

## Frequently asked questions - line managers

In the event of a disaster, how long will my staff member/s be away from their normal duties?

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	T	W	W	W	W	W	T	R	R
	R	O	O	O	O	O	R	E	E
	A	R	R	R	R	R	A	C	C
	V	K	K	K	K	K	V	U	U
	E						E	P	P
	L						L	E	E

Fatigue Leave OR Weekend

If a Ready Reserve member needs to travel into a disaster area, a normal deployment period is usually nine days, as shown in the diagram.

- If they are locally based, and no significant travel is required, a deployment period would normally be seven days, which includes two days to recuperate after their 5 day deployment, known as Critical Incident (Special) leave. Of course in a large scale disaster Ready Reserves may be asked to go on multiple deployments during the course of the recovery operation.
- When your staff member is deployed and you backfill their position with a public servant the cost cannot be recouped. If you backfill by an agency temp, the costs can be recouped.

### Examples

- An AO5 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 is recoupable up to the pay level of the substantive officer (eg. AO5 in this example).
- An AO5 employee is undertaking eligible community recovery activities and their position is backfilled by an existing AO3 public servant. If the AO3 officer is paid

higher duties up to the pay level of the substantive officer, only the higher duties component of the AO5 salary above their substantive AO3 level salary is recoupable.

Critical Incident (Special) leave must be taken immediately on their return home. Depending on the days of the week, the two recuperation days could be a weekend, that is Saturday to Sunday. When your Ready Reserve staff member is deployed, they are asked to forward their Deployment Email to you. This email contains all details of their deployment, including their scheduled return to work day.

### Can I choose when my staff members are deployed?

There is an expectation that Ready Reserve members will complete the required online training programs and be available to help disaster-impacted communities as required, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The work of the Ready Reserve in a disaster is a priority of government that takes precedence over the delivery of less essential government programs. This is outlined in the [Critical Incident Response and Recovery Directive 10/14](#).

When you endorse your staff member's nomination you should consider how you will manage business continuity if there is a disaster. Take time to discuss with your Ready Reserve staff members how you will manage their absence if they are required for deployment. This may include negotiations within your workplace to extend project timeframes or to pool resources within broader workgroups.

Ready Reserve members are requested to indicate their deployment lead time requirements in the Ready Reserve Management System after they have discussed their potential deployment with their line manager.

You may wish to raise any business continuity concerns with the [Ready Reserve contact](#) for your agency.

### Will my staff member be required for more than one deployment?

Depending on the scale and severity of the disaster, it is not unusual for your Ready Reserve staff member to be required for multiple

deployments. The [Critical Incident Entitlements and Conditions Directive 06/16](#) applies as long as it is necessary, but for no longer than 60 days. In a significant statewide disaster it would not be unusual for a Ready Reserve member to be required for three to four deployment periods.

In addition to general community recovery worker roles, there are a number of key management and leadership roles where consistency in staffing over the course of the disaster event is extremely important. These roles include team leaders for logistics, grants, deployment, outreach, intelligence and planning, reporting and the Incident Management Team in Brisbane.

If any of your Ready Reserve staff members are identified for these specialist positions they will discuss their longer-term deployment periods, that is, without returning to their normal duties between deployments, with you first.

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

In the lead up to, or at the time of a disaster, Ready Reserve members will be asked to confirm if they are available for possible deployment during the range of fortnightly timeframes provided.

It is important that they discuss this with you as a matter of priority so that the number of available Ready Reserves across the state can be determined. If Ready Reserves are not available for deployment, they are asked to identify the reason for this – refer information below.

#### **Start date – end date (usually a fortnightly period)**

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

#### **How much lead time do you need to organise yourself for deployment?**

- No lead time required – immediately available
- Less than 12 hours
- 12-24 hours
- More than 24 hours

If your staff member confirms their availability, it does not mean they will automatically be deployed.

Deployment decisions are based on the need for specific skills or experience, local knowledge of the impacted communities, the lead-time a staff member requires, as well as the cost and time to move Ready Reserve members into the disaster area. Fatigue management is also an important consideration, particularly if Ready Reserve members have already been deployed multiple times for the disaster.

