Reserve, the AKC and/or manager should have a conversation with the staff member regarding their non-approval and advise Community Recovery via **email** that approval has not been given .

ENCOURAGE READY RESERVES TO COMPLETE THE MANDATORY TRAINING

Upon registering to join the Ready Reserve the staff member will receive an email with their enrolment details to access the online training courses that must be completed to become ready for deployment.

Community Recovery provides the AKC with a report detailing the training status of each Ready Reserve member. The AKC role includes reminding the Ready Reserves to complete the training requirements in a timely manner to be ready if and when a disaster is declared.

PROVIDE REGULAR INFORMATION TO MANAGERS

Keep managers informed of Community Recovery activities and remind them of their obligation to release staff to undertake Community Recovery training and for deployment.

A shared responsibility exists between the department/agency manager, Community Recovery team leader/manager and employee for the psychological and physical wellbeing of a deployed Ready Reserve. Useful **tips for managers** have been developed on how to be involved in their staff members' deployment and how to manage fatigue.

Managers may need advice on how to manage their teams and business continuity if there is a disaster, including: negotiations within their workplace to extend project time frames, utilising an opportunity to pool resources within broader work groups, and backfilling the position using Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Examples:

- An A05 employee is undertaking eligible Community Recovery activities and their position is backfilled by a temporary employee new to government. The costs of backfilling the officer on deployment are recoupable up to the pay level of the substantive officer (i.e. A05 in this example)
- An A05 employee is undertaking eligible Community Recovery activities and their position is backfilled by an existing A03 public servant. If the A03 is paid higher duties up to the pay level of the substantive officer, only the higher duties component of the A05 salary above their substantive A03 level salary is recoupable.

PROVIDE ADVICE TO READY RESERVES

In the first instance the AKC should respond to any general questions relating to Community Recovery from staff within their department/agency. Most of the answers can be found on the **ForGov** website or in the Ready Reserve Welcome Pack or **useful tips** for Ready Reserves. All other questions can be **emailed** to Community Recovery.

SUBMIT TIMESHEETS TO PAYROLL FOR PROCESSING

Please create a separate cost centre for each disaster so all recoupable costs can be identified and invoiced to Community Recovery.

Approved Community Recovery **timesheets** and relevant allowances to be paid via your payroll area will be forwarded to you to distribute to your payroll area for processing. Please note that some allowances are paid directly by DCHDE and these payments will not be forwarded to you e.g. meal allowances and overnight incidental allowance.

INTERNAL REPORTING FOR SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The AKC will be required to monitor and provide regular internal reports to senior management on Ready Reserve membership and the availability of Ready Reserves to be deployed.

During non-activation, Community Recovery provides a monthly Ready Reserve report to the AKC that details the number of active Ready Reserves including their training and approval status, and who has recently left the Ready Reserve.

During activation, Community Recovery provides a daily Ready Reserve report to the AKC that details the number of active Ready Reserves including their training and approval status, as well as their deployment status and details if deployed.

CHANGES TO DEPARTMENTAL/AGENCY STRUCTURE

Community Recovery manages the RRMS and uses the system to generate reports for each department/agency to inform the AKC of the status of their Ready Reserves. The system contains the department/agency's structure to allow staff members to select their department and business unit when registering or updating their employment details.

Maintaining the department/agency's structure within RRMS allows the AKC to group the Ready Reserves into their specific business units for further distribution within the department/agency if necessary. If there is a change of structure to your department/agency please inform Community Recovery as soon as possible via [email](#).

CHANGES TO A READY RESERVE'S STATUS

It is critical for the AKC to advise Community Recovery of any Ready Reserve who no longer meets the eligibility/suitability requirements and should be removed from the Ready Reserve. Changes to eligibility/suitability may include change of their reporting responsibilities, department/agency restructure, conclusion of employment with the department/agency, and changes to their physical condition/wellbeing (i.e. pregnant or permanent injury).

