



Edition 4 | August 2025

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management would like to respectfully acknowledge First Nations peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Queensland.

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

## A message from the Inspector-General

Welcome to the latest edition of the Research Connect newsletter.

In a world where disasters are becoming more frequent, complex, and interconnected, the role of research has never been more vital. I reflect on my presentation at the [Queensland Disaster Management Research Alliance's](#) midyear event, where the theme was 'Mind the Gap'. This event reminded us of the importance of bridging divides between research, policy and practice.

As our environment evolves, so must our systems and responses. The challenges we face today are no longer just complicated, they are complex, unfolding across jurisdictions, sectors and communities. Bridging these gaps requires more than just knowledge, it demands collaboration, trust, and a shared commitment to lasting, equitable change.

Research is the foundation that helps us navigate uncertainty, build resilience, and inform decisions that shape a safer future. Whether through pilot projects or large-scale initiatives, the focus must remain on outcomes over outputs, and on translating insights into action.

In this edition, we spotlight the partnerships, innovations, and community-driven efforts that are helping to close these gaps. Let's continue to learn from one another, align our strengths, and turn research into reality.

Together, we can mind the gap and build bridges that last.



## 2025 IGEM Disaster Events Reviews

The Office of IGEM is conducting reviews into the preparation and response for the three major weather events which hit Queensland earlier this year:

- North Queensland Floods

- Tropical Cyclone Alfred
- Western Queensland Floods.

A big thank you to the councils, departments, agencies, organisations and community members who provided submissions and attended our community forums, generously sharing their experience.

These reviews will focus on opportunities for improvement and examples of good practice from across the sector.

The final reports are due to be delivered in October 2025.

To read more about the reviews and view the Terms of Reference, visit: [igem.qld.gov.au/2025-Reviews](https://igem.qld.gov.au/2025-Reviews)

For enquiries, please email [info.igemreview@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:info.igemreview@igem.qld.gov.au).



## 2025 Disaster Management Research Forum

This year the Office of the IGEM will host the 5th Annual Queensland Disaster Management Research Forum. The Forum will be held on Wednesday 12 November at Rydges South Brisbane and registrations will be available via Eventbrite soon.

Keep an eye out on the [Research Connect webpage](#) for more details.

This year's theme is '**From Yesterday to Tomorrow: Past, Present, and Future - Navigating progress and possibility**'.

We invite you to help shape the program by sharing your ideas, research, or suggestions for presenters.

We welcome you to reach out to the team via [research@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:research@igem.qld.gov.au) with your



suggestions and for opportunities to participate through posters and presentations.

## Intern Expression of Interest: Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) Research Capability Project

The Office of the IGEM is seeking expressions of interest for student research internship opportunities within your agency.

This is an opportunity for undergraduate and postgraduate students to work on disaster management topics across Queensland. The student internships will be funded through the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA) Research Capability Project.

These internships provide students with valuable hands-on experience while delivering practical, actionable research outcomes for the sector. If your agency is exploring new approaches to prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, or resilience, you may wish to consider partnering with an intern to help bridge the gap between research and practice.

If you would like to host an intern and/or have a research project idea, please scan the QR code or complete the [Expression of Interest Form](#). Alternatively, if you have any questions, please reach out to the team via [research@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:research@igem.qld.gov.au).



Natural Hazards Research Australia



[Natural Hazards Research Australia](#) continues to connect research and practice in Queensland and northern Australia through internship opportunities, women in fire management, disaster innovation, and the role of social media in disasters.

[In May, the Women-in-Fire Training Exchange \(WTREX\)](#) came to northern Queensland, where First Nations women gathered and explored how diversity, collaboration and leadership are vital to effective bushfire management. As part of the program, Natural Hazards Research Australia funded a [research project](#) to explore how participation impacts First Nations women's wellbeing (physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually) and memory (ancestral/genetic).

In the Northern Territory, [a new internship opportunity](#) is opening doors for students interested in bushfire management. Through a partnership with Bushfires NT, and NT Fire and Emergency Services, interns will gain unique on-the-ground insights into how northern Australia manages

hazard reduction, suppression and community engagement in one of the world's most fire-prone environments.

The Centre recently announced [the finalists of the Disaster Challenge 2025](#), an event that encourages emerging researchers and practitioners to think boldly about real-world disaster resilience challenges. This year's teams are tackling issues ranging from community preparedness to technology-driven solutions, with winners to be announced at the upcoming Hobart showcase in October.

[The July Hazardous Webinar](#) placed a spotlight on how disasters unfold through a social media lens. Experts unpacked the opportunities and risks of online communication, highlighting how misinformation, amplification and community voices shape disaster response and resilience.

## Queensland Disaster Research Alliance

The [Queensland Disaster Research Alliance](#) (QDRA) hosted its 2025 Mid-Year Event, *Mind the Gap*, in July at UniSQ's Brisbane City Hub, bringing together more than 80 leaders, researchers, and agency partners from across Queensland and Australia.

