



Queensland Government
Department of **Emergency Services**
Emergency Management Queensland

Disaster Operations

OVERVIEW of ACTIVITIES

July to December 2007



Army Chinook gently returns EMQ rescue helicopter to Cairns – July 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
STATE DISASTER COORDINATION CENTRE	3
Recover Rescue Helicopter – July 2007	3
East Coast Low – August 2007	3
Grounding of the “Kri Arung Samudra” - August 2007	3
Emergency Animal Disease – August 2007	3
Storms – October 2007	4
Storms – October 2007	4
Tropical Cyclone (TC) Guba – November 2007	4
Grounding of the “Endeavour River” - December 2007	4
Grounding of the “Grain Harvester” - December 2007	4
Storms – December 2007	4
Tropical Low – December 2007	4
Summary of Resupply Operations	5
Avian Influenza - ongoing	5
Bureau of Meteorology	5
DISASTER RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS	6
South East and North Coast Queensland East Coast Low, August 2007	6
Central & Southern Queensland Severe Storms, 7-12 October 2007	7
Central and Southern Queensland Severe Storms, 28-30 October 2007	8
South West Queensland Storms and Flooding 23-30 November 2007	9
NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP PROGRAM	10
TRAINING and AWARENESS ACTIVITIES	10
SDCC Training	10
External Training.....	10
Exercise Ocean Storm.....	10
Exercise Central Havoc.....	10
STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENTS	11
Workshop Contribution.....	11
Committee Contribution.....	11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minister for Emergency Services activated the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements and State Disaster Relief Assistance on four occasions, for natural disaster events that impacted 95 Local Governments between July and December 2007. Twenty-two of these Local Governments were impacted by multiple events.

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) was activated outside normal business hours on four occasions for 24-hour operations to support whole of government counter disaster operations, in relation to Australia's first Equine Influenza outbreak and severe weather events in August, October and December. The SDCC also operated during normal business hours in response to a number of smaller operations such as localised storm damage and flooding events. The State Disaster Management Group's Duty Officer also assisted in numerous minor operations that occurred state-wide but did not warrant out of hour's activation of the SDCC.

An active monsoon trough in early November and the movement of Tropical Cyclone Guba across the top of Cape York in mid November, closed many roads resulting in a resupply operations to air-lift essential foods to an isolated community in Cape York.

There was one visit to Queensland by a nuclear powered warship.

STATE DISASTER COORDINATION CENTRE

The State Disaster Coordination Centre was involved in the following operations during this period:

Recover Rescue Helicopter – July 2007

On 22 July, the Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) Cairns based helicopter incurred an over-torque during a descent to a remote location west of Cooktown. Due to the inaccessible location and lack of commercial resources, the State Disaster Coordination Centre made a formal request for Commonwealth Assistance. The aircraft was subsequently winched from the location by an Army Chinook heavy lift helicopter and safely returned to Cairns for maintenance.

East Coast Low – August 2007

From 22 to 28 August, a complex low pressure system located over the south east Coral Sea produced damaging winds, heavy rain and major flooding across south east Queensland. This resulted in widespread damage to roads and infrastructure impacting communities from the New South Wales border up to the north coast area. Exposed beaches sustained severe erosion due to the large swells. Due to the significant damage to public assets, primary production areas and cases of personal hardship the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated.

Grounding of the "Kri Arung Samudra" - August 2007

The Indonesian Navy Training Ship, Kri Arung Samudra ran aground on Rainbow Beach, about 175 kilometres north of Brisbane on 23 August. The 18 naval officers received no injuries although the vessel suffered major damage to its keel and rudder. The Royal Australian Navy assisted in refloating the vessel and no diesel oil leaked from the 2,000 litres that was carried in drums onboard. The vessel was then towed to Brisbane for repairs.

Emergency Animal Disease – August 2007

An outbreak of Equine Influenza in New South Wales was confirmed on August 24. The disease was detected the following day in Queensland at a horse trial event at the Morgan Park Equestrian Centre near Warwick. Approximately 250 horses and 200 people were quarantined at the facility until 2 October. Numerous other locations across Queensland were confirmed as infected over the following days and weeks.

The State Disaster Coordination Centre activated to assist the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) with the containment and eradication of the highly contagious disease. An Operation Response and Recovery Management Group (ORRMG) was quickly established at the DPI&F Headquarters and remained there until 2 November.

Storms – October 2007

Severe storms impacted communities in central and southern Queensland from 7 to 12 October 2007. Several dwellings were damaged by strong winds and fallen trees. The Department of Communities identified some of the householders as suffering personal hardship and requiring emergency accommodation, which resulted in the activation of State Disaster Relief Assistance.

