MARS Portal User Guide

Betterment

MARS | Queensland Reconstruction Authority

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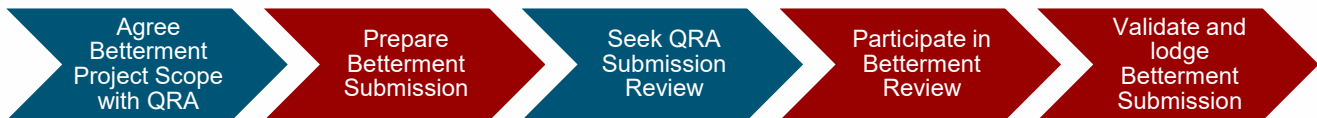
QLD

4002

Phone (07) 3008 7200

info@qra.qld.gov.au

Contents

1. Overview

Administration of Betterment funding begins with discussing with your QRA Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) the possibility of lodging a submission for a Betterment project. After discussion and agreement with your RLO, the Betterment project must be lodged through the MARS Portal as part of a REPA submission that has been enabled for Betterment.

The diagram below shows the key steps in the Betterment funding process to lodge a submission to QRA. The steps in **maroon** indicate where your action is required. Work with your QRA RLO to complete steps related to the blue chevrons in the below diagram.

Agree Betterment Project Scope with QRA	Prepare Betterment Submission	Seek QRA Submission Review	Participate in Betterment Review	Validate and lodge Betterment Submission

2. Prepare Betterment Submission

A Betterment project must be lodged through the MARS Portal as part of a REPA submission that has been enabled for Betterment. Your RLO can enable the REPA submission for Betterment funding.

Once Betterment has been enabled on a submission, a (Betterment) Funding column becomes available in the submission line items grid which will help you to identify Betterment related line items and select Betterment as the Funding category.

The *Funding category options* are:

- *Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets* – REPA line items outside of the Betterment project scope

- *Betterment Project* categories – to identify the proposed Betterment alternative treatments to increase resilience of the asset

- *REPA with associated Betterment* – REPA scope that would have been requested to restore event damage at the identified Betterment site. The associated lines are used to calculate the actual betterment cost (betterment value minus the associated with betterment value).

  Note: Since these line items will be replaced on approval of the Betterment Project scope, if these line items represent activities that are required as part of the final Betterment Project scope, the line items should be cloned in the submission and their funding category should be updated to Betterment Project category.

Betterment can be lodged in the MARS Portal in one of the following ways:

- Draft a **new REPA submission** under the relevant Betterment eligible event

- Lodge via a **REPA submission that is already lodged in MARS, but not yet approved by QRA**

- Lodge via an **already approved REPA submission**, where work has not yet commenced, for the eligible event

2.1. Draft New REPA Submission with Betterment

Betterment is lodged in the MARS Portal by drafting a **new REPA submission** under the relevant Betterment eligible event. This is considered a *pre-approval Betterment submission* in MARS.

2.1.1. Create New Submission

Create a new REPA submission in MARS (by selecting **Submissions** in the navigation pane and the **+ NEW SUBMISSION** button). On the **New submission** pop-up:

1. Select the Betterment eligible **Event** relevant to the Betterment Funding Program
2. Select REPA as the **Submission type**
3. Enter your organisation's reference for this project
4. Enter your project name in the **Description** field to identify the Betterment project.

Refer to the MARS Portal user guide – activation and submission preparation for more information in relation to creating and populating a submission.

2.1.2. Request QRA to Enable the Submission for Betterment

To enable the newly created submission for Betterment, email your RLO and provide the ***MARS Draft submission number*** of the REPA submission.

2.1.3. Build Betterment Scope: Add Funding Categories

Once you receive confirmation from your RLO that betterment has been enabled for the submission, open the draft submission from the **Submissions** list and complete the following steps in the **Line Items** tab:

1. Develop *REPA scope line items* to meet REPA submission requirements, including photo evidence supporting the exact location, nature, and extent of damage to the asset caused by the eligible event.

