



Edition #1 | 28.11.2024

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this Country.

We recognise their connection to land, sea, and community. We pay our respects to them, their cultures, and to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

## A message from the Inspector-General

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Research Connect, the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management's (Office of the IGEM) quarterly newsletter focused on research. The newsletter features insights into ongoing projects and highlights both established and emerging researchers.

Disaster management in Queensland is underpinned by evidence-based practice, and research is a key part of that evidence base. To support this, the Office of the IGEM implements the Queensland Disaster Management Research Framework, a peer-driven approach promoting collaboration between the tertiary research and disaster management sectors. The Framework includes a Research Advisory Panel (RAP), regular environmental scanning to identify research needs and opportunities, and promoting research implementation.

Last week, the Office of the IGEM hosted the 2024 Queensland Disaster Management Research Forum. The Forum provided an excellent opportunity to exchange knowledge, forge new partnerships, and showcase the innovative research being conducted in our unique state.

The theme, 'Embedding Research into Practice', sparked thoughtful discussions and underscored the various forms of research that play a role in enhancing Queensland's disaster management strategies and practices.

The Office of the IGEM, in collaboration with our partners from the RAP, was proud to convene disaster management practitioners and researchers once again to learn, challenge ideas, and explore new opportunities.

We sincerely appreciate the ongoing collaboration and support from all our stakeholders and wish the sector continued success as we navigate another high-risk weather season.

**Alistair**



## Research Connect webpage

Have you ever wondered... How can we continue building networks between researchers and practitioners? How do we encourage interdisciplinary collaborations to broaden the impact of research? How can we help make existing research more accessible?

Well, the Office of the IGEM, in collaboration with our partners, has created a new online space for research, the Research Connect website.

We invite you to explore this new webpage once it launches. We look forward to your participation and engagement with our new research-focused webpage.

The [2024 Queensland Disaster Management Research Forum](#) took place on 19 November at Rydges Southbank. This year, we welcomed over 300 participants, both in-person and online, making it our largest turnout to date.

The Honourable Mr Dan Purdie MP, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, opened the Forum by highlighting the valuable role research plays in the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA).

Focusing on embedding research into practice, Dr Alastair Stark and Eleanor Williams started the day by challenging the audience to think about learning and how organisations approach knowledge.

Attendees enjoyed a series of presentations that illustrated how research has shaped practice in areas such as heat waves, biological hazards, climate change, and community engagement, as well as updates from the Queensland Disaster Research Alliance and Natural Hazards Research Australia.

The Forum also featured emerging Queensland researchers exploring a range of topics, including the use of artificial intelligence for predicting fire spread, community-level resilience indices, waste management, earthquake-resistant building designs, and the roles of legal professionals during disasters.



A big thank you to the working group for their invaluable support and for curating an outstanding program:

- Annie Rehman | Alliance Manager | [Queensland Disaster Research Alliance](#)
- Stacey McInnes | Director | [Department of Energy and Public Works](#)
- Michael Carroll | Principal Program Officer – Research and Innovation | [Queensland Fire Department](#)
- Nicola Moore | Node Research Manager | [Natural Hazards Research Australia](#)
- Chris Kerr | Principal Program Officer | Lessons, Research and Projects | [Queensland Police Service](#)
- Magdalena Andrews | Principal Project Officer | Resilience and Recovery | [Queensland Reconstruction Authority](#)
- Liz Drumm | Disaster Management Lead | [Local Government Association of Queensland \(LGAQ\)](#)

- Professor Mahen Mahendran | [Queensland University of Technology](#)

If you couldn't attend or would like to rewatch the sessions, the recordings are posted on our [website](#). Planning for next year's forum has already begun. If you wish to be part of the working group, please contact [research@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:research@igem.qld.gov.au).

## Queensland Disaster Research Alliance

The Queensland Disaster Research Alliance ([QDRA](#)) continues to lead the way in advancing disaster resilience and management through innovative research and collaboration.

This year, QDRA has made significant strides in enhancing partnerships and supporting high-impact projects that directly benefit Queensland communities.

One key achievement in 2024 is the creation of the Queensland Disaster Researchers Database, a comprehensive resource that maps the expertise and capabilities of disaster researchers across Queensland. This database is developed through an annual survey that incorporates national and state priority documents, ensuring that it reflects the most relevant research areas and challenges.

By promoting collaboration among academic institutions, government, and industry, the database helps address pressing disaster management issues and facilitates more effective responses to emerging challenges.

For more information and to participate in the annual survey, click [here](#).

