

SURF LIFE SAVING QUEENSLAND

REGIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

NORTH QUEENSLAND

Overview

The regional response plans enable Surf Life Saving Queensland to establish their capability to support other emergency services when a disaster occurs. Through the five surf lifesaving clubs and 4 staff members we have the capabilities to lead prevention, preparation, response, and recovery outcomes for most emergency situations in the Port Douglas Shire, Cairns Region, and Cassowary Coast.

SLSQ has established Emergency Response Groups operating in all regions across the state, providing vital assistance to emergency service authorities and agencies during times of crisis. SLSQ continues to directly work with the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service, State Emergency Service, Emergency Management QLD, QLD Fire and Rescue Service and Local Disaster Management Groups to develop key strategies as to how our resources and volunteers can best be used during emergency situations.

North Queensland Branch Disaster Principal

As per the Disaster Management Handbook, SLSQ approach Disaster through Comprehensive, Capability and Risk of hazards approach. Below North Queensland Branch provides an in-depth overview on what support we can provide, if, and when, a disaster occurs.

Activation Levels

Activation of an SLSQ disaster response progresses through an escalation process, as outlined in the QSDMP. The levels of activation are:



Movement through these levels of activation is not necessarily sequential but is based on flexibility and adaptability to the location and the event. Formal activation levels apply to operations and coordination centres at all levels (incl. the SLSQ SOCC). Incident Management Teams (IMTs) may be operating as a part of an SLSQ operations centre with activities based on the relevant plan or sub-plan in support of the nominated lead at that level of response. If an SLSQ commander is appointed at any level to undertake preparedness, response or recovery activities, the corresponding operations centre is deemed to be at 'Alert,' 'Lean Forward' or 'Stand Up' level of activation. SLSQ operations may be at different levels of activation across regions and local areas depending on their operational posture and service demands due to an event.