Storms – October 2007

A series of severe thunderstorms swept across central and south east Queensland over 28 to 30 October. Numerous houses and businesses were damaged by strong winds, debris and heavy rain. Properties in Emerald suffered extensive damage from a localised super cell which was described by residents as a mini-tornado. Due to the significant damage to public assets, businesses, primary production areas and cases of personal hardship, the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated.

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Guba – November 2007

TC Guba formed near Papua New Guinea on 16 November and quickly intensified to a Category 3 as it moved erratically towards Cape York. As a severe cyclone, there were concerns of a potential storm tide and strong winds affecting Cape York communities. Fortunately by 19 November, TC Guba degenerated to a Category 1 and headed directly for the tip of Cape York, passing just north of Thursday Island on 21 November. No significant damage occurred, however, a resupply of essential foods was required to Aurukun due to the excessive wet conditions.

Grounding of the “Endeavour River” - December 2007

The bulk bauxite vessel "Endeavour River" grounded just north of South Trees wharf in the Port of Gladstone on 2 December. Although this was a coal-burning vessel, a small quantity of oil was carried for emergency use. After several attempts the vessel was successfully refloated on 7 December without causing any pollution.

Grounding of the “Grain Harvester” - December 2007

The bulk carrier "Grain Harvester" grounded near the Gatcombe Channel, in the Port of Gladstone on 18 December. The vessel was loaded with coal and posed a significant pollution risk, due to the 1,540 tonnes of heavy fuel oil onboard. Early reports indicated a possible breach to the ship's hull but further detailed inspections showed the hull's integrity remained intact. Maritime Safety Queensland deployed a pollution response team from Brisbane and the vessel was refloated without incident the next day, with minimal disruption to port shipping movements.

Storms – December 2007

Severe storm activity from 22 to 30 December caused flooding in Central West Queensland. Due to significant damage the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated.

Tropical Low – December 2007

In late December, a tropical low developed in the Coral Sea northeast of Gladstone and moved slowly towards the Queensland coastline. Due to the abnormally high seas and strong winds, plans were readied for the evacuation of over 3,000 registered campers on Fraser Island. Over 130 guests self-evacuated from Heron Island. Widespread beach erosion and localised flooding resulted in many areas between Noosa and Coolangatta.

Summary of Resupply Operations

Heavy rain over Cape York in early November made many roads in the area impassable, resulting in several communities becoming isolated. The community of Aurukun was particularly affected and a resupply operation was conducted to airlift nearly three tonnes of essential foods to the isolated community.

Date	Destination	Cargo	Method	Kilograms
19/11/07	Aurukun	Foodstuffs	Fixed wing	2,900
Total:				2,900

Avian Influenza - ongoing

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) has been receiving Situation Reports from the Australian Government's Department of Health and Aging on the status of Avian Influenza since 29 July 2004. The SDCC continues to maintain a watching brief.

Bureau of Meteorology

Disaster Operations has a very close relationship with the Bureau of Meteorology, as Queensland has a high frequency of severe natural phenomena effecting communities throughout the State. The State Disaster Coordination Centre has access to 20 weather radar sites around the State.

During the period July to December 2007, 801 weather warnings were received from the Bureau, which required monitoring and notification to affected districts by the SDCC or State Disaster Management Group (SDMG) Duty Officer.

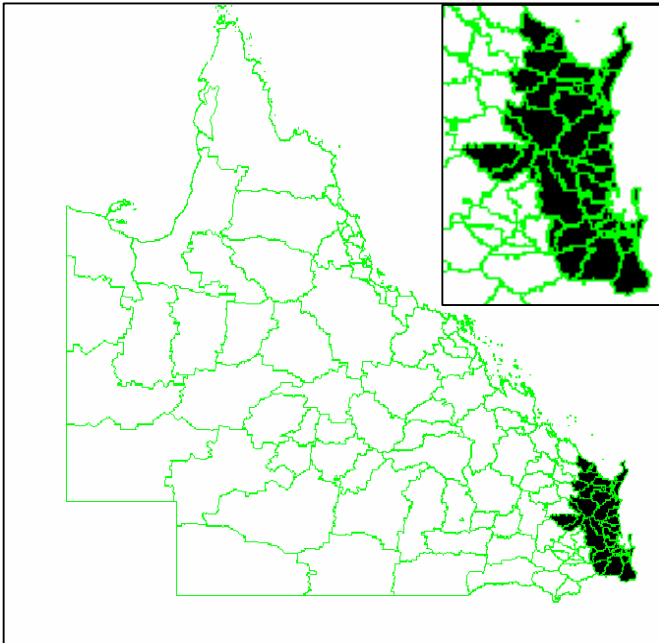
Warning	No.
Gale	92
Severe Thunderstorm	422
Tropical Cyclone	18
Tsunami	53
Flood	143
Severe Weather	73

An additional, 786 reports were received from the Bureau but generally required no or minimal action, as they were routine reports such as Coastal Waters Wind Warning, Tropical Cyclone Outlook, Tropical Cyclone Information Bulletin and Flood Summary.

