



State Disaster Coordination Centre

Overview of Activities

January to June 2012





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services activated the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements on six occasions for different natural disaster events that impacted Queensland during this period.

Due to extensive flooding in southwest Queensland in early February 2012, the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services declared Disaster Situations under the provisions of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* for the Districts of Roma and Charleville, which remained current for 14 days.

The Minister also declared a Disaster Situation for the District of Townsville on 20 March 2012 as a result of extreme storm damage. This remained in force until 28 March.

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) was activated from 3 February to 13 February 2012 to support operations relating to the Western Queensland Tropical Low.

The SDCC coordinated 11 resupply operations which resulted nearly 34 tonnes of essential supplies being airlifted to isolated communities. The SDCC Watch Desk also assisted in numerous minor operations that occurred state-wide but did not warrant formal out of hours activation of the SDCC.

There were 24 Emergency Alert campaigns to communities that were affected by floods associated with the Western Queensland Tropical Low.

There were no visits to Queensland by Nuclear Powered Warships from the United States Navy for crew rest and recreation.



STATE DISASTER COORDINATION CENTRE

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

Phobos-Grunt Space Probe Re-entry – 15 January 2012

A 13.5 tonne Russian space probe that was designed to collect samples from Mars was launched 9 November 2011 but became stuck in Earth's orbit shortly afterwards. As its orbits decayed, it eventually began an uncontrolled re-entry to earth's atmosphere and started to break up, however, many large pieces survived re-entry and crashed down into the South Pacific Ocean after first passing over Queensland.

Southeast Queensland Heavy Rainfall and Flooding 23-26 January 2012

Very heavy rainfall across Brisbane and the Gold and Sunshine Coasts over several days caused flash flooding, landslides and hundreds of road closures. High tides exacerbated flooding in low lying areas and several beaches were closed on the Gold Coast due to dangerous tides and debris.

The Emergency Services Minister activated the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to assist affected Councils cover the cost of restoring damaged public infrastructure and their counter disaster operations.

Western Queensland Tropical Low 27 January to February 2012

Very heavy rainfall associated with a tropical low pressure system that moved south, impacted northwest, central and western Queensland from late January to mid February 2012. Record flood levels were reached in several towns which caused widespread flood damage to private and public infrastructure.

Over 900 buildings were flood affected with floodwaters inundating the living or work areas. Significant road and rail networks were flooded. Approximately 10,000 kilometres of fencing was damaged as well as extensive damage to about 1,250 kilometres of the wild dog barrier fence. Approximately \$36 million of cotton crop was destroyed at St George.

Residents of St. George were evacuated, initially by bus and then by aircraft when surrounding roads became flooded. Temporary flood barriers were deployed to Charleville and St George.

The Emergency Services Minister declared Disaster Situations under the provisions of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* for the Districts of Roma and Charleville and activated the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements for most parts of the State.

The Australian Defence Force assisted by providing additional helicopter support and over 200 personnel to assist with clean-up operations.

Tropical Low – 3 to 4 February 2012

A Tropical Low in the Gulf of Carpentaria continued to move eastwards and crossed Cape York before emerging in the Coral Sea. Due to the damage to a number of Aboriginal communities from heavy rainfall and strong winds, the Emergency Services Minister activated the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.



Tropical Cyclone Jasmine – 5 to 16 February 2012

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Jasmine formed in the Coral Sea off the Far North Queensland coast on 5 February 2012. The low that intensified into TC Jasmine began its life several days earlier when it formed in the Gulf of Carpentaria, before crossing Cape York to deepen into a cyclone.

TC Jasmine continued to intensify slightly as it maintained an easterly track across the Coral Sea. By 10 February it had become a Severe Tropical Cyclone Category 4 and was near Vanuatu.

North Coast Queensland Low – 24 February to 7 March 2012

Slow moving very severe thunderstorms associated with an upper low produced considerable rainfall and strong winds resulting in flooding and considerable damage to both public infrastructure and private property in a number of Sunshine Coast communities, particularly in Noosa, Cooroy and Coolumb. The Bureau of Meteorology requested media outlets to use the Standard Emergency Warning Signal to alert the affected communities.

The Emergency Services Minister activated the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to assist Gympie and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils cover the cost of restoring damaged public infrastructure and its counter disaster operations. Personal hardship assistance was also made available.