If a Ready Reserve member is required for deployment, they will receive instructions by phone and email. Ready Reserves are asked to forward the deployment email to their line manager so that all parties are aware of deployment arrangements.

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

The following table describes the communications you will receive during a disaster.

Disaster phase	Line manager communication
<p><b>ALERT</b> A heightened level of vigilance due to the possibility of an event requiring human-social recovery activation. The situation is actively monitored.</p>	<p>Ready Reserves located in the areas likely to be impacted by the disaster will be instructed to keep their line managers informed of any developments they become aware of.</p>
<p><b>LEAN FORWARD</b> A heightened level of situational awareness and a state of operational readiness.</p>	<p>When Ready Reserves are asked to confirm their availability for deployment they are asked to discuss this with their line manager before submitting the online availability form. Agency key contacts and regional deployment coordinators will receive reports showing the outcome of the Ready Reserve Availability for Deployment Report.</p>
<p><b>STAND UP</b> Resources are mobilised, personnel are activated and operational activities commence.</p>	<p>Throughout the disaster activation Ready Reserves will be asked to ensure they share all activation and deployment related information with their line managers.</p>
<p><b>STAND DOWN</b> Transitioning back to core business</p>	<p>A broadcast email will be sent to all Ready Reserves advising them that the disaster-impacted region has been stood down and deployments have</p>

Disaster phase	Line manager communication
	<p>ceased. They will be instructed to share this information with their line managers.</p>

If your staff member is deployed they will be emailed their deployment instructions, including their return to work date. They will be instructed to forward this deployment email to their line manager.

## How will I know if my Ready Reserve staff member is going to be deployed?

Ready Reserves who have confirmed their availability for deployment will be contacted by phone if they are needed for deployment. They should immediately let their line manager know. Ready Reserve members who are being deployed will receive an email confirming their deployment details. Ready Reserves are asked to forward the email to their line managers. The email will provide transport and accommodation arrangements, if relevant, as well as their scheduled return to work date. Your agency key contact will also be advised of all deployed Ready Reserves from your agency.

## I have more than one staff member in the Ready Reserve – can I schedule their release during a disaster?

Not all Ready Reserve members will be deployed at the same time. Depending on the numbers needed for deployment, it may be useful for you to discuss with your Ready Reserve staff members, and your broader workplace, how any specific business continuity issues could best be managed. Your [agency key contact](#) may be able to assist. You should have this discussion before Ready Reserve members complete their 'availability for deployment' section in the Ready Reserve Management System.

## How do I approve timesheets and Critical Incident (Special) leave?

Your agency's community recovery [key contact](#) will advise Ready Reserve members, and line managers, of the steps needed to ensure the necessary human resources documentation is completed. This is usually done when the Ready

Reserve member is emailed their community recovery timesheet.

Approved community recovery timesheets will be forwarded to agency key contacts who will then send the forms to payroll.

If you have any questions regarding community recovery timesheets please email [CRTimesheetTeam@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au](mailto:CRTimesheetTeam@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au) . If the Community Recovery Timesheet Team is unable to answer your query they will forward it to the correct contact person as advised by your agency.

### **Is there anything I need to do when my Ready Reserve staff member returns to work?**

Community recovery work is extremely rewarding but can also be emotionally draining and challenging for Ready Reserve members. Many Ready Reserve members who are deployed face an unfamiliar environment away from home, family and their normal workplace. They can also work very long hours in a pressured environment.

To help your staff member adjust to normal duties you could:

- ask them how they're going – it's not always easy returning to the workplace and normal routines after an intense deployment experience in a disaster area
- 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.

Be aware of any signs of stress, or behaviours that are out of character. Also, make sure your Ready Reserve staff members know how to contact your agency's employee assistance provider if needed.

### **Who should I contact if have a question about the Ready Reserve registration and approval processes?**

You should speak with your [agency contact](#) in the first instance.

If your question can't be answered, you may be referred to the Community Recovery Branch at [community.recovery@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au](mailto:community.recovery@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au)