2. Identify the REPA line items related to the proposed Betterment project site by selecting *REPA with associated Betterment in the* **Funding** *column* (i.e. this represents the work that would be required if the Betterment project did not take place).

Note: If these line items represent activities that are required as part of the final Betterment Project scope, the line items should be cloned in the submission and their funding category should be updated to Betterment Project.

3. If there are any line items in the submission that are outside the Betterment project scope, these line items Funding column should be Reconstruction of essential public assets.

4. Identify the Betterment project scope line items by selecting the Betterment option in the Funding column. This is the actual spend of the betterment treatments and will be the amounts featured in the briefing note amounts. The associated amounts are not taken into account on payment. You can copy the change by holding down ctrl + D and then dragging the Betterment cell down.

5. Ensure that for each line item that has Betterment funding, there is at least one matching line item with *REPA with associated Betterment Project* funding.

Note: these lines items should represent the complete Betterment Project scope inclusive of any activities already recorded against the REPA with associated Betterment funding category.

2.1.4.   Complete the Betterment Application Form

Complete the *Betterment Application Form* from the [QRA website](#), one per project.

2.1.5.   Add Supporting Documents

The *Betterment Application Form* should be added as a supporting document. To add supporting documents, select **Add documents** from the **Details** tab, and follow the prompts.

Note: Ensure an estimates supporting document is provided for any treatments identified as 'Other'.

2.1.6.   Request RLO to Review Betterment Submission.

When you are ready to lodge your Betterment submission, contact your RLO to seek their review of your Betterment submission. This is to ensure that QRA can provide early feedback on the project submission to avoid submission withdrawal after lodgement.

3. Participate in QRA Betterment Review (or Pre-Lodgement assessment)

A Betterment Review, or pre-lodgement assessment, is a combined assessment (Compliance and Value for Money) conducted for a close consultation to review and provide feedback on a Betterment submission prior to submission lodgement. It is undertaken in consultation with the applicant and QRA's RLO on a draft pre-approval REPA submission that has been enabled for Betterment.

3.1. Betterment Review Set-Up

The request for a Betterment Review can be done on a draft pre-approval Betterment submission and is done in consultation with the relevant QRA RLO. It doesn't require any action in MARS.

The request for a Betterment review is recorded by the QRA RLO. The QRA assessment team will access the draft submission in MARS and identify the line items in the submission to be included in the Betterment review. These line items cannot be edited by your organisation once a Betterment review has been created and will be locked in a view-only state. New lines can be added to the draft submission, but these will not be included in the Betterment review unless requested during the Betterment review.

Once the Betterment review record has been created by the QRA RLO, the organisation can see this on the submission details page. The page will display a **draft review** badge.

A **Draft Review Assessment summary section** will also display on the submission **Details** page.

On the **Line Items** tab, each line item included in the Betterment review will display the **Draft Review-in-progress** notification, and is locked until the Betterment review is complete. Line items not included or removed from the Betterment review will not have the notification and can be updated by the organisation at any time.

3.2. Responding to BR queries

QRA assessors can also record queries on (a) submission or specific line item(s) during a Betterment review. When QRA assessors have batched the queries for the organisation, the submission contact recorded in the **Lodgement** tab on the submission, will receive an *automated email advice* titled 'Draft Review Queries for Submission [Submission Name]'. This email will list the submissions in the Betterment review and the number of queries included in the submission. Organisations will also be able to view their queries on the **Pending queries** dashboard on the MARS landing page.

Select the submission name in the **Pending queries** dashboard and the submission will open on the **Pending Queries** tab. The Pending queries dashboard and the number in brackets on the Pending Queries tab show the number of queries included in this submission.

Guidance on **responding to assessment queries** in the MARS Portal can be found in the MARS Portal user guide – activations and submission preparation. Queries need to be addressed (i.e. answered and accepted by QRA) for the Betterment review to be completed.