Northern and Far Northern Queensland Flooding - March 2012

A Tropical Low that formed earlier in the week over the Timor Sea crossed into Queensland near the southern Gulf of Carpentaria on 16 March, and generally moved in a easterly direction over the next few days. The Low remained imbedded in a vigorous active monsoon trough, which resulted in widespread rainfall of 150-200mm per day, with several areas recording well over 300 mm. Fast River rises occurred resulting in extensive flooding across the Gulf region. Higher than normal tides occurred in the Gulf of Carpentaria with many areas reaching or slightly exceeding the Highest Astronomical Tide level. 50 people were relocated from the low-lying Karumba Caravan Park to commercial accommodation and 12 people were also relocated from flood affected stations in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

From 19 March, the Low moved generally southeast over land, causing rapid rises in coastal rivers and creeks between Cooktown and Brisbane, with many systems reaching a major flood level. Floodwaters cut the Bruce Highway and rail line in north Queensland. On 20 March 2012, strong wind bursts impacted southwest Townsville, cutting power to about 8,000 properties and causing severe damage to almost 100 properties and minor damage to over 300 properties. To assist with the coordination of the response and management and control of resources, the Minister for Emergency Services declared a disaster situation for the Townsville Disaster District as well as activating Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

The Low and monsoon trough maintained its south-easterly direction along eastern Queensland resulting in heavy rainfall along the coastline down to the Sunshine Coast.



East Coast Low North Coast Queensland - March 2012

Extreme rainfall from a hybrid low pressure system impacted southeast Queensland from 3 March 2012, particularly in the Sunshine Coast area. Several locations recorded over 300mm in a 24-hour period on 5 March, which cut numerous roads including the Bruce Highway between Tiaro and Maryborough, while five schools were closed in the region.

The Minister for Emergency Services activated Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

Hendra Virus – May to June 2012

In late May 2012 one property near Rockhampton and another property near Ingham were quarantined following the positive confirmation of the Hendra Virus. On 27 June 2012, another property near Mackay was quarantined. Horses died or were euthanized at all three properties.



Bureau of Meteorology

During the period January to June 2012, 2,607 weather advices were received from the Bureau of Meteorology. 1,478 advices required minimal or no action as they were routine reports such as Coastal Waters Wind Warnings, Gale/Storm Warnings for shipping, Tropical Cyclone Outlooks, Tropical Cyclone Information Bulletins and Flood Summaries.

However, 1,129 were warnings that required monitoring and notification to affected Local Governments by the Watch Desk. These warnings were for phenomena such as Flood, Severe Weather, Tropical Cyclone and Storm Tide.

Summary of Resupply Operations

There were 11 state level resupply operations coordinated by the State Disaster Coordination Centre and the total movement of supplies was almost 34 tonnes. Some communities required multiple resupplies due to long periods of isolation caused by road closures due to flooding. Additionally, a number of Local Governments conducted their own operations which were typically by light aircraft or mustering helicopters to isolated homesteads in their area.

State Level Resupply Operations:

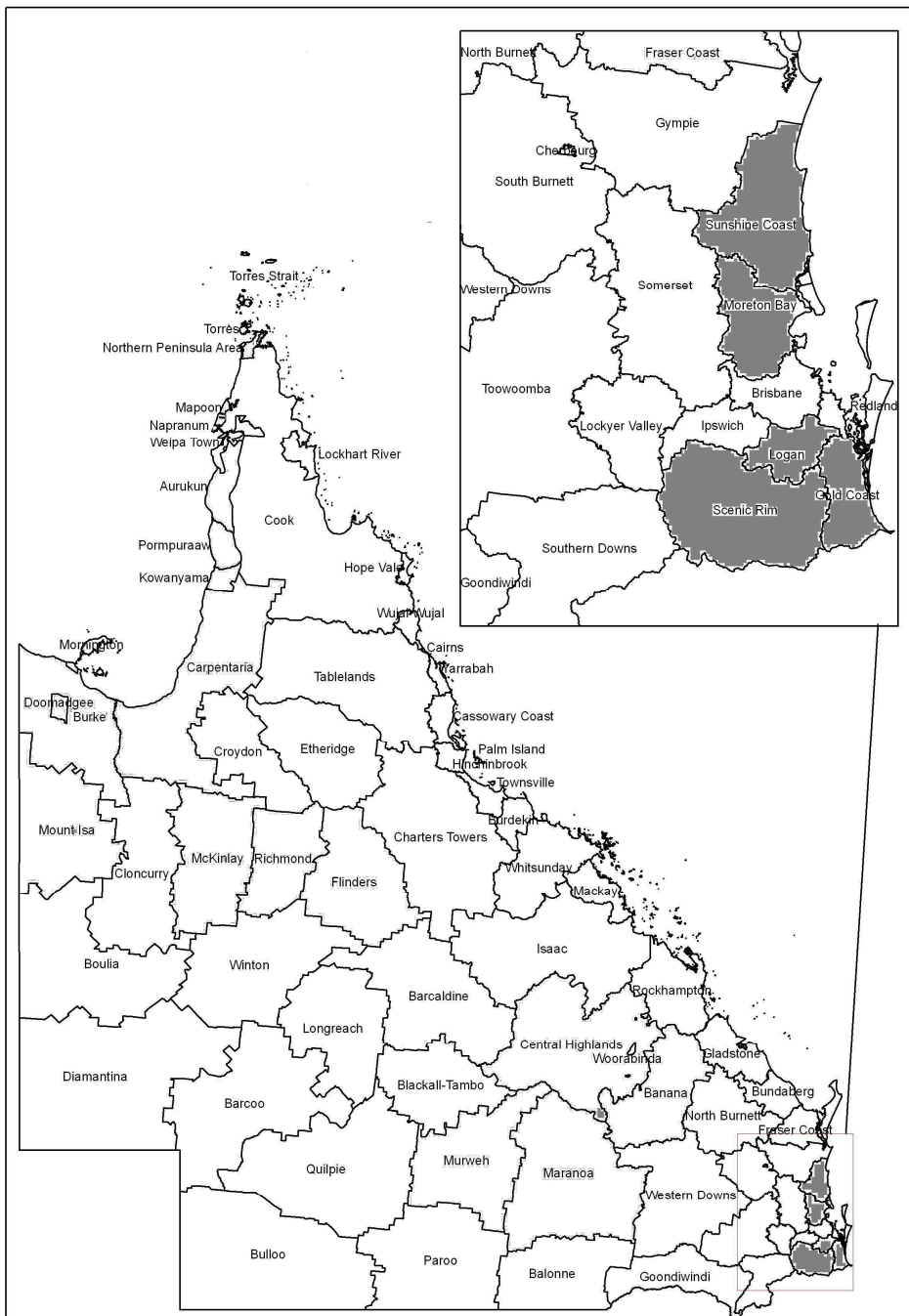
Date	Destination	Cargo	Delivery Method	Kilograms
3/2/12	Doomadgee	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	2,700
3/2/12	Burketown	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	2,000
6/2/12	Quilpie	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	3,640
7/2/12	Thargomindah	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	4,900
7/2/12	Charleville	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	4,599
7/2/12	Augathella	Medical Supplies	Fixed Wing	12
7/2/12	Quilpie	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	7,854
7/2/12	Morven via Charleville	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing and Road	540
8/2/12	Dirranbandi	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	4,352
22/3/12	Doomadgee	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	750
22/3/12	Burketown	Essential Foods	Fixed Wing	2,620
			Total:	33,967



