

## Community recovery

### Frequently asked questions – Ready Reserve members

#### What is Community Recovery?

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

The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (DFSDSCS) coordinates community recovery services to assist disaster-affected people, including providing emotional support, material aid and financial assistance.

#### Who are the Ready Reserves?

The Community Recovery Ready Reserve is a workforce of approved public servants from across Queensland Government departments who sign-up for deployment during disaster recovery efforts.

It's important to have diversity in the Ready Reserve workforce to cover a variety of roles. It provides services to a range of nationalities, religions and cultures. To do this effectively, the workforce requires a range of skills from senior staff to entry level administration officers.

#### How to join the Ready Reserve?

- Obtain support and approval from your line manager
- Seek your department/[Agency Key Contact \(AKC\)](#) endorsement
- Register on the [Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#)
- Complete the mandatory online training courses.

#### Need help with the nomination process?

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)

#### Am I eligible to nominate as a part-time or casual employee?

Each agency determines eligibility for the Community Recovery Ready Reserve. Part-time and casual government employees (not contracted through a recruitment agency) can participate. Part-time staff deployed on their usual days off will be paid for additional hours at their normal hourly rate.

#### Does line manager endorsement guarantee membership in the Ready Reserve?

No, line manager endorsement does not guarantee membership in the Ready Reserve. After completing your RRMS registration/profile, your AKC will review and formally approve or decline your nomination based on agency business continuity needs.

You must complete mandatory online training provided by DFSDSCS (iLearn Program Support) to become a member.

For each event, confirm your availability for deployment with your line manager.

## How do I update my registration details?

If your agency or position changes, discuss your Ready Reserve membership with your new line manager and update your RRMS profile.

Membership is subject to agency approval, and any changes to your role or employer require new endorsements from your line manager and AKC.

Update your RRMS profile with any changes to your contact details, such as phone number or email. For questions about this process, please contact your AKC.

## How does deployment work?

As a Ready Reserve member, you must be available for deployment when needed. During disaster events, deployments are staggered, and you can confirm your availability via the [Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#). Efforts will be made to coordinate with agencies to balance the needs of Community Recovery and your workplace.

When you receive a deployment email, consult your line manager and respond promptly. If unavailable, update your RRMS profile with reasons.

Local Ready Reserve staff are prioritised for Community Recovery operations, but others may be called if needed. For local-only work, select 'Local Deployment' in your profile.

Business support roles are available in Brisbane if you live in Brisbane and prefer not to travel/do not wish to go into an impacted area. Otherwise you may be deployed to assist in a Community Recovery Hub or Coordination Centre established close to the disaster impacted area.

If you are available to travel away from home, you may be deployed to assist impacted regions in Community Recovery Hubs and coordination centres.

## Can I participate if I live a long way from a disaster area?

Yes. If practical, the Community Recovery Workforce Management travel team will arrange your travel, accommodation and meals if you need to travel to a disaster area. They will call you to discuss arrangements and provide guidance on what to expect and do upon arrival. Details will also be included in your deployment confirmation email.

## What happens at the time of a disaster?

During the 'Alert' phase, the situation is monitored and may progress or cease depending on the threat.

In the 'Lean Forward' phase, you will be asked to confirm your availability for potential deployment.

Discuss deployment with your line manager before updating your availability in the [Ready Reserve Management System \(RRMS\)](#) under the 'Qualifications' tab.

You will need to provide:

- Start date – end date (timeframes are for two-week periods; if you're available for less than two weeks, still mark yourself as available)
- 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

Being available does not guarantee deployment. Decisions are based on skills, local knowledge, lead time and fatigue management, especially for those previously deployed. If selected, you will receive instructions via phone and email, along with a Deployment Confirmation email to forward to your line manager. Your AKC is updated daily on deployments. If available for deployment, keep your phone handy as you may be contacted anytime, including weekends and after hours.

If deployed, you will receive a confirmation email with a Deployment Guide and details of your absence from your workplace, which must be forwarded to your line manager.

After deployment, you will receive a post-event survey to provide feedback on your deployment experience. Your input is valued to help identify what works well and areas for improvement.

