

# Flinders Shire Council Local Monsoon Trough Recovery Plan

North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January - 14 February 2019

Endorsed by: Flinders Shire Council on 10 April 2019



FLINDERS  
SHIRE COUNCIL

Recovery narrative

## Recovery narrative

### Overview of Flinders Shire Council

Flinders Shire is a place of discovery opportunity and lifestyle, our mission is to promote quality of life through leadership attitude and respect.

Flinders is part of a regional council network that was impacted by the Monsoon Trough (Winton, Flinders, Richmond, McKinlay and Cloncurry).

This collective area represents a total population of approximately 7,412 residents and the geographical area 211,068km<sup>2</sup> which represents 12% of the state. This area has a population growth of -2.4%. This total area (2014-15) is a critical part of the \$5.1 billion dollar beef industry in Queensland. Flinders Shire Council has a population of approximately 1,500 people and has a current annual growth rate of -3.3%.

Flinders Shire employment by industry is as follows: Agriculture 35%, Retail trade 7%, Construction 4.3%, Accommodation and food 4.9%, Transport 8.2%. Combined, these industries represent approx. 60% of the shire's employment; with all sectors significantly impacted by the event.

The above sectors represent 303 individual businesses which will be impacted. Flinders Shire has 264 properties who are experiencing devastating drought since April 2013. 101 properties were impacted by flood during the event.

## Damage and impacts

### Grazing

Initial impacts identified, significant stock losses, property infrastructure damage, the need for continual monitoring of human and social support. The need for immediate financial assistance and long term support, management of carcass disposal and volunteer assistance for infrastructure repair.

### Small Business

A survey confirmed 17 small businesses impacted by the monsoon event, 93% experienced loss of trade as a direct result, 73% expect future loss of trade, 23% may seek work away from Flinders Shire, 48% of businesses confirmed the event has impacted ability to retain their current employees in future.

### Not-for-profit / community events

8% of clubs were directly impacted with damage to infrastructure effecting future events, 4% lost equipment and stock. 27% confirmed planned events will be impacted, 86% of the events rely on local sponsorship. 36% believe there will or may be long term effects.

### Values

Caring philosophy, Pursuit of excellence, Teamwork, Local ownership, Communication, Leadership, Recognition

### Local Recovery Group

Established: 13 February 2019  
Chaired by: Sean O'Neill

### Lines of Recovery

Human and Social (Social Wellbeing), Economic, Environment, Building, Roads and Transport.

### Key stakeholders

Lead state government agencies, community groups, non-government organisations/non-government associations, local businesses and trader associations, service providers and other invested parties.

### Recovery themes

1. Response: ensure community safety
2. Rebuilding: bring the community forward to a new normal
3. Restoration: working together to repair and re-establish community linkages across the function of recovery
4. Support for not-for-profit groups to enhance facilities and events, building capability and long term sustainability
5. Engage organisations and services to support the provision of emergent and restoration works
6. Develop and implement community resilience betterment projects
7. Resilience: embed the principle in all activities to mitigate, improve and build betterment for the community
8. Ongoing support for animal welfare and environmental impacts

### Infrastructure and Transport

Up to 85% of the road network was impacted by the monsoon event. Loss of railway network between Hughenden and Cloncurry impacts the road network causing further damage. This will negatively impact the safety of road users and tourism industry. Council emphasises the need to use the local resources in the delivery of the road network restoration delivery methodology.

### Tourism

Five tourism businesses were impacted by the monsoon event. 95% experienced loss of trade, 72% expect future loss of trade as a direct result, 38% of businesses confirmed the event has impacted their ability to retain current employees, 40% of businesses confirmed loss from cancellation of forward bookings.

Recovery objectives

## Recovery objectives

### Short term

1. Essential services – Power, water, waste, telecommunications – repaired and restored
2. Emergency funding granted/approved – see activations
3. Recovery Governance – appoint Community Development Officer role, coordinate recovery planning and communications for recovery
4. Community support – recovery hubs and outreach support services coordination, events and connectedness
5. Complete impact assessments –
  - rural properties covering identified impacted areas including human health, business impacts, deceased animals and property access.
  - small business covering loss of trade, employment and future impacts.
  - non-profit and community organisations looking at assessing continued viability.
6. Road transport network – coordinated restoration and betterment planning for the extensive road transport network for state and local controlled roads

### Medium term

7. Key transport routes – priority restoration and improved resilience to the key transport routes for primary producers and resource sector

8. Community information and ongoing public and mental health support services, events and engagement plan
9. Restore confidence in tourism – funding, communications, sponsorship, marketing and development of attractions
10. Flood resilience – develop and implement strategies for greater flood resilience – Flinders River Catchment
11. Empower local business to increase resilience in disasters – financial counselling and business mentoring
12. Support the re-establishment of the grazing industry ready for business – financial counselling and access to services
13. Environmental management assessed including weed, erosion and silting impacts