DISASTER RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS

The Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services activated the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements on six occasions during this period, however, seven Local Government areas were impacted twice and Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils were impacted by three events.

Southeast Queensland Heavy Rainfall and Flooding 23-26 January 2012



Event and Timing

Heavy rainfall from an upper trough moving west across South East Queensland, from 23 to 26 January 21012.

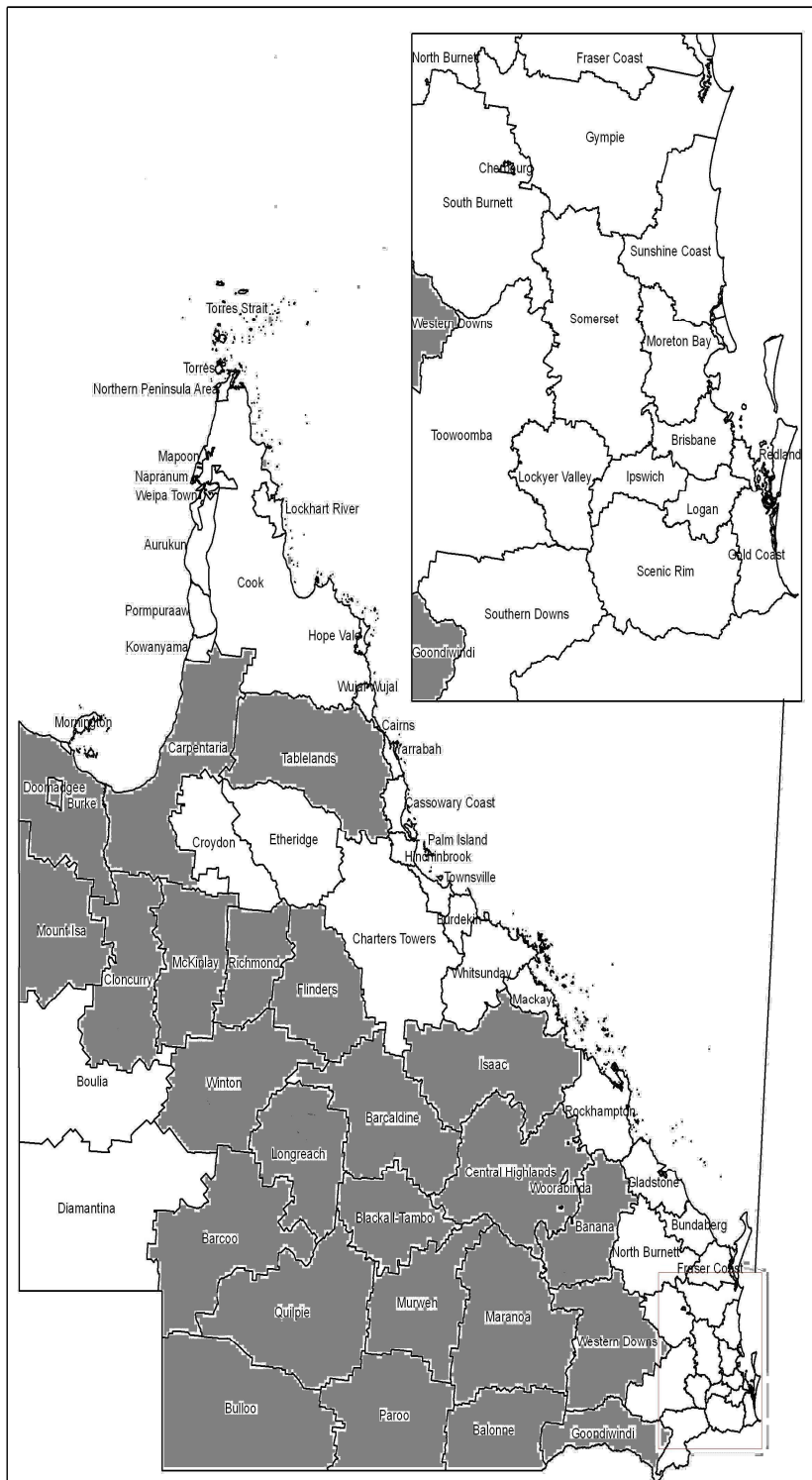
Relief Measures Activated

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets

The Local Governments affected were Gold Coast City Council, Logan City Council, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Scenic Rim Regional Council and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.



Western Queensland Tropical Low 27 January to February 2012



Event and Timing

Heavy rainfall originating from a Tropical Low moving south through North West and mainly Western Queensland combined with a trough affecting West Queensland, from January 2012.