The event explored how disaster management research, policy, and practice can be better aligned to strengthen resilience. Keynote speaker Alistair Dawson, the Inspector-General of Emergency Management, delivered a thought-provoking address that set the tone for rich discussion and reinforced the importance of translating evidence into equitable, real-world outcomes.

Event highlights:

- Emeritus Professor Paul Greenfield opened and closed with a strong call for sector-wide collaboration.
- Associate Professor Shannon Rutherford from [Griffith University](#) presented a Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) success story, showing how early collaboration with agencies leads to stronger, more impactful bids.
- Dr Cynthia Cliff from University of [University of Southern Queensland](#) summarised the discussion and captured momentum for future action.
- An interactive workshop, facilitated by QDRA Alliance Manager Annie Rehman, brought agencies and QDRA member universities together to identify pressing gaps, cross-jurisdictional barriers, and potential priorities for future work.

This year, QDRA has also coordinated and submitted collaborative bids to the [Disaster Ready Fund \(DRF\)](#) and [Natural Hazards Research Australia \(NHRA\)](#) with member universities and agency partners, and we look forward to building on this strong support as proposals progress.

In addition, QDRA is now working to develop proactive projects informed by the outcomes of the Mid-Year Event workshop, ensuring agencies priorities continue to shape our future initiatives.

Participant feedback emphasised QDRA's role as a trusted connector, linking governments, universities, and industry to tackle shared challenges.

Planning is already underway for QDRA's end of year Stakeholder Forum in November, which will continue to showcase impactful research and strengthen cross-sector collaboration in disaster resilience.

Learn more or get involved at [www.qdra.org](http://www.qdra.org) or reach out via [contact@qdra.org](mailto:contact@qdra.org).





## Queensland University of Technology: Empowering CALD Communities in Disaster Resilience, Jenny Hou

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities face significant systematic challenges when accessing information, resources, and tools for disaster risk reduction and resilience building. This project addresses specific challenges identified in literature and by Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In collaboration with the generous different CALD communities in Cairns, Queensland and relevant local, state and federal stakeholders, the project has developed a storytelling toolkit for developing disaster risk and resilience building information through a series of consultations and workshops.

[Explore the project and research.](#)

## The University of Queensland: Taking a long view - How community organisations and volunteers transform disaster recovery in Queensland? By Nikita Sharma, Ella Kuskoff and Cameron Parsell

A new case study from [The University of Queensland](#), highlights the critical role of community organisations in disaster recovery. Focusing on a Queensland-based community organisation, the research explores how volunteers and local networks provide not just immediate relief, but long-term, personalised support, focussed on housing recovery and socioemotional care.



The study draws experiences from recent disasters, including the 2022 Southeast Queensland floods and Tropical Cyclone Jasper in 2023.

Key findings show that:

- Empathy and early engagement build trust and resilience
- Collaboration with government and other stakeholders enhances recovery outcomes

This research underscores that community organisations are not just filling gaps but are essential drivers of recovery and resilience.

Read the full case study [here](#).

## Upcoming events

### International Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Sciences (CAETS) 8-11 September

The [Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering](#) (ATSE) will be hosting the 2025 Generations Symposium focused on shaping a sustainable future through innovation and collaboration. [Register now.](#)

### Shaping Australia Awards

The Shaping Australia Awards, proudly presented by Universities Australia, shine a spotlight on the impactful contributions

### Global Australian Awards

The Global Australian Awards celebrate the extraordinary impact of Global Australians from Australians living abroad and at home, to international alumni of Australian universities, and recent migrants who now call Australia home.

These Awards shine a spotlight on inspiring individuals who are innovating in their fields and shaping a better world.

Nominations are open year-round. If you know a Global Australian making an

universities make each day – shaping our nation's future through teaching, research and community service. Read more [here](#).

### Regional University Industry Collaboration Program

The Regional University Industry Collaboration (RUIC) program is designed exclusively for Queensland-based Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), providing support at every stage of their research and development journey. The program offers the skills, funding, expertise, and networks necessary to drive innovation across the state's regions. [Find out more.](#)

outstanding contribution, or you are one yourself, submit a nomination [here](#).

### Australian Disaster Resilience – What's New in Knowledge

The August edition of [What's New in Knowledge](#) collates key research, reports and public interest journalism across the disaster resilience space.

## Want to see more?

Don't forget to check out our [Research Connect webpage](#) which has been developed to connect researchers with disaster managers. The Office of the IGEM will continue to grow the Research Connect webpages in collaboration with our stakeholders, and we invite your organisation to share your research content and opportunities on the platform. For more details on how to submit for the next edition, feel free to reach out to the team via [research@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:research@igem.qld.gov.au).

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