QDRA continues to support several important research projects:

- A Disaster Ready Fund ([DRE](#)) project addressing heat-health risks in Queensland, led by Dr. Shannon Rutherford from [Griffith University](#) and involving James Cook University ([JCU](#)).
- A [NHRA](#) project titled "Quantitative Review of the Ecosystem Resilience Program to Inform a Long-Term Monitoring Strategy," led by Dr. Ali Chauvenet from Griffith University.
- Collaborations with Queensland Fire Department ([QFD](#)) including Pine Fire Behaviour Models, High Biomass Grasses and Grassland Fuel Curing and Condition, led by Dr. Sanjeev Srivastava from the [University of Sunshine Coast](#).

For more information on QDRA's projects, researchers, and upcoming initiatives, visit <https://qdra.org/#/>

## Natural Hazards Research Australia



[Natural Hazard Research Australia](#) (the Centre) is delighted to be part of Research Connect and looks forward to sharing research innovation and utilisation in the coming editions.

Queensland is at the forefront of research-to-practice integration in a collaboration between the University of Queensland, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and the Centre. Led by the Academy of Management's 2024 Joanne Martin Trailblazer award winner [Prof Paula Jarzawowski](#), [Evaluating the Resilient Homes Fund](#) is driving collaborative program and policy evaluation in disaster resilience by assessing the Resilient Homes Fund's Resilient Retrofit, Home Raising and Voluntary Home Buy-Back options.

Lived experience of natural hazards including [Tropical Cyclones Yasi in 2011 and Kirrily in 2024](#) and the Townsville floods in 2019, gave the winning 2024 Disaster Challenge team the idea and motivation to tackle this year's wicked problem.

The concept of an [AI chat bot](#) delivering postcode-specific disaster information developed by psychology postgraduate students at [James Cook University](#) won the main prize, with other finalist pitches including [home insurance risk reduction options](#) and a [multi-platform engagement](#) to combat heatwaves.

Find out more and watch the pitches [here](#).

## Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd

In Queensland, disaster management is a locally led initiative. As the closest level of government to the community, local governments are uniquely positioned to understand the specific risks their communities face and to implement the most appropriate strategies to mitigate these risks.

There is a strong desire among Council's disaster managers to engage in research, participate in studies, share lessons learned, and implement recommendations. This collaborative approach ensures that the latest research informs practical disaster



management strategies, enhancing the resilience of communities.

Numerous informative projects are currently underway, presenting a wealth of opportunities for practitioners to collaborate closely with local governments. Researchers are encouraged to reach out to Councils to explore potential partnerships, while Councils are invited to submit ideas to researchers and universities to identify available opportunities.

For those unsure where to start, the [Local Government Association of Queensland \(LGAQ\)](#) or the Office of the IGEM can provide guidance.

## Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

[Neighbourhood Centres Queensland \(NCQ\)](#) recently undertook a project to strengthen the Neighbourhood Centres sector, their local communities and broader disaster management sector towards flood recovery and resilience through increased and strengthened community-led practices.

In just five months (April to August), this peer-led initiative achieved notable results, drawing on the insights of participating Neighbourhood Centres. Achievements included:

- peer-learning sessions discussing community-led disaster practices
- online interactions with leading disaster recovery experts
- a mental health and wellbeing workshop for Centre staff conducted by Dr. Rob Gordon
- development of multiple resources, including [four case studies](#) on community-led recovery efforts.

Additionally, NCQ, [Community Plus](#), and [Benarrawa Community Development Association](#) presented their approaches at the 2024 Australia and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference.

All resources are now available to [Neighbourhood Centres](#) across Queensland, with joint funding from the Queensland and Australian Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements ([DRFA](#)).

Please reach out to Sally Foreman: [sallyforeman@ncq.org.au](mailto:sallyforeman@ncq.org.au) or Natasha Odgers [natashaodgers@ncq.org.au](mailto:natashaodgers@ncq.org.au) for further information.

## Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

The [Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience \(AIDR\)](#) is the national institute for disaster risk reduction and resilience. We collaborate across sectors to strengthen the resilience of Australian communities to disasters.

The AIDR:

- creates, grows and supports a range of networks
- provides opportunities for learning, development, and innovation
- shares knowledge and resources to enable informed decision-making and action
- facilitates though leadership through national conversations.

Read more about how AIDR contributes to a more disaster resilient Australia [here](#).