DISASTER RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS

The Minister for Emergency Services, activated Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements three times and State (funded) Disaster Relief Arrangements once during this period.

South East and North Coast Queensland East Coast Low, August 2007



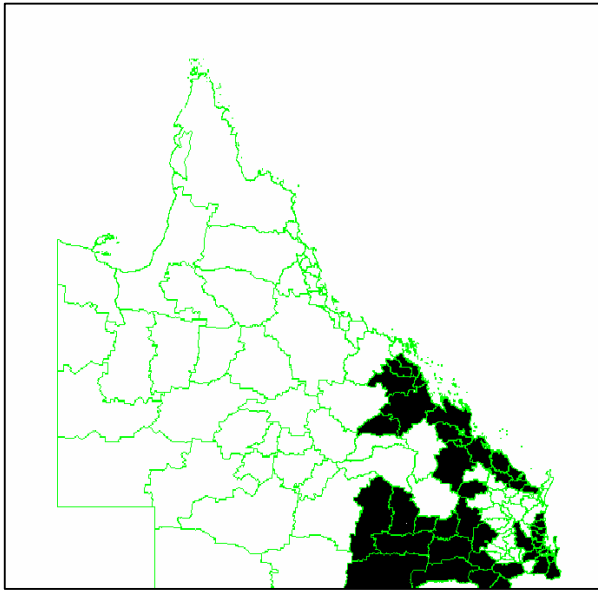
From Wednesday 22 August 2007, a complex low pressure system located over the south-east Coral Sea produced damaging winds, heavy rain and major flooding. This resulted in damage to roads and infrastructure impacting communities in the South East and North Coast Queensland areas.

Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated for the Restoration of Essential Public Assets, Counter Disaster Operations, Concessional Loans to Primary Producers, Freight Subsidies to Primary Producers, Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme and the Associations Natural Disaster Relief Scheme.

The Local Government areas affected were:

Beaudesert Shire Council	Ipswich City Council	Redcliffe City Council
Biggenden Shire Council	Isis Shire Council	Redland Shire Council
Boonah Shire Council	Kilkivan Shire Council	Tiaro Shire Council
Brisbane City Council	Kilcoy Shire Council	Woocoo Shire Council
Bundaberg City Council	Kingaroy Shire Council	
Burnett Shire Council	Laidley Shire Council	
Caboolture Shire Council	Logan City Council	
Caloundra City Council	Maroochy Shire Council	
Cherbourg Aboriginal Council	Maryborough City Council	
Cooloolah Shire Council	Murgon Shire Council	
Esk Shire Council	Nanango Shire Council	
Gold Coast City Council	Noosa Shire Council	
Hervey Bay City Council	Pine Rivers Shire Council	

Central & Southern Queensland Severe Storms, 7-12 October 2007



A number of severe storms impacted communities in central and southern Queensland from 7 to 12 October 2007. Some extensive dwelling damage resulted from these storms.

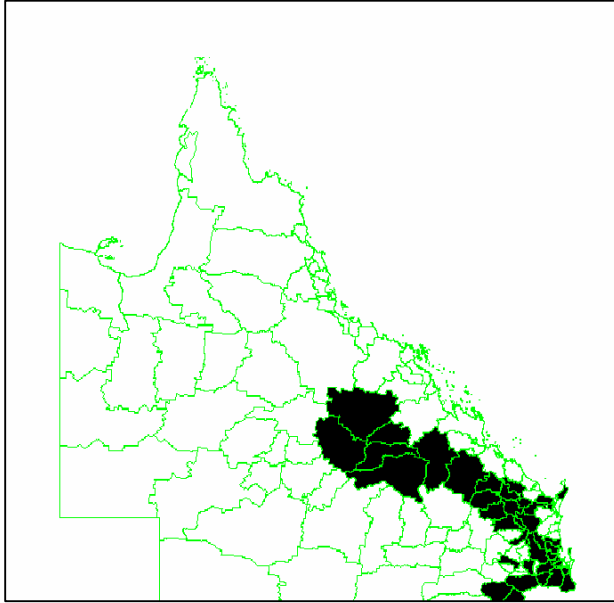
Personal hardship and distress was identified by the Department of Communities, which required emergency grant, emergency accommodation, household repairs and household contents replacement assistance.