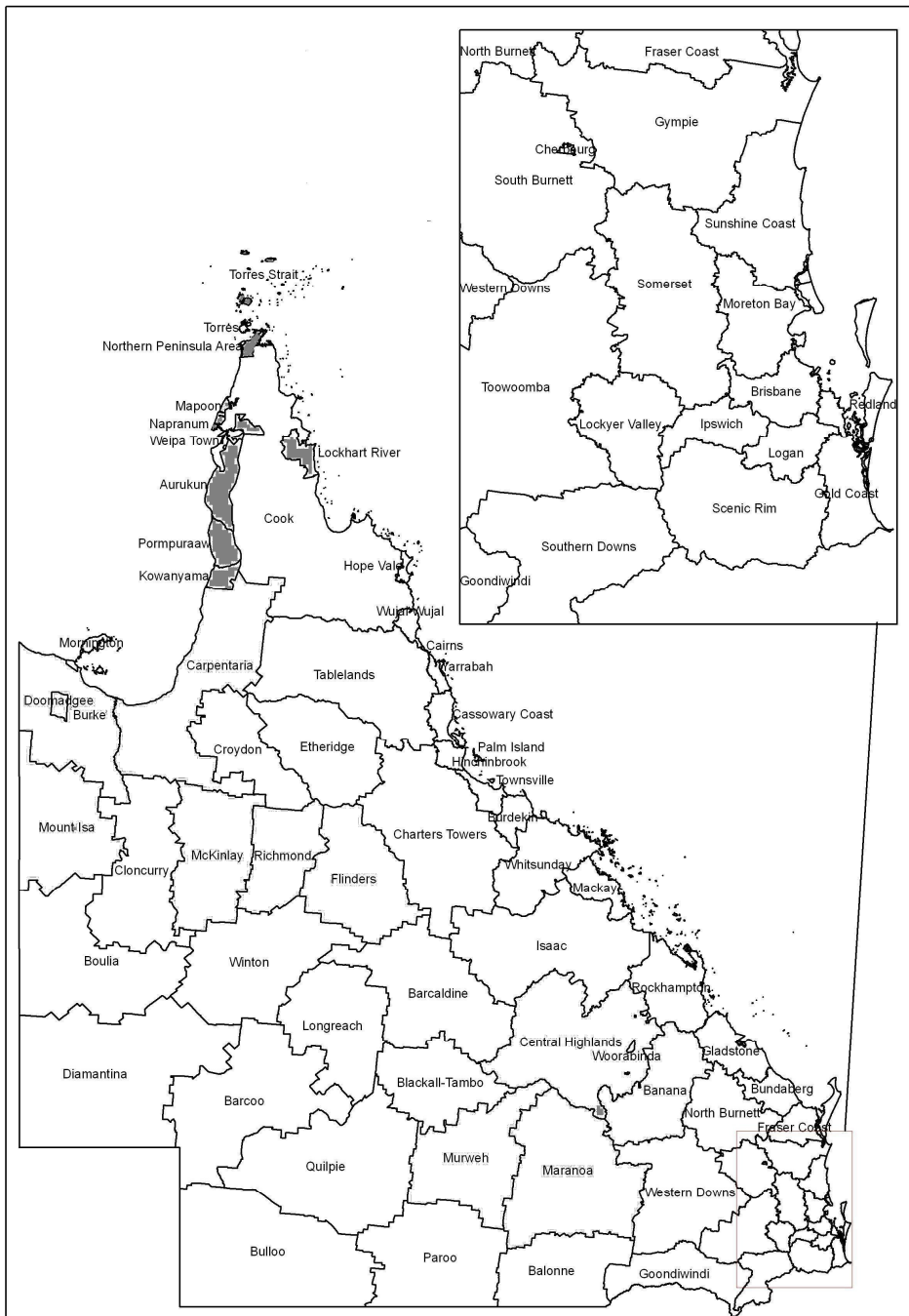
Relief Measures Activated

- Concessional Loans to Not for Profit Organisations
- Concessional Loans to Primary Producers
- Concessional Loans to Small Business
- Counter Disaster Operations
- Essential Services Safety & Reconnection
- Freight Subsidies for Primary Producers
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets
- Special Disaster Assistance Grants for Primary Producers
- Special Disaster Assistance Grants for Non-Profit Organisations
- Special Disaster Assistance Grants for Small Business

The Local Governments affected were Balonne Shire Council, Banana Shire Council, Barcaldine Regional Council, Barcoo Shire Council, Blackall-Tambo Regional Council, Bulloo Shire Council, Burke Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Goondiwindi Regional Council, Isaac Regional Council, Longreach Regional Council, McKinlay Shire Council, Maranoa Regional Council, Mount Isa City Council, Murweh Shire Council, Paroo Shire Council, Quilpie Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council, Tablelands Regional Council, Western Downs Regional Council and Winton Shire Council.



Tropical Low Far North Queensland 3 to 4 February 2012



Event and Timing

Heavy rainfall and strong winds originating from a Tropical Low moving east from the Gulf of Carpentaria into the Coral Sea, on 3 and 4 February 2012.