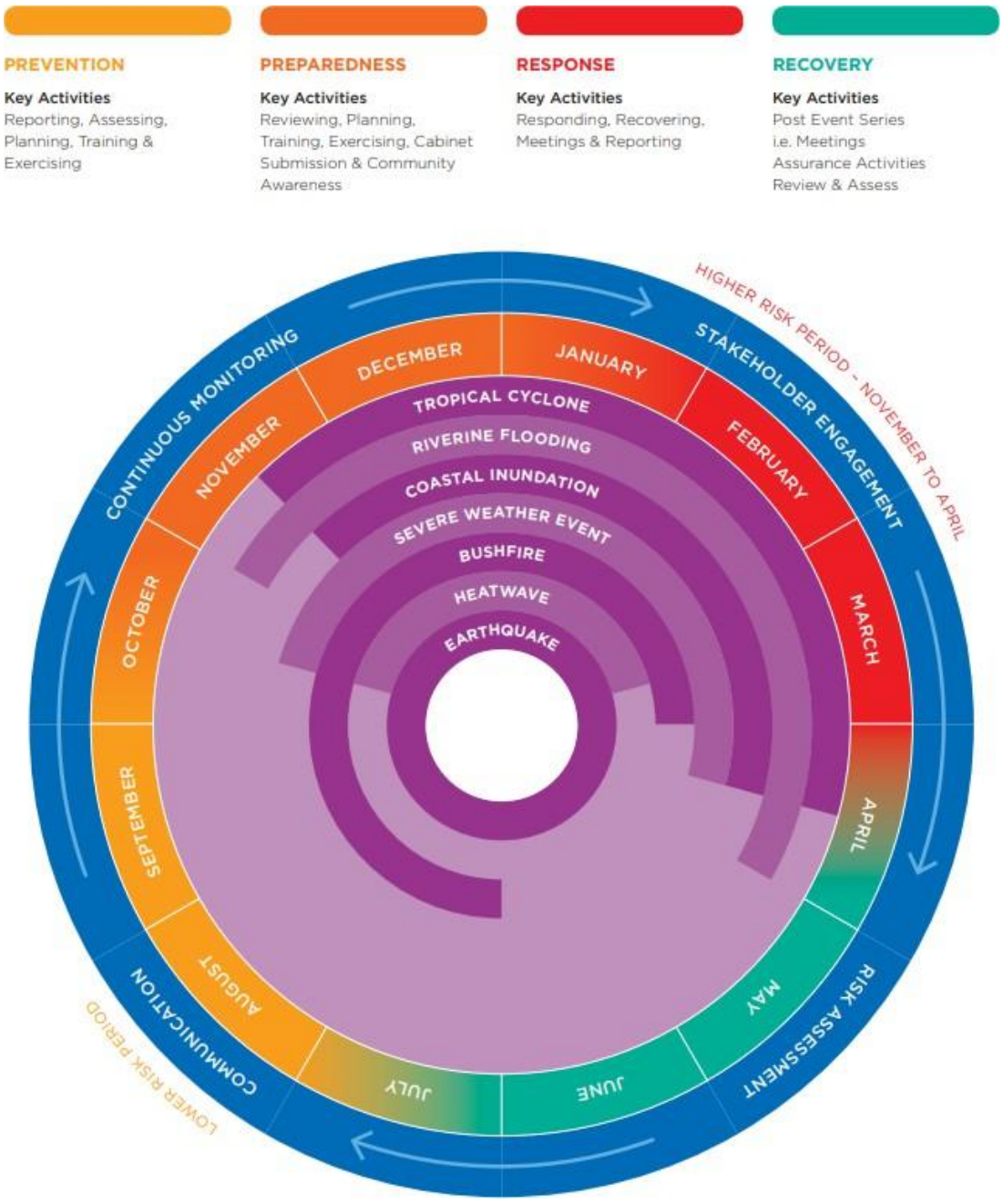
SLSQ Responsibilities

As outlined in the Queensland Interim State Disaster Management Plan 2024-2025, SLSQs role includes:

- Function as the primary authority for closing beaches in Queensland, collaborating with local councils, land managers, and partner agencies to ensure consistent and initiative-taking messaging is delivered effectively to the community.
- Function as the primary authority for beach safety, updates, and patrolling commitments.
- Provide intelligence on the coastal environment and present/emerging aquatic hazards.
- Provide response assets for use in flood waters, or assist with relocating people, emergency service personnel, and gear/equipment.
- Ensure business as usual remains on Queensland patrolled beaches.
- Provide a network of support and intelligence to disaster management groups in relation to disaster and emergency response via volunteer surf lifesavers, professional lifeguards, and SLSQ Aviation
- Provide response and surge capacity to emergency situations in relation to operational requirements.
- Gather, collate, and distribute real-time intelligence via the State Operations and Communications Centre (SOCC) via the State camera, radio, and member networks.
- Provide two winch enabled helicopters.
- Perform swift water rescue.
- Perform surveying, mapping, and imagery support using Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles (UAV)
- Provide flood response teams.
- Provide liaison officers to disaster management groups.
- Perform search and rescue.

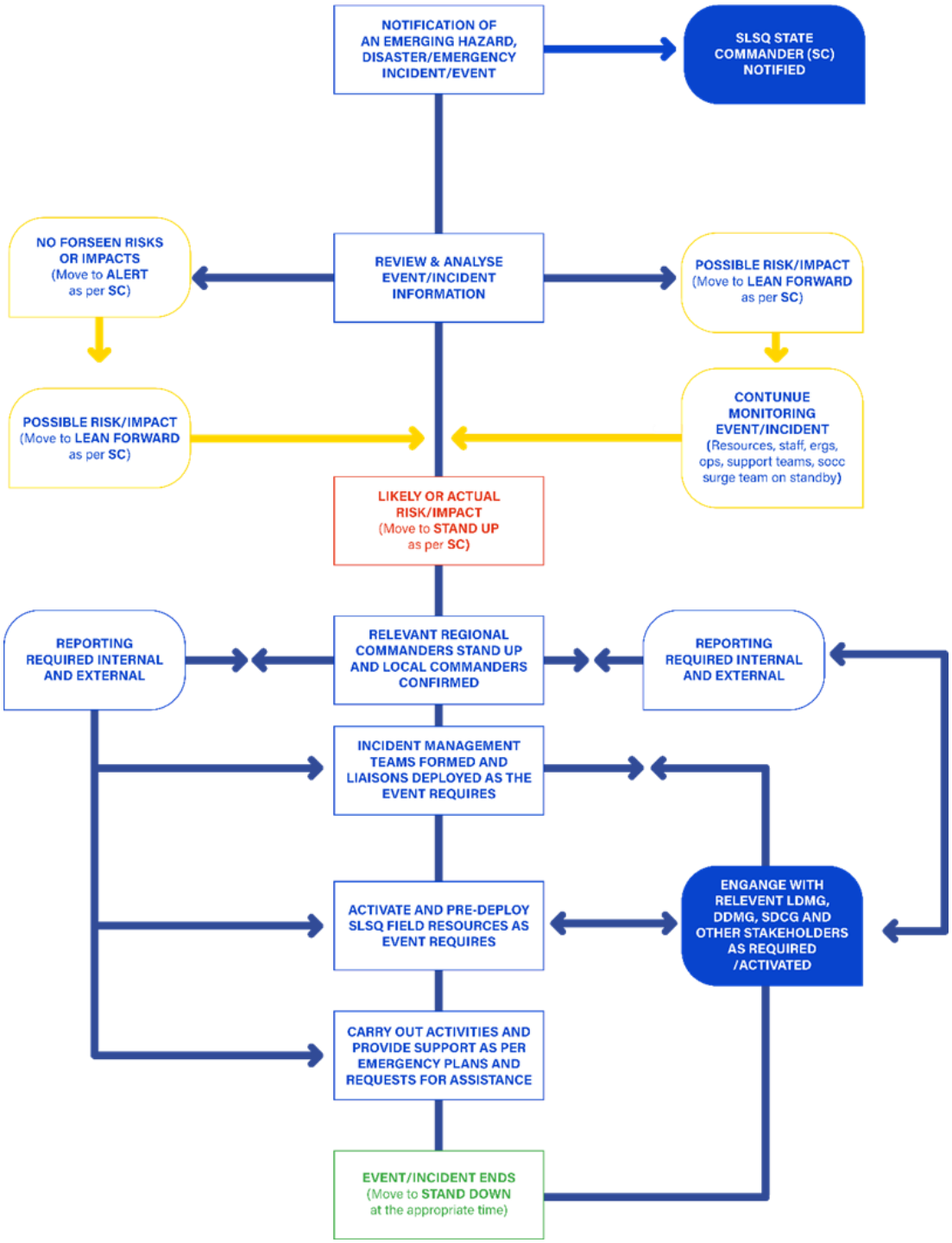
Queensland Disaster Management Activities Calendar