State Disaster Relief Arrangements were activated for the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme and Counter Disaster Operations.

The Local Government areas affected were:

Balonne Shire Council	Fitzroy Shire Council	Murilla Shire Council
Banana Shire Council	Gladstone City Council	Nebo Shire Council
Beaudesert Shire Council	Gold Coast City Council	Noosa Shire Council
Bendemere Shire Council	Goondiwindi Town Council	Peak Downs Shire Council
Booringa Shire Council	Hervey Bay Shire Council	Pine Rivers Shire Council
Brisbane City Council	Inglewood Shire Council	Redcliffe City Council
Broadsound Shire Council	Ipswich City Council	Redlands Shire Council
Bundaberg City Council	Isis Shire Council	Rockhampton City Council
Bungil Shire Council	Kolan Shire Council	Roma Town Council
Burnett Shire Council	Livingstone Shire Council	Sarina Shire Council
Caboolture Shire Council	Logan City Council	Stanthorpe Shire Council
Calliope Shire Council	Mackay City Council	Tara Shire Council
Caloundra City Council	Maroochy Shire Council	Waggamba Shire Council
Chinchilla Shire Council	Milmeran Shire Council	Wambo Shire Council
Dalby Town Council	Mirani Shire Council	Warroo Shire Council
Eidsvold Shire Council	Miriam Vale Shire Council	Warwick Shire Council
Esk Shire Council	Mount Morgan Shire Council	

Central and Southern Queensland Severe Storms, 28-30 October 2007



A number of severe storm cells impacted Central and Southern Queensland communities from 28 to 30 October 2007. Damage was caused to infrastructure by torrential rain, high winds and hail.

Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated for the Restoration of Essential Public Assets, Counter Disaster Operations, Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme, Associations Natural Disaster Relief Scheme, Concessional Loans to Small Businesses and Concessional Loans to Primary Producers.

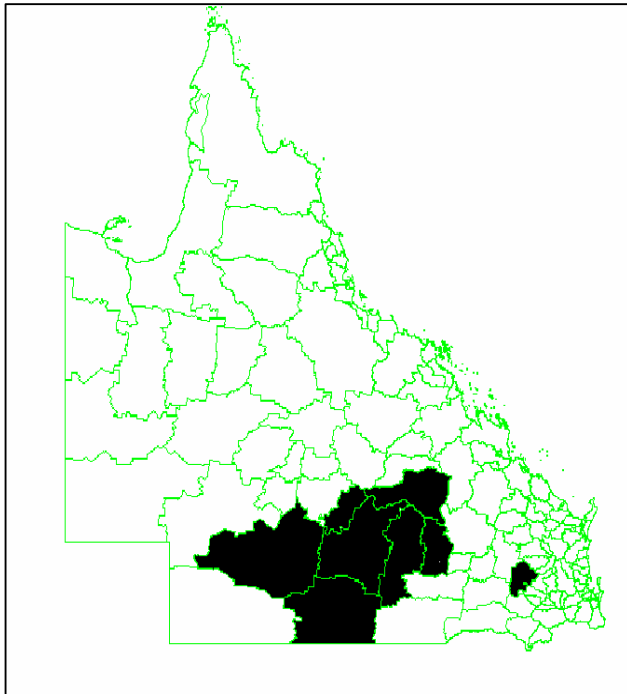
The Local Government areas affected were:

Banana Shire Council
Bauhinia Shire Council
Beaudesert Shire Council
Belyando Shire Council
Biggenden Shire Council
Boonah Shire Council
Brisbane City Council
Caboolture Shire Council
Duarina Shire Council
Eidsvold Shire Council
Emerald Shire Council
Esk Shire Council
Gatton Shire Council

Gayndah Shire Council
Gold Coast City Council
Hervey Bay City Council
Inglewood Shire Council
Ipswich City Council
Jericho Shire Council
Jondaryan Shire Council
Kilcoy Shire Council
Kilkivan Shire Council
Kolan Shire Council
Logan City Council
Maryborough City Council

Monto Shire Council
Mundubbera Shire Council
Murgon Shire Council
Nanango Shire Council
Peak Downs Shire Council
Perry Shire Council
Pine Rivers Shire Council
Redcliffe City Council
Stanthorpe Shire Council
Warwick Shire Council
Wondai Shire Council
Woocoo Shire Council

South West Queensland Storms and Flooding 23-30 November 2007



Storm activity commencing in the period from 23-30 November 2007 caused localised flooding in South Western Queensland areas. The floodwaters caused significant road damage.

Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements were activated for Restoration of Essential Public Assets, Counter Disaster Operations and the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme.

The Local Government areas affected were:

Bauhinia Shire Council

Booringa Shire Council

Bungil Shire Council

Dalby Town Shire Council

Murweh Shire Council

Paroo Shire Council

Quilpie Shire Council

Roma Town Council

Tambo Shire Council

Wambo Shire Council

NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP PROGRAM

Disaster Operations is the lead agency for coordinating Nuclear Powered Warship (NPW) visits to Queensland ports. There was one visit to Queensland during this period for crew rest and recreation purposes, when the USS Hampton, a Los Angeles class fast attack submarine visited Brisbane in July.

All the recommendations following Exercise Fisherman 2007 that was conducted in May 2007, have now been implemented and incorporated into the Port Safety Plan.

TRAINING and AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Disaster Operations maintains an active role in organising and conducting disaster management activities at a State level.

SDCC Training

To provide a surge capability during protracted operations, Disaster Operations has been conducting regular training sessions for EMQ and other DES divisional staff who are interested in assisting the SDCC during operational periods. These sessions alternate between delivering theoretical training and exercises, this allows participants to learn in a hands-on environment and reinforces their training. 71 personnel attended the training, 47 attended exercises and 38 attended both activities.

External Training

Several Disaster Operations staff attended internal and external training activities and courses as part of their professional development and succession planning.

Exercise Ocean Storm

This was a three day real time exercise conducted over 24 to 26 July. The exercise was designed around a hypothetical but realistic and potential scenario of a cyclone affecting the Queensland South East Region. Local and District Disaster Management Groups actively participated and were able to review the effectiveness of policies and procedures at local and disaster district level for preparation, evacuation, damage assessment and recovery phases during an event.

Exercises had been planned for Warwick, Cairns and Brisbane later in the year but had to be cancelled due to the resource requirement of the Equine Influenza outbreak.

Exercise Central Havoc

This was a two day exercise conducted on 4 and 5 December 2007 at Gladstone utilising the Emergo Training System. The exercise focused on exercising multi-agency response and evacuation procedures at a tactical and operational level, to an incident resulting in mass casualties.

STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENTS

On July 1 2007, Queensland joined the National State Emergency Service (SES) **132 500** Telephone Network enabling Queensland residents to easily call for help from the SES anywhere in the State. This system is monitored by the SDCC and SDMG Duty Officer.

Disaster Operations also made contributions to the following activities and projects:

- Estimates Hearing
- SDMG Annual Report
- Roma Street Precinct Discussion exercise
- Exercise Hyperion

Workshop Contribution

Disaster Operations staff actively participated in the following workshops:

- Australasian Natural Hazards Management Conference – Brisbane 3-4 July
- National Cyclones Workshop – Mount Macedon 28-30 August
- NCR Workshop – 29 August
- Nuclear Powered Warship Seminar – Mount Macedon 30-31 August
- Qld Tropical Cyclone Consultative Committee Workshop – Caloundra 18 October
- Psychosocial Response and Recovery Symposium – Brisbane 2 November
- Qld Tropical Cyclone Consultative Committee Workshop – Mackay 15 November

Committee Contribution

Disaster Operations staff were also actively involved in supporting the following committees:

- APEC State Steering Committee
- Brisbane Port Safety Organisation
- Chemical Biological Radiological Working Group
- Community Warning Working Group
- Coordination Reference Group
- Counter Terrorism Training and Exercise Management Committee
- Disaster Management Alliance Management Group
- Emergency Service Unit Steering Committee
- Information Communication Technology Steering Group
- Interdepartmental Committee on Bushfires
- Interdepartmental Committee on Bushfires Operations Subcommittee
- Major Transport Precinct Project Reference Group
- Nuclear Powered Warship Visits Committee
- Port of Brisbane Mutual Aid Group
- Protecting Our Coastal Communities
- Queensland Emergency Operations Centre Control Group
- Queensland National Plan State (Oil Spill) Committee
- SAFER Steering Committee
- Senior Executive Management Team
- State Community Recovery Committee
- State Disaster Coordination Group
- State Disaster Management Group
- Task Tracking System Project Control Group
- Traveller Information Standing Committee
- Tsunami Project Steering Committee