3.3. Betterment Review Completion

3.3.1. Notification and Viewing Recommendations

When QRA assessors have completed the Betterment review, the submission contact recorded in the Lodgement tab on the submission, will receive an *automated email advice* titled 'Draft Review Complete for Submission [Submission Name]' and the submission lines will be unlocked for the organisation to review. The **Draft Review Assessment summary section** on the right of the submission **Details** tab will display a **Draft Review state** of **Final.**

Accepting the recommended values will copy the values in the Betterment review columns, and overwrite the original submitted values in the draft submission. Select **yes** to continue.

Select the **Save** button to save the updated recommended values.

Making changes to line items after a Betterment review

If, after accepting the Betterment review recommendations, changes are required, for example:

- adding mandatory data to any cloned/added line items
- populating co-ordinates from chainage where any length reductions were made or vice-versa
- removing any unnecessary photos from reduced chainages or adding additional photos where required.

Guidance on updating line items in the MARS Portal can be found in the MARS Portal user guide – activations and submission preparation.

3.3.2. Not Accepting the Recommendations

If during the review you do not accept the changes recommended by QRA's assessment team, additional/different information should be provided to enable assessment on lodgement. Changes could include:

- updating treatment
- changing coordinates and chainage
- adding supporting documents
- adding photos to the line items
- adding comments in the **comments** field.

Guidance on updating line items in the MARS Portal can be found in the MARS Portal user guide – activations and submission preparation.

4. Validate and Lodge Betterment submission

Guidance on *validating line items* in the MARS Portal can be found in the [MARS Portal user guide – activations and submission preparation.](#)

After a Betterment review, a submission must be re-validated. Each validation message must be addressed prior to lodgement i.e. cleared through adjusting submission data or explained with a comment.

Guidance on *lodging submissions* in the MARS Portal can be found in the [MARS Portal user guide – activations and submission preparation.](#) Contact your RLO should you have any problems with the lodgement.

When lodging a betterment submission, there is an additional check box on the **Lodgement** tab requiring confirmation of review of the Betterment Project submission with your QRA RLO. The purpose of this check is to facilitate smooth assessment processing and to avoid possible withdrawal and re-lodgement of your submission. **Select** this check box to confirm your review of this Betterment submission with your QRA RLO.

4.1. Record Submission Contact

Select the **Lodgement** tab then select the Lodgement details contact from the list. Confirm the checkboxes, review the **Acknowledgement,** and select **I Agree** then select **Lodge Submission**.

4.2. Update a 'Lodged, Not Yet Approved' REPA Submission with Betterment Scope

Betterment may be lodged in the MARS Portal on an existing REPA submission that is lodged in MARS but has not been approved by QRA. This is considered a *pre-approval Betterment submission* in MARS.

To enable the identified submission for Betterment, email your RLO:

1. Provide the *MARS submission number* of the REPA submission

2. Request that the submission be ***Withdrawn***.

3. Once the submission is withdrawn, open the submission in the MARS Portal and select **RE-LODGE** (this creates a Draft submission in the MARS Portal)

4. If required, update your organisation's reference for this project and the **Submission Description** field on the **Details** tab with your project name to identify the Betterment project.

5. Follow the steps from 2.1.2 through to 2.1.7 to lodge the submission.

4.3. Update Approved REPA Submission with Betterment Scope

Betterment may be lodged in the MARS Portal using an already approved REPA submission, for the eligible event, where work has not commenced. This is considered an *estimate update Betterment submission in MARS*.

To enable the identified submission for Betterment, email *QRA Support* and/or your RLO:

1. Provide the ***MARS submission number*** of the REPA submission

2. Request an ***Estimate Update – Scope Change*** on the approved submission and request that ***Betterment be enabled*** on the Draft Estimate Update submission.

Follow the steps from 2.1.3 through to 2.1.7 to lodge the submission.