Below diagram is from the Queensland Disaster Management Handbook which highlights the cycle of Disaster Management activities. Surf Life Saving Queensland adapts this to ensure it aligns with Queensland's Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery plan.



Activation and Response Process Map

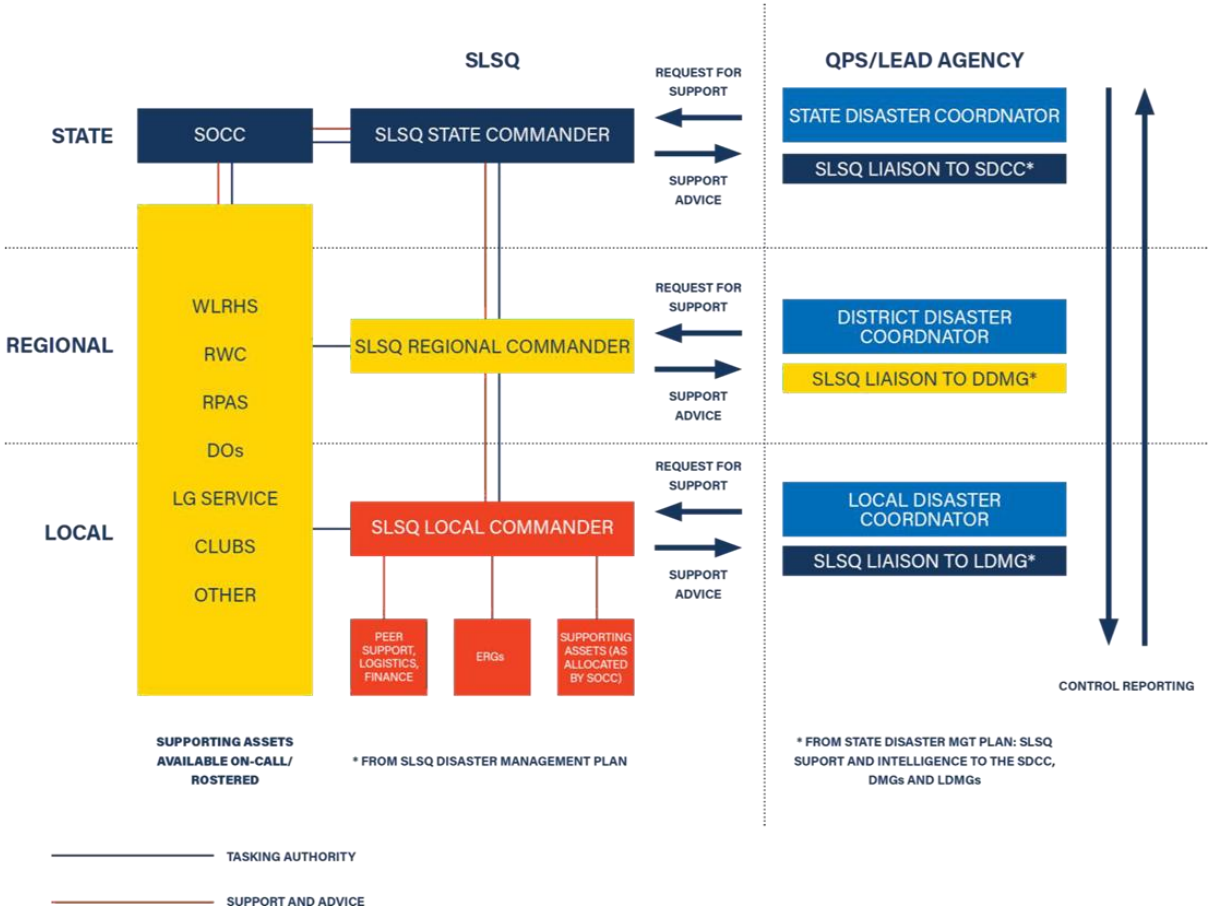
The Activation and Response Process Map and Actions list provide an example of activities undertaken during a response to a disaster. Depending on the event, these actions may not always be followed in a linear fashion and may occur concurrently.