Additionally some Ready Reserves will contact Community Recovery directly to advise they are no longer employed with the department/agency or no longer want to be a member of the Ready Reserves. This information will be provided to the AKC via the Ready Reserve report (monthly during non-activation and daily during activation).

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS RECOUPMENT PROCESS

In the *Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Recoupable Costs Guide* the Queensland Government outlines the eligibility of a variety of expenses that may be incurred during an activation, such as:

- Staffing (employment, backfilling, human resource management, deployment)
- Supplies, assets and services (supplies and consumables)
- Employee allowances and the use of private property.

The guide also requires departments/agencies to submit invoices on a monthly basis and identifies the type of documentation required to support the expenses incurred. Additional information can be sought via [email](#) from the Community Recovery Business Services Team.

CHANGES TO AGENCY KEY CONTACT

Disaster events can occur at any time and it is important for Community Recovery to be able to contact the AKC if an urgent matter arises. If the AKC is going on leave or is seconded to another position or department/agency please inform Community Recovery of the new AKC details. It is also advisable that each department/agency provide Community Recovery with a secondary contact and after hours details. Using a generic email address will ensure all Community Recovery correspondence is kept in a central location and accessible by a number of staff within the department/agency.

PHASES OF DISASTER ACTIVATION

ALERT

The 'Alert' phase signals a Community Recovery operation may be required.

If time permits Community Recovery will invite the AKC to attend a meeting to discuss the current situation, the potential for a disaster event and a refresher of AKC responsibilities during an event. The AKC contact (including after hours) details will also be confirmed during this phase.

LEAN FORWARD

'Lean Forward' is a heightened state of awareness and operational readiness – usually a disaster situation is imminent. Ready Reserves will receive a 'Deployment Availability Email' (sent to their home and work email) requesting they log into their RRMS profile and update their deployment availability during the nominated time frames. The Ready Reserve must discuss the possibility of deployment with their manager before updating their availability. If Ready Reserves are not available they must indicate the reason why, for example they may be impacted by the disaster or sick.

AKC duties:

- Review their Ready Reserves and expedite the approval process for new Ready Reserves or anyone with an approval status of 'Pending'
- Assist managers to manage staff resources ensuring business continuity is maintained (consider backfilling arrangements)
- Remind Ready Reserves to complete the core training courses if they have not done so already, or review them in preparation for possible deployment
- Advise Community Recovery of alternative contacts if AKC is absent
- Liaise with the department/agency's finance area to establish a separate Cost Centre for each disaster event (or other mechanism to ensure costs can be separately identified by disaster, for recoupment purposes)
- Provide the following information via **email** to the Community Recovery Deployment Team Leader*: Name of department/agency contact for Community Recovery timesheets; delivery address for Community Recovery timesheets; Department/Agency Cost Centre

STAND UP

This is when resources are mobilised, personnel are activated and operational activities commence.

The AKC will report on deployed staff and deployment availability to senior management/DDG to support effective communications with Ready Reserves and the managers to release staff for deployment. The AKC is also required to actively support requests for surge workforce through distribution of surge materials to eligible staff within the Brisbane CBD and regions.

The AKC must immediately advise Community Recovery of any Ready Reserve members who are no longer eligible or suitable to be a Ready Reserve member and should not be deployed.

Being deployed can be challenging and rewarding. It's important that Ready Reserves returning from deployment are aware of their department/agency's Employee Assistance Provider (EAP) and how to contact them for support, if required. Useful information to assist employees before, during and after deployment can be found [here](#).

STAND DOWN

Ready Reserves are no longer required to be deployed and assist the impacted communities. Business continuity returns and the post disaster event analysis occurs.

At the end of each disaster event or season Community Recovery will provide a final report detailing the number of deployments each department/agency deployed. Each department/agency will also be invited to attend a post disaster event debrief to hear first hand how Community Recovery responded to the event. There is also an opportunity for each AKC to ask questions and provide feedback. It is strongly recommended that the AKC attends the debrief session.

DEPLOYMENT PROCESS

To determine statewide capacity a Deployment Availability Email is sent to active Ready Reserves (approved and trained) as soon as a disaster is imminent, or there is a high possibility of becoming imminent.