### How will I be kept informed?

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

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

If you are available for deployment, please keep your phone at hand. If you are required, we will contact you to confirm your deployment details, including 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 a 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 deployed, the [Deployment Guide](#) in your confirmation email outlines your conditions, entitlements, briefings and expectations. Forward this email to your manager.

Any arranged travel and accommodation bookings will also be confirmed via email to both your work and home addresses.

### Will I receive my regular pay during deployment?

During deployment, you remain an employee of your home agency and will be paid at your usual salary level. For example, if you are an AO6 Senior Project Officer, you will continue to be paid at the AO6 level, regardless of the role you perform during deployment.

If you are deployed and go on higher duties, you will be paid at that rate for normal hours, with overtime paid at your substantive rate.

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 overtime entitlements four to six weeks after deployment, providing forms have been signed and submitted correctly.

## What other conditions and entitlements apply?

During a significant disaster, if the [Critical Incident Entitlements and Conditions Directive](#) is activated, staff up to AO8.4 (or equivalent) are paid overtime for hours worked beyond their ordinary hours. Accrued Time Leave/TOIL hours are not accrued during this period.

## If I am deployed, how long will I be away from my normal job?

A standard deployment period is nine days if travel to a disaster area is required, including one day for travel in, five days of work, one day for travel home, and two fatigue ([critical incident leave](#)) days. Travel days may involve work depending on the time you arrive at your deployment location.

For local deployments without significant travel, the period is typically seven days, with five workdays and two fatigue (critical incident leave) days.

[Critical incident \(special\) leave](#) must be taken immediately after returning home. When fatigue days fall on a weekend, there is no claim for additional days in lieu of the weekend.

In significant disasters, Ready Reserve members may be required for multiple deployment periods, and your return-to-work date will be advised during deployment.

## What roles may I be deployed to?

Ready Reserve members support recovery through two key teams:

1. Deployed to impacted regions in Community Recovery Hubs and coordination centres
2. Business support/office roles – Brisbane-based or in impacted regions:
  - Team Leaders and Managers
  - Training delivery
  - Grants processing officers
  - Logistics coordination
  - Client support services and administration
  - Workforce management coordination
  - Business support and finance
  - Communications
  - Planning and reporting

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

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

## How is travel to a disaster area arranged?

Before deployment, you will receive a phone call to confirm your availability and discuss transport requirements. You will also receive a deployment confirmation email with:

- Deployment period and scheduled return date to your usual workplace
- Workplace health and safety information
- Community Recovery timesheet and claim forms

Forward the confirmation email to your Line Manager.

## What are the arrangements for overnight stays on deployment?

Community Recovery will arrange and cover the cost of your travel and accommodation. Be prepared to share a room, stay in a community hall, or sleep on a camp bed or in a tent. Pack suitable clothing for these conditions.

## Looking after yourself and your colleagues

Before your deployment, take some time to go through the health and wellbeing information provided to help you understand your role, responsibilities and what's expected of you, so you can adjust to the Community Recovery environment more easily.

Ensure you get enough sleep, take regular breaks, eat well and attend all briefing and debriefing sessions during your deployment. Monitor stress levels in yourself and co-workers and don't hesitate to ask for a break or assistance if needed.

During your deployment, you are expected to fulfil your role responsibilities professionally, maintain clear communication and actively contribute to the recovery efforts.

For emotional or psychological support during or after deployment, contact your Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provider via your human resources team.

If you face any workplace issues during your deployment, reach out to your local management team or the Community Recovery Workforce Support, Wellbeing and Safety (WSWS) Team at [CRWorkforceSupport@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au](mailto:CRWorkforceSupport@communityrecovery.qld.gov.au).

## What should I do if I'm finding it hard to adjust after the event?

It's common for emotional wellbeing to be affected after a traumatic event, either immediately or weeks to months later. Support and counselling are available through your agency's Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provider for all government employees and their families. Contact your human resources team for EAS details.

## Withdrawing from the Community Recovery Ready Reserve

We understand that circumstances can change. If you need to withdraw from the Ready Reserve, please notify your AKC via email as soon as possible to allow for a replacement to be arranged.