	SOCC receives notification of large-scale emergency or disaster situation (can be triggered locally or from State)
	Rostered State Commander - review and analyse incident information
	No foreseen risks or impacts (this includes no requests for assistance)
1	**Move to Alert (as directed by authority in plan)**
2	**Continue to monitor**
3	**Key internal and external (e.g., CEO, affected regional manager) stakeholders informed of event and activation status**
4	**Ensure that all decisions, activities, and records are documented and maintained**
	Lean Forward – High Risk/Possible Impact
5	**Commence preparedness activities e.g., requirements for surge preparedness, staffing, equipment etc.**
6	**Continue reviewing and analysing event information, providing situational reports (SITREPS) as required**
7	**Notify and record decision to change activation status to LEAN FORWARD**
8	**Keep key stakeholders (e.g., CEO, regional managers) informed of event and activation status**
9	**Place Incident Management and SOCC surge resources on standby**
10	**Confirm dedicated cost code (or other process) to track financial expenditure and ensure appropriate records are maintained to support insurance and funding claims**
	Stand Up – Very High Risk/Likely or Actual Impact
11	**Notify and record decision to change activation to STAND UP**
12	**Keep other key stakeholders (e.g., CEO, regional managers) informed of event and activation status**
13	**Continue reviewing and analysing event information**
14	**Consider scale of event, response required, and resource accordingly**
15	**Continue providing SITREPs as required and commence Incident Action Planning and Recovery Planning**
16	**Convene State IMT if required and set direction and meeting schedule**
17	**Establish the daily rhythm/reporting schedule**
18	**Engage with LDMG/DDMG/SDCG/Queensland Disaster Management Committee (QDMC)as required/activated**
19	**Engage with agencies as required/activated**

20	Undertake activities required as part of activation, as outlined in relevant plans (e.g. deploying resources)
21	If LC identifies that the response required is beyond their capacity/capabilities, request support, or assistance from the SOCC or LDMG/DDMG as relevant If the State Commander identifies that the response required is beyond SLSQ capacity, capabilities, request support, or assistance from other agencies
22	Identify lessons that can be incorporated into the response to support continuous improvement
	Stand Down – Event Ends (noting this can be a gradual action through lean forward to alert or a direct move to stand down)
23	Commence return to business as usual (BAU) activities and continue providing SITREPs as required
24	Continue recovery activities, including recovery reporting
25	Commence SOCC surge/ LC decommissioning activities such as: • Save/file all documentation. • Consolidate all financial records. • Restore SOCC in readiness for next event
26	Stand down IM resources and LC when recovery activities no longer require activation of these Notify relevant stakeholders
27	Notify and record decision to change activation to STAND DOWN
28	Conduct post-event debrief and identify lessons (ensure all stakeholders have an opportunity for input)

Snapshot of SLSQ DM PLAN Arrangements



Operational Priority During Activation

During periods of active disaster management posture, all regional emergency response groups, along with established local and regional command structures, will be engaged and tasking-directed in accordance with incident priorities and operational requirements. During such activation, Emergency Response and Disaster Management activities will take precedence over all business-as-usual (BAU) functions. Resources, personnel, and capabilities ordinarily allocated to routine operations may be re-tasked, reallocated, or suspended as necessary to support life safety, incident stabilisation, and community protection objectives. Command authorities are empowered to

prioritise response coordination, situational awareness, and inter-agency collaboration to ensure an effective, timely, and scalable response aligned with the evolving nature of the incident.

Levels of Activation

Activation of an SLSQ response progresses through an escalation process, as outlined in the QSDMP. Movement through these levels of activation is not necessarily sequential but is based on flexibility and adaptability to the location and the event.

For SLSQ actions related to each level of activation, refer to the Activation and Response Flowchart and Actions list in the executive summary.