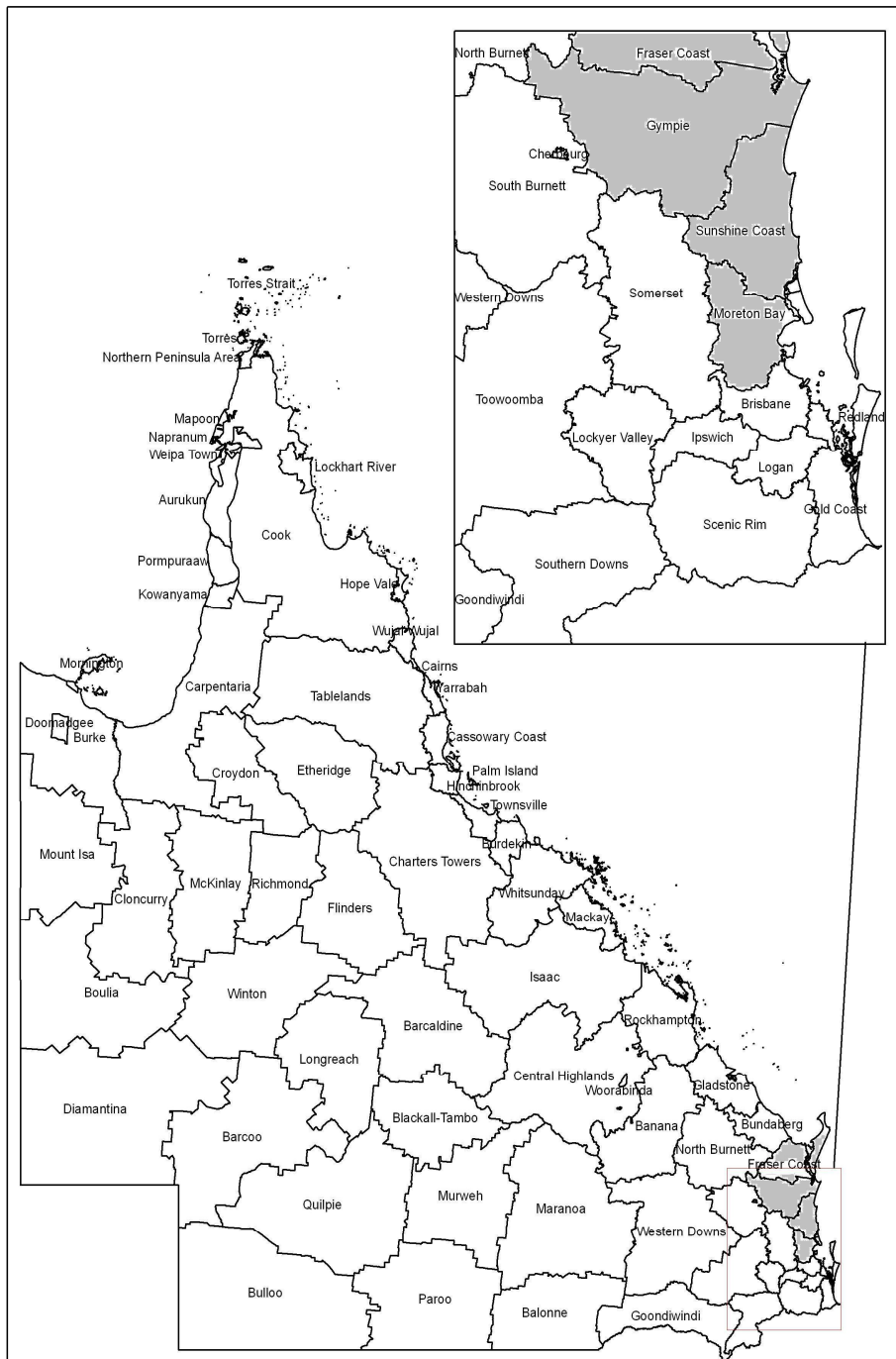
Relief Measures Activated

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets

The Local Governments affected were Aurukun Shire Council, Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council, Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council, Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council, Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council, Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council, Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council and Torres Strait Islands Regional Council.



North Coast Queensland Low 24 February to 7 March 2012



Event and Timing