1

The email requests Ready Reserves to log into their RRMS profile page within 24 hours to indicate their deployment availability or otherwise during nominated time frames (10-14 day blocks). Ready Reserves must speak with their manager prior to updating their availability.

2

The disaster impacted district/s submits their staffing request to respond to the event. Ready Reserves are selected based on the criteria and contacted via phone.

3

Flights and accommodation are booked and catering is organised.

4

The Deployment Confirmation Email is sent to the Ready Reserves who are confirmed for deployment. This email contains their deployment details and scheduled return to work date. Ready Reserves are asked to forward this email to their manager.

WHY READY RESERVES ARE NOT DEPLOYED

Not all Ready Reserves are deployed. Some reasons include:

- Approval status is 'Pending'*
- Deployment status is unknown*
- May not be logistically/financially viable
- Ready Reserve is uncontactable
- Ready Reserve does not meet specific criteria requested from the district/s
- Local deployment only selected
- Quota reached

*A daily deployment status report is provided to AKC during activation

DEPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

Disaster events are unpredictable. The size and scale can result in changes to deployments at short notice. Other challenges include:

- Remoteness of impacted communities
- Limited accommodation
- Complex travel arrangements, i.e. availability, multiple modes
- Flight cancellations/Ready Reserves missing flights
- Public holidays

DIRECTIVES

The following directives will assist you to provide advice about leave and entitlements during community recovery activities:

**Directive 10/14:
Critical Incident
Response and Recovery**

**Directive 06/16: Critical
Incident Entitlements and
Conditions
(and supporting material)**

**Directive 05/17: Special
Leave**

RETURNING FROM DEPLOYMENT

When Ready Reserves return from deployment the AKC should ask managers to look out for any signs of stress or behaviours that are out of character for the employee and to provide employees with the contact details of the Employee Assistance Provider (EAP) who can provide confidential and voluntary short-term counselling.

It is important for the AKC to also encourage the managers to have a conversation with their employees about their deployment experience. It is not always easy returning to the workplace and normal routines after an intense deployment experience in a disaster area.

It may be beneficial for the manager or AKC to organise a morning tea where experiences can be shared or staff can reconnect with their colleagues who have been 'holding the fort' in their absence.

TIMESHEETS AND ALLOWANCE STEPS

1. Receive timesheets and allowances claim forms from Community Recovery
2. Submit Community Recovery timesheets and other relevant allowances including Hardship, Usual Workplace Overtime, Meal Allowance and Private Vehicle allowances to payroll
3. Add your department/agency cost centre to the electronic batch sheet
4. Write the cost centre and employee payroll number on each timesheet or other relevant payroll allowance
5. Scan the batch sheet and timesheets in batches (max 10) to Payroll agency for coding and payment
6. Validate salary costs incurred using QSS Fortnightly Payroll Transaction Report and invoice Community Recovery

DEPLOYMENT INFORMATION



Ready Reserves can access deployment information at the [ForGov](#) website.

Keep up to date with the latest information on:

- Current disasters and impacted community profiles
- Tips and information on what to pack, entitlements and conditions
- Useful resources including contacts, factsheets and guides
- Community Recovery social media feeds

READY RESERVE REWARD & RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The **Reward and Recognition Program** recognises the contribution of all Queensland Government employees who play a part in the delivery and support of human and social recovery services.

Your role as Agency Key Contact:

- Name badges are created for all new Ready Reserves who have been deployed in an event. The name badges will be provided to you as Agency Key Contact to distribute to your Ready Reserves.
- Annually we celebrate and thank our Ready Reserves with an awards night. You will be provided with promotional material to help promote the event to your department/agency's Ready Reserves
- Each year at the awards ceremony Ready Reserves are presented service award pins, if they are unable to attend on the night these pins will be distributed to you to pass on to your Ready Reserve recipients.

CONTACTS

Ready Reserve Management Team

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A full list of email addresses that are useful during an activation can be found [here](#).