Levels of Activation	**Definition**
Alert	A heightened level of vigilance and preparedness due to the possibility of an event in the area of responsibility. Some action may be required, and the situation should be monitored by staff capable of assessing and preparing for the potential hazard. Other required stakeholders should be notified. • Direction by Rostered SLSQ State Commander. • Notification to Regional Commanders and Teams • Participation on DMGs and relevant sub committees • Report provided to DMGs as required. • Assessment of Helicopter Assets for utilisation / re-deployment • Report provided to relevant stakeholders.

Lean Forward	An operational state prior to Stand Up, characterised by a heightened level of situational awareness of a disaster event (current or impending) and a state of operational readiness. Resources, staff, volunteers, and operations centres are on standby – prepared but not activated.
	
	• SLSQ State Commander to consult with active Regional Commanders.
	• Participation on DMGs and related sub committees (as resources allow)
	• Assessment of Helicopter and other specialist assets for utilisation / deployment
	• Report provided to relevant stakeholders.
	• Regional or Local Commanders on alerting ERG Teams on Situation
	• Prepare for disaster.
	
	SLSQ Regional and Local Commanders
	• Immediately identify the following information and reports to the State Commander
	  • Number of volunteers available
	  • Number of resources available
	  • Contact list available.
	  • Preparing equipment and assets
	  • Alert ERGs Teams for Standby
	  • Supplies required communicated to Regional Commanders

	Regional Commanders provides information through relevant SLSQ and QGov DM Systems. Prepare to contact staff/ caters so we can have suffice documentation / supplies for our staff/ volunteers included.

Levels of Activation	Definition
Stand Up	When a disaster or emergency incident occurs, and a response is required. Resources are mobilised, personnel are activated, and operational activities commence. • Notification to SLSQ State Commander • Regional Commanders consult with State Commander • Notification to the CEO • Participation on DMGs and relevant sub-committees (as capacity allows) • Reporting to DMGs as required. • Notification to the SOCC on Stand up. • Assessment of Helicopter and other specialist assets for utilisation / deployment • Report provided to relevant stakeholders. Regional and Local Commanders • Immediately identify the following information and reports to the State Commander • Number of volunteers available • Number of resources available • Contact list available. • Preparing equipment and assets • Alert ERGs Teams on Situation • Equipment / supplies required. • Location of Operations Centres or Command Posts (if disaster happening) • Supplies required communicated to Regional Commander • Regional Commander to set up Regional Operations Centre (If applicable)
Stand Down	• Notification to State Commander • Regional Commander to consult with State Commander • Notification to the CEO • Participation on DMGs and active sub committees (as capacity allows) • Reporting to the DMGs as required. • Notification to the SOCC on Stand down. • Review assets with damages. • Transition assets from disaster recovery to normal operations. • Post disaster briefing for all staff and volunteers. • Internal stand down disaster workshop • Acknowledgment of volunteers & staff involved. • Equipment restocks. • Report provided to relevant stakeholders.

Formal activation levels apply to operations centres, and the SOCC at a state level. IMTs may or may not be operating as a component of SLSQ operations centres or the SOCC, with activities based on the relevant plan. If an IMT is operational and undertaking preparedness, response or recovery activities, the corresponding operations/coordination centre is deemed to be at 'Alert,' 'Lean Forward' or 'Stand Up' level of activation.

Notification and Reporting

Initial notification of a disaster or major emergency may be received at any level within SLSQ.
Media enquiries may also be the first notice of an incident. ERGs report through their SLSQ LCs, who then report to the SOCC, any incident that initiates activation of any disaster management and response plan.

Notifications from LCs to the SOCC should be completed. If LIMSOC is not available, the SOCC redundancy notification template, should be used. Notification of activation should also be supported by a phone call to the SOCC on 07 5631 7400 (24/7 on call).

The SLSQ state office should notify all regions, and clubs of disruptions to critical functions. This will be through email and/or phone call.

Escalation procedures should be in place to ensure that this information is communicated to the appropriate level of leadership that enables activation decisions to be made. It is important to ensure all key stakeholders are notified of any disruption or activation to enable effective decision making, communications, and response.

LCs are encouraged to engage in cross-boundary discussions and share communications during disasters or emergency incidents if required providing situational awareness to the SOCC where appropriate. Requests for assistance (RFAs) should be directed to the SOCC which can facilitate appropriate resources and support. Further detail on RFAs can be found in Section 4.3.6.

Commander's Intent, Situation reports (SITREPs), and Incident Action Plans (IAPs) are used to manage information and ensure actions meet the overall incident objectives. LCs should submit SITREPs to the relevant Operations Centres and SOCC that describe SLSQ support for all affected areas. These, along with handover formats (e.g. SMEACS) and other supporting information must be maintained and stored.