We welcome practitioners and researchers to visit and explore the [AIDR Knowledge Hub](#) and use the resource collections, including:

- [Australian Journal of Emergency Management | AJEM](#)
- [Major Incidents Report | AIDR Knowledge Hub](#)
- [Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection | AIDR](#)

Readers are welcome to join AIDR's mailing list to stay in touch with events and news: [enquiries@aidr.org.au](mailto:enquiries@aidr.org.au) or [www.aidr.org.au](http://www.aidr.org.au)

AIDR is supported by its partners:

- Australian Government [National Emergency Management Agency](#),
- [AFAC](#)
- [Australian Red Cross](#)



Trailblazing researchers

### Dr Barbara Ryan - farewell and thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to recognise a long-time friend of the Office of the IGEM as she transitions to the next phase of her career. Associate Professor Barbara Ryan from the University of Southern Queensland has been instrumental in various research projects with us and has served on the Queensland Disaster Management Research Advisory Panel for eight years.

Recently, she was referred to as a “guru” in communication and community engagement research, a title that perfectly captures her expertise. Her work has significantly influenced how the disaster management sector engages with the community.

We wish you all the best in this next chapter and eagerly anticipate the wonderful things you will continue to accomplish in making our communities safer.

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### Dr Richard Franklin - Professor, James Cook University 2024 Queensland Resilient Australia Award

Congratulates to Dr Richard Franklin for winning the [2024 Resilient Australia National Award](#) for Research Impact.

Richard's project addressed the critical knowledge gap regarding heatwave impacts on health service delivery across Queensland, particularly beyond Brisbane. The research identified significant increases in ambulance calls, emergency department visits, hospital admissions, and deaths during heatwaves, with vulnerable populations such as the elderly and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups being notably affected.

Collaborative efforts with state departments and academic institutions enriched the project's outcomes, leading to the integration of findings into policy and planning, including the [Queensland Health Heatwave Sub-Plan](#) and the [Stakeholder Toolkit](#).

Richard and Nicole Mandalios from Queensland Health, recently presented about the project at the 2024 Queensland Disaster Management Research Forum. You can watch their presentation [here](#).

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### Dr Alastair Stark - Building Resilience and Managing Disasters

Dr Alastair Stark is an Associate Professor in Public Policy at [The University of Queensland](#) specialising in the study of crisis and disaster management. Committed to bridging the gap between research and practice in the disaster management space, he is the author of three books and has published widely on the nature of democracy during crises, pre-crisis planning, crisis coordination, resilience, community participation and lesson learning.

#### Elevate your disaster management skills with a short course.

Do you want to be introduced to the big ideas, cutting-edge concepts and contemporary theories of disaster management research that exist around the world?

Designed for professionals already working in this space, the [Building Resilience and Managing Disasters](#) short course will enhance your competence in resilience building, disaster preparedness, emergency response, and recovery. This short course will see you dive into the latest ideas, cutting-edge concepts, and contemporary theories in global disaster management research. Leave equipped with the analytical tools to tackle the disaster management challenges you face at work

For more information, please contact the School of Political Science and International Studies via email [polsis@uq.edu.au](mailto:polsis@uq.edu.au) or click [here](#).



## Upcoming events

### [What happened, and where to from here? | 28 November 2024](#)

Join the [ANU Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions](#) for a panel event discussing the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference. Hear from leading experts, including those who attended the conference in person, discuss key takeaways and what the implications are for Australia.

### [Natural Hazards Research Forum | 18-25 June 2025](#)

The Natural Hazards Research Forum returns to Adelaide on 18-20 June 2025, showcasing the latest natural hazards research, expert keynote speakers and knowledge collaboration. Registration information available soon.



### [Emergency Management Conference 29-30 July 2025](#)

2025 will be the Emergency Management Conference's 25th anniversary. As the conference program and celebrations are being planned, the public are invited to complete this short survey.

### [2025 LGAQ Disaster Management Conference](#)

In partnership with the [Queensland Police Service](#), [Queensland Fire Department](#), [Queensland Reconstruction Authority](#), and [Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management](#), planning is underway for what is set to be another not to be missed event. This event aims to support members and key partners from government, industry, and non-government organisations by strengthening relationships, sharing insights, and generating ideas to tackle increasingly severe weather seasons. Double click here to add content



### [Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit Launch 13 December 2024](#)

Co-hosted by the [ANU Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions | The Australian National University](#), in partnership with the National Emergency Management Agency, this event will launch the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management toolkit.

## Want to see more?

Please email IGEM at [research@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:research@igem.qld.gov.au) for more information about anything in this newsletter.

Or check out our social media for all the latest from the Office of the IGEM. Click the links below to be redirected to our official platforms.

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