A severe thunderstorm, originating from an upper low moving across South East Queensland, produced heavy rainfall and localised flooding from 24 February to 7 March 2012.

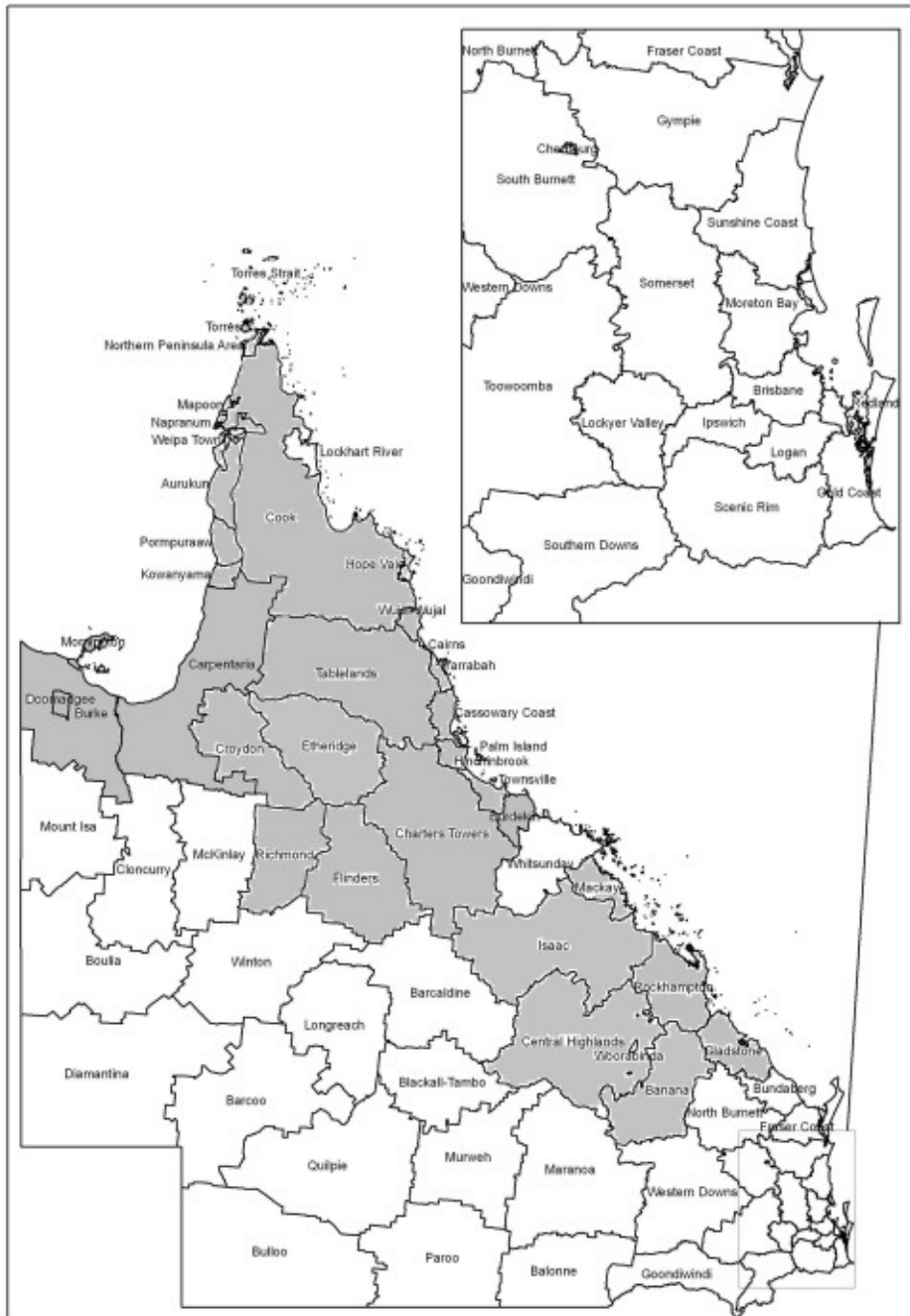
Relief Measures Activated

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme
- Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets
- Concessional Loans for Non-Profit Organisations
- Concessional Loans to Small Business
- Concessional Loans to Primary Producers
- Freight Subsidies for Primary Producers

The Local Governments affected were Fraser Coast Regional Council, Gympie Regional Council, Moreton Bay Regional Council and Sunshine Coast Regional Council.