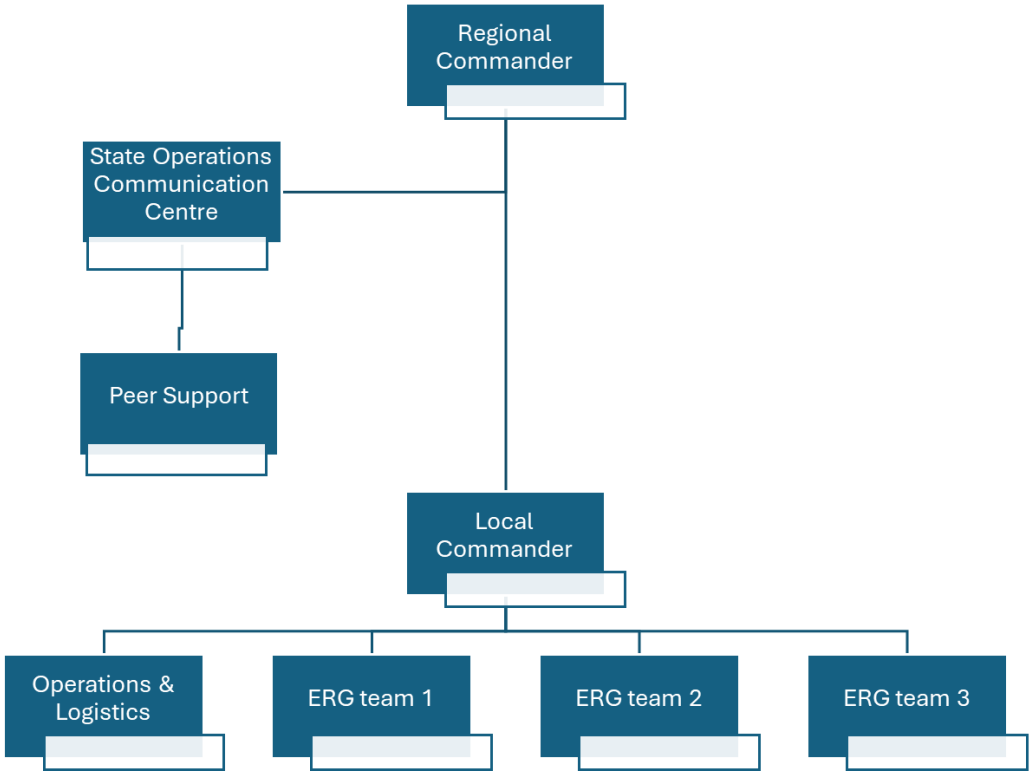
Gear & Equipment

In the event of deployment or activations, any costs or damages incurred as a result are not at the expense of the SLSQ club or member. The SLSQ Emergency Response and Disaster Management will be responsible for these costs.

Emergency Response Groups / SLSQ Club Members

- Members of the ERGs are to abide by SLSQ code of conduct and policies.
- Members cannot participate in ERG responses until they have been endorsed by their Club. Club members should not commit to operations designated to ERG.
- ERG members cannot 'self-task;' they need to await direction from the relevant authority (SLSQ, QFES, QPS, SES).
- As an ERG member you are not required to attend an incident, members can identify if they have capacity or not.

North Queensland Branch Communication Structure



Role Descriptions

SLSQ Regional Commander

The Regionally Located Commander supports the State Commander in all aspects of disaster management within a designated region. This role focuses on regional planning, coordination, and implementation of disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities to ensure the safety and resilience of local communities.

Responsibilities:

During Event

- Establish effective liaison and cooperation with all relevant agencies directly or through liaisons, prioritisation of resourcing allocation within the Region including obtaining and maintaining human and physical resources required for in support of the event.
- Activate and oversee a regional command centre during disaster events when required.
- Consult with the SOCC on tasking, issuing of warnings and incident information to the relevant stakeholders.
- Apply a risk management approach and establish systems and procedures for the safety and welfare of all response personnel.
- Management of the relationship with agencies and people affected, or likely to be affected, by the event and incidents.
- Ensure effective communications with the State and Local Commanders when and active disaster is occurring.
- Ensure relief and recovery considerations are addressed and collaborations between response and recovery agencies.
- Attend LDMG Meetings for interagency information updates.
- Schedule (with support from the Administration) frequent meetings for information updates on disaster

Pre and Post Event

- Develop and implement community-based disaster preparedness programs.
- Conduct public education and outreach activities to enhance community awareness and readiness.
- Provide training and guidance to staff and volunteers on disaster response protocols and procedures.
- Develop and implement local communication plans for disaster situations, ensuring timely and accurate information sharing.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with local government agencies, emergency services, community organizations, and other stakeholders.
- Promote and implement initiatives to enhance community resilience and recovery.