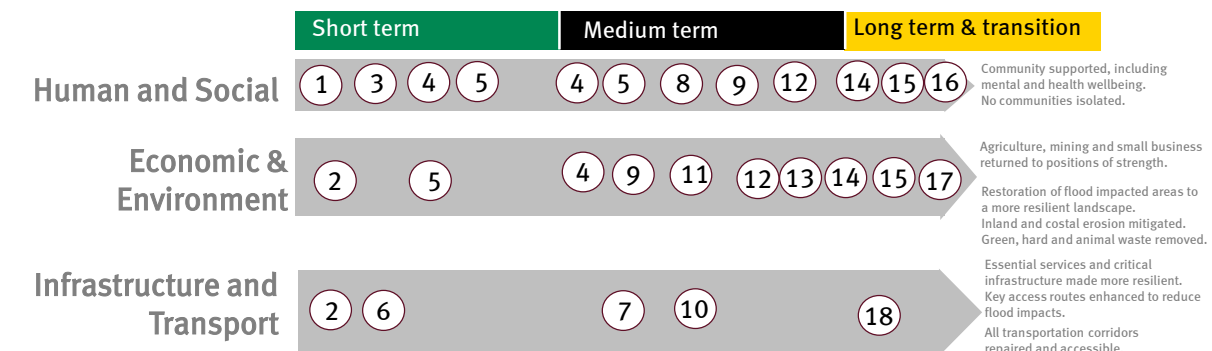
### Long term

14. Develop and implement community and resilience programs, engagement and business continuity
15. Re-establish the grazing industry and small business back to new normal, working with regional networks, State and Commonwealth governments
16. Commemorate Monsoon Trough event with anniversary celebrations
17. Development of tourist attractions and Queensland destination funding events
18. Continue lobbying with the relevant stakeholders on the funding required for betterment projects on both state and local controlled roads.

Damage and impacts

Recovery timeframes

## Recovery timeframes



## Damage – locations



## Activations for Disaster Recovery Funding Assistance

For details of activations and assistance measures visit [www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations)

Disaster relief measure	Activation date
• Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme *	08/02/2019
• Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) *	08/02/2019
• Counter Disaster Operations	06/02/2019
• Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Small Business) Loans	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Small Business	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Not-for-profit) Loans	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Not-for-profit	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Primary Producers) Loans	06/02/2019
• Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Primary Producers	06/02/2019
• Freight Subsidies for Primary Producers	06/02/2019
• Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Primary Producers	08/02/2019
• Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Small Business	15/02/2019
• Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Small Business	15/02/2019

\* The Emergency Hardship Assistance component of the Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) and Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme activation for Cloncurry, Flinders, McKinlay and Richmond commenced on 8 February 2019.

## Recovery tasks

- Initial impact assessments – identify immediate response needs (graziers, small business and not-for-profit organisations)
- Secondary impact assessments – identify medium and long term needs
- Ongoing outreach and community events
- Ongoing community and stakeholder consultation
- Provision of two way recovery communications to all stakeholders
- Provide road access to the rural and remote areas
- Provide access to financial and mental health counselling services

## Measures of success

### Governance measures of success

- Engagement of permanent Community Development Officer (Objectives 3,4,8,9,11,14).
- Event Specific Recovery Plan implemented (to achieve all Objectives).

### Environment

- Environmental strategies are developed (Objective 13).
- Support key stakeholders to develop management plans for erosion and silt (Objective 13).

### Community wellbeing measure of success

- Community event participation (Objectives 4,8,16,17)
- Professional feedback on assistance trends (Objectives 4,8,11,15).
- Community development activities relating to recovery implemented (Objectives 4,8,11,12,14,15,17).
- Provision of two-way recovery information through community networks implemented immediately and ongoing (Objectives 3,4,5,8,14).

### Roads and Transport

- Council is aiming to provide access to all the rural properties within 90 days of the event activation (Objectives 6,7).
- Council is aiming to restore at least 40% of the network to the pre existing standard within six months of the event activation (Objective 6,7).
- Council is aiming to restore 100% of the network to pre existing standards within 18 months of the event activation (Objective 6,7).

### Economic measures of success

- Grazing and small business returned to positions of strength as identified by survey (Objectives 4,5,7,8,12,15).
- Financial counselling services reporting on improvements on current state of play including exit strategies ongoing (Objectives 4,5,11,12,14,15).
- New tourism attractions developed to increase visitation and local spend within 12 months (Objectives 5,9,11,17).
- Road infrastructure construction provides increased local employment in initial 6-12 months (Objectives 6,7).
- New industries provide increased employment opportunities within 12 months (Objectives 14,17).
- Supporting small business through business information sessions within 6-12 months (Objective 3,5,7,8,11,14).

### Recovery arrangements

- Over the last week of January 2019 and the first week of February, torrential rainfalls over far North Queensland caused widespread flooding.
- During the event Flinders Shire experienced damage to road infrastructure, and major stock losses.