Northern and Far Northern Queensland Flooding 15 March 2012



Event and Timing

Heavy rainfall and flooding as a result of a monsoonal trough situated over the far southern Gulf of Carpentaria on 15 March 2012.

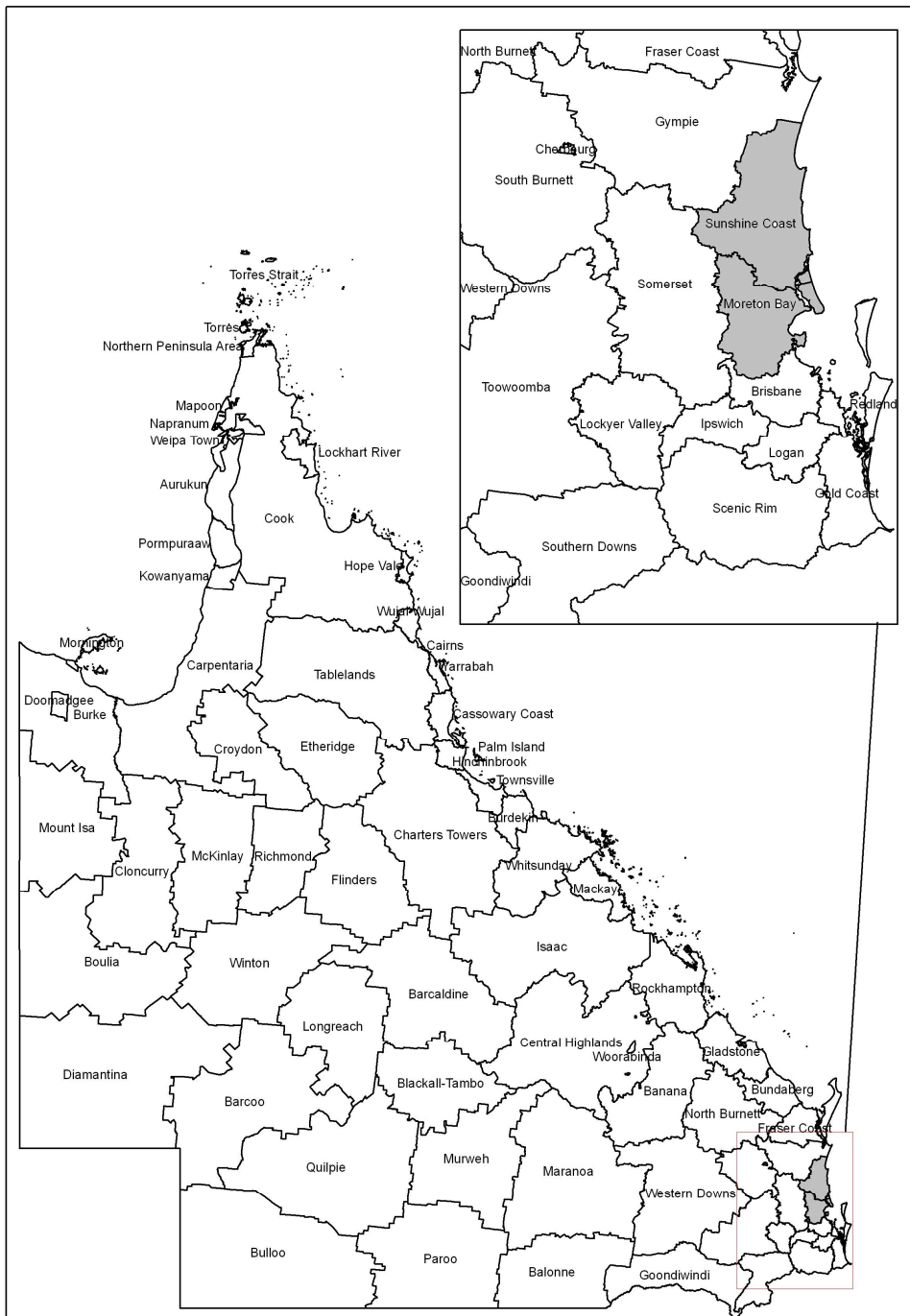
Relief Measures Activated

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme
- Essential Services Safety & Reconnection Scheme
- Restoration of Essential Public Assets
- Concessional Loans for Not for Profit Organisations
- Concessional Loans to Small Business

The Local Governments affected were Aurukun Shire Council, Burke Shire Council, Banana Shire Council, Burdekin Shire Council, Cairns Regional Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Charters Towers Regional Council, Cook Shire Council, Croydon Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Gladstone Regional Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Isaac Regional Council, Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council, Mackay Regional Council, Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council, Mornington Shire Council, Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council, Northern Peninsular Area Regional Council, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council, Rockhampton Regional Council, Tablelands Regional Council, Torres Strait Islands Regional Council, Townsville City Council, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.