- Develop and monitor performance metrics for local disaster response activities.

SLSQ Local Commander

The Local Commander is responsible for overseeing and delivering SLSQ response activities at the local level. This role involves coordinating local resources, supporting community preparedness, and leading response efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of community members during disaster events.

Responsibilities:

During the event:

- Lead and coordinate local disaster response operations, ensuring the effective deployment of personnel, equipment, and resources.
- Establish and manage local command posts and assume operational command during incidents in accordance with established protocols.
- Provide leadership to the Emergency Response Group, assigning roles based on operational needs, skills, and experience.
- Develop and implement response plans while coordinating activities with emergency services, partner agencies, and relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure the safety of personnel through risk assessments, safety briefings, and adherence to operational safety procedures.
- Maintain clear communication with the Regional Commander and stakeholders, providing regular situational updates on operations and resource requirements.

Post event

- Manage response equipment, return to cache and restocking of resources following deployments.
- Incident reporting, post-incident reviews, and the maintenance.
- Collect and provide feedback to RO.

ERG – Team Leader

The Emergency Response Team Leader is responsible for leading and managing ERG members.

Responsibilities

- Lead and manage the Flood Response Team, providing clear direction, leadership, and support during flood operations. (See Appendix 1)
- Develop and implement operational flood response plans aligned with broader disaster management strategies.
- Coordinate flood response activities, including evacuation support, rescue operations, and emergency assistance to affected communities.
- Ensure the effective deployment and management of personnel, equipment, and resources during flood events.
- Monitor operational safety by conducting risk assessments and safety briefings and ensuring compliance with established safety procedures.
- Maintain clear communication with the Local Commander, partner response teams, and relevant stakeholders, providing regular situational updates.
- Ensure team readiness through training, exercises, and the maintenance and accountability of flood response equipment and supplies.
- Maintain accurate operational records and prepare incident reports, while leading post-incident debriefs and ensuring equipment is cleaned, repaired, and restocked following deployments.

Required Skills / Qualifications

- Completion of relevant **QDMA training** as required.
- Meet the requirements outlined in the **Technical Skills Award**.

Operations & Logistics Officer

Collect, evaluate, and analyse intel and data to provide accurate, timely, and reliable responses/solutions to operational matters raised during the disaster or emergency incident Management of resources including coordinating procurement, distribution and maintenance of human and physical resources, facilities, services, and materials.

Responsibilities:

- Review and respond to email and phone requests, obtaining and providing technical/expert advice, and identifying potential strategies and solutions to matters raised.
- Contribute to the development and updating of the Operations Centre Tasks/Action Register
- Consult with the Room Manager, Logistics and Planning Officers to ensure appropriate resources are available to manage the response.
- Consult with SLSQ and other agencies as required to work through operational activities related to the incident response.
- Process incoming requests for assistance, allocating to the appropriate cell role/function (e.g., Logistics)
- Ensure and Operations Centre -related Workplace Health and Safety incident reports are completed (to support the Planning Officer)
- Support the Room Manager and XO to manage and monitor staff fatigue and signs of stress. Forward plan breaks, next shifts, and ongoing requirements
- Complete handover including handover notes by end of shift.
- Consult with the Operations Centre Incident Management Team (IMT) to determine support requirements.
- Sourcing non-workforce resources, including but not limited to equipment, computers, printers, access cards, cab-charge vouchers, stationery, consumables, catering, and any other materials required.
- Monitor and track the use of resources and ensure all resources are returned or re-deployed if not being fully utilised.
- Raise, monitor, and progress Requests for Assistance (RFAs)
- Ensure resourcing includes business continuity activities.
- Anticipate future resource requirements, in conjunction with the Planning Officer
- Arrange the logistics of catering for the Operations Centre, to support the Planning and Operations Officers
- Provide detailed handover of any outstanding matters to person working in the logistics role the next day, including handover notes by the end of shift.

Recommended Skill/Qualifications

- QDMA training as required.