East Coast Low North Coast Queensland 22 March 2012



Event and Timing
 Heavy rainfall on the 22 March 2012 as a result of a Low which developed off the Fraser Coast and moved onshore affecting the North Coast Region.

Relief Measures Activated

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme
- Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme
- Concessional Loans for Not for Profit Organisations
- Concessional Loans to Small Business

The Local Governments affected were Moreton Bay Regional Council and Sunshine Coast Regional Council.



NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS

Emergency Management Queensland is the lead agency for coordinating visits by Nuclear Powered Warship (NPW) to Queensland ports for crew rest and recreation purposes, however there were no visits during this period.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

The SDCC maintains an active role in organising and conducting disaster management activities at a State level. However, most training and exercises are conducted later in the year when the cyclone season has finished.

One staff member involved in disaster management training completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

A shift supervisor enrolled on the Positive Workplace Program, which provides leadership and management skills.

Staff attended a number of internal departmental training sessions, covering subjects such as Code of Conduct, Workplace Bullying and EMbrace (internal counselling and support program)

State Disaster Coordination Centre Training

In order to support the State Disaster Coordination Centre during disasters and events staff are brought in from across the whole of government. Consultation has occurred with the Public Service Commission with the intention of formalising this support into a Critical Incident Directive and the creation of an SDCC Response Team. Considerable effort has been directed towards development of new teams from government departments and enhancing training packages for delivery later in the year. All SDCC staff attended revised Cell Leader training for the Intelligence, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Support Cells that function within the SDCC. WoG training will commence in August 2012.

Several new Watch Desk staff were also trained in the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements and the systems and processes used within the SDCC.

Exercise Northern Condor – 14 March 2012

This was a national discussion exercise hosted by the Crisis Coordination Centre at Canberra on 14 March 2012. The aim was to reaffirm arrangements and communication strategies of stakeholders within the final draft of the Australian Government Aviation Disaster Response Plan (AUSAVPLAN). SDCC staff participated though a teleconference connection.



STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENTS

Disaster Intelligence

The Intelligence Cell is a functional group within the SDCC that provides improved coordination of event information and intelligence. This cell has now been greatly improved by developing its role from simple information gathering to a dedicated Disaster Intelligence function that now provides credible information.

This has been achieved by training staff to work as intelligence analysts and used proven tools such as the Admiralty Grading Scale and production of an Intelligence Action Plan. This increased situational awareness capability will inform future intent for the State Disaster Management Group.

Emergency Management Assistance Team

The purpose of an Emergency Management Assistance Team (EMAT) is to provide a team of emergency management subject matter experts, who are trained and experienced in disaster planning and coordination, to any jurisdiction in order to support and sustain disaster management operations.

Whilst the development of this capability is still in its infancy, the intention is develop interoperability between states and territories and maintain a group of approximately 40 experienced members who can deploy at short notice.

Workshop and Conference Contribution

SDCC staff actively participated in the following activities:

- Emergency Alert National Guidelines, Melbourne, 21-22 March

Committee Contribution

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

- Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) Structure Work Group
- Emergency Alert Contract Management Committee
- Emergency Alert Steering Committee
- Information Communication Security Change Advisory Board
- Interdepartmental Committee on Bushfires
- Location Based System Steering Committee
- Public Safety Steering Committee
- Regional Directors Conference
- Senior Executive Management Team
- State Disaster Coordination Group
- State Disaster Management Group



Official Visits

Disaster Operations hosted official tours of the State Disaster Coordination Centre and gave presentations to the following agencies.

- Australian Technical Experts Network
- Australian Federal Police
- Auckland City Council disaster management study group
- Biosecurity Queensland
- Brisbane City Council
- Codan (2 tours)
- Dalian Municipal Committee Organisation, People's Republic of China
- Department of Premier and Cabinet (2 tours)
- Department of Transport and Main Roads (2 tours)
- Emergency Management Australia
- Emergency Management Queensland (2 tours)
- Emergency Management Research Group
- Gold Coast City Council
- Japanese Water Forum
- Kedron Residents Group
- Kedron State High School
- Lockyer Valley Disaster Management Unit
- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand
- Ministry of Defence of Thailand
- National Security College
- Qinghai Province, People's Republic of China
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (6 tours)
- Queensland Police Service (5 tours)
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Reel Image
- Royal Australian Air Force
- State Emergency Service
- Telstra
- United Nations
- University of Queensland
- Victorian Emergency Services Telecommunication Authority