Local & District Groups in North Queensland Branch

SLSQ Region	LGA
North Queensland	Cairns • Douglas Shire • Cairns Regional • Tablelands Regional • Cassowary Coast Regional Not in area of operations (AO) • Cook Shire • Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire • Northern Peninsula Area Regional • Torres Strait Island Regional • Mappon Aboriginal Shire • Weipa Town • Napranum Aboriginal Shire • Aurukun Shire • Hopevale Aboriginal Shire • Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire • Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire • Mareeba Shire • Etheridge Shire • Croydon Shire • Hinchinbrook Shire


Local Government Area
and Disaster District
Major City
Regional City
LGA
Disaster Districts
Brisbane
Bundaberg
Cairns
Charleville
Dalby
Gladstone
Gold Coast
Gympie
Innisfail
Ipswich
Logan
Longreach
Mackay
Mareeba
Maryborough
Moreton
Mount Isa
Rockhampton
Roma
Sunshine Coast
Toowoomba
Townsville
Warwick
INSET
Not to Scale

Situation Reports (SITREPs)

Timely and comprehensive information updates during disaster and emergency incidents are crucial. These meetings, involving both internal and external personnel as needed, cover a wide range of critical topics. They should be scheduled promptly and held frequently throughout the duration of the disaster. Key agenda items include:

- Updates on deployed resources
- Assessment of SLSQ capabilities and capacity
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers
- Strategy briefings and adjustments
- Risk assessment and consequence planning.
- Media engagement strategies
- Evaluation of successful or unsuccessful disaster response strategies
- Planning for recovery efforts

Additionally, a designated SLSQ Representative participates in the State Disaster Coordination Group meetings, ensuring that updates and pertinent information from external agencies are seamlessly integrated into our internal SITREP meetings.

Record Keeping

It is the responsibility of all involved in disaster/ emergency incidents to ensure that all records are maintained for subsequent shifts and later for review post disaster/ emergency incident. This has to occur regardless of the size or duration of the disaster/ emergency incident. Records that should be included in this are:

- Pre/ Post Briefing notes.
- Incidents occurred (LIMSOC)
- Decisions made
- Actions taken.
- Asset Damaged
- SMEACS
- Executive Summary Reports
- Financial records/documentation

Local Government Links

Douglas LDMG - Douglas Shire Council

Dashboard (cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au)

Dashboard (cairns.qld.gov.au)

Dashboard (douglas.qld.gov.au)

Appendix 1

SMEACS BRIEFING

Queensland

ACTIVATION LEVEL: STAND UP				
PLANNING	INCIDENT:			
	LOCATION:			
	PREPARED BY:		POSITION:	
PERIOD	FROM:	TO:	TIME:	DATE:
SITUATION Current Situation				
MISSION Define Incident Control Objectives				
EXECUTION How control of the incident will be achieved. Tactics that will be implemented.				
ADMIN Logistical arrangements				
COMMAND/ COMMS Command structure and reporting system.				
SAFETY Safety issues.				

--- SMEACS ENDS --

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Appendix 2

North Queensland: Emergency Response Groups
Equipment List 2026

Service / Location	ERG Primary Contact	ERG Secondary Contact	Vehicle		Emergency Response Trailer	Powercraft			UAV		COMMUNICATIONS		FIRST AID			CLUBHOUSE		
			4WD	SSV		IRB Road Trailer	IRB	RWC	Sub 2KG	Sub 7 KG	GWN Radio/s	ER	Oxy Viva	Defib	FA Kit	Bunk Rooms	Comms Room	Briefing Room
Port Douglas	John Goodman 0417 633 793	Irene Cats 0428 875 275	0	1		1	2	1	1		6	13SURF	2	2	2	NO	Yes	Yes
Ellis Beach	Jarrah Sutherland 0499 885 854	Gary Williams 0448 558 890	0	1		1	1	No	1		6	13SURF	1	1	1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cairns (Palm Cove)	James Czencz 0407 632 263	Paul Mead 0432 469 500	0	1		1	3	1	1		6	13SURF	1	1	1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Etty Bay	Shayne Cini 0429 643 192	Peter Greven 0417 779 095	0	1		1	1	1	1		6	13SURF	1	1	1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mission Beach	Jesse Glutz 0406 981 494	Simon Linden 0417 823 738	0	1		1	2		1		6	13SURF	1	1	1	no	Yes	Yes
North Queensland Branch	Rachael Wynberg	0408 068 763	Isuzu Mux 390LM2		081USQ	FC9412 Double IRB	AZC17Q	0	1		3	13SURF	2	2	2	NO	Yes	Yes
	Jeremy Kay	0423 128 973					AZC18Q	0			1	13SURF						
	Max Rivett	0407 299 186	Ford Ranger 745 PJ2			DR4589	32080QC	2			1	13SURF	1	1	1			
	Jennifer Mullins 0429 501	Jon Murray 0415 495 648	Ford HH3			DR4590	32079QC	0			2	13SURF	1	1	1			
	Dee Westland (LG)	0407 316 145	Ford 034HN3					1			1	13SURF	1	1	1			