

Scenic Rim Regional Council

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

**SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND SEVERE STORMS
AND RAINFALL, COMMENCING 24 DECEMBER 2023**

EVENT SNAPSHOT

26 December 2023

LDMG to Stand Up

4 January 2024 LDMG to Alert

15 January 2024 LDMG to Stand Down

Local Recovery Coordinator:

Principal Specialist
Community Development

**Deputy Local Recovery
Coordinator:** Manager Regional
Prosperity and Communications

Chair of Local Disaster Management Group:

Mayor Greg Christensen

Scenic Rim Regional Council Chief Executive Officer:

David Keenan

RECOVERY NARRATIVE

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

The Scenic Rim Local Government Area encompasses **4,300 square kilometres south-west of Brisbane, with the southern boundary of the area doubling as the border between Queensland and New South Wales.**

Ranked within the Top 10 Regions of the World, the Scenic Rim is home to six national parks, World Heritage listed rainforests, eco-adventures, and an abundance of fresh local produce, wineries, and breweries. Just over an hour's drive from both Brisbane and the Gold Coast, the region is known for its leading sectors of agriculture and tourism, and the provision of key industries and construction that service a growing population and developments.

Scenic Rim has endured 15 activated disaster events since 2010 and is preparing for ongoing severe weather and disasters. The disasters have impacted communities across the region, and include the Black Summer bushfires that devastated the Scenic Rim in 2019, the Kooralbyn bushfire in 2023, and seven separate flooding events since 2010.

The Scenic Rim Local Recovery Group is committed to ensuring that our communities have a successful and resilient future and will approach recovery from an empathic and inclusive approach in partnership with the community, other organisations and agencies.

THE THREE MAIN CENTRES OF BEAUDESERT, BOONAH AND TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN ARE THE LARGEST IN TERMS OF POPULATION, BUT A NUMBER OF SMALLER TOWNS PROVIDE A DEPTH OF CHARACTER AND UNIQUENESS TO THE REGION.

We acknowledge the traditional country of the Mununjali, Wangerriburra, and Ugarapul People of the Scenic Rim. We recognise that the Scenic Rim continues to have connections to cultural, spiritual, environmental, and economic importance and respect connection to Country.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Scenic Rim LGA population as of end June 2022 was **44,333** people
- Median age is **49 years**
- Median income in Scenic Rim is 10% lower than the Queensland average
- **4,738** local businesses, **99% small business** (majority sole-trader or employees less than 5 people)
- Tamborine Mountain as per 2021 Census: **8,001** people, **2,335** families, **3,463** private dwellings and median weekly household income of **\$1,505**



LOCAL RECOVERY GROUP AND FUNCTIONAL SUB GROUPS

Stood Up: 1 January 2024

Chair/LRC: Principal Specialist Community Development

SUB-GROUP	LEAD (NAME)
Human and Social	Principal Specialist Community Development
Economic	Principal Specialist Regional Prosperity
Environment	Principal Specialist Biodiversity and Climate Change
Infrastructure	Manager Maintenance and Operations

ABOUT THE DISASTER EVENT

On 25 December 2023, Southeast Queensland was impacted by a severe storm which caused significant property damage as a result of localised flash flooding and high winds. A large amount of trees fell across the region, with primary damage and debris being experienced at Tamborine Mountain and Tamborine.

IN THE WEEK FOLLOWING THE STORM, A RAIN EVENT IMPACTED THE SCENIC RIM WITH UP TO 500MM OF RAIN LEADING TO FLOODING, ROAD NETWORK DISRUPTION, AND FURTHER DAMAGE TO PROPERTIES PREVIOUSLY DAMAGED IN THE CHRISTMAS DAY STORM.

On 26 December 2023, the Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Group activated in response to the Christmas storm and subsequent rainfall event. Specific areas that were affected were Allenvie, Barney View, Beechmont, Beaudesert, Benobble, Biddaddaba, Binna Burra, Birnam, Boyland, Bromelton, Cainbale, Canungra, Chinghee Creek, Christmas Creek, Cryna, Darlington, Ferny Glen, Flying Fox, Gleneagle, Hillview, Illinbah, Innisplain, Josephville, Kagaru, Kerry, Knapp Creek, Kooralbyn, Lamington, Laravale, Mount Barney, Mount Gipps, Mount Lindesay, Nindooibah, Oak Creek, O'Reilly, Palen Creek, Rathdowney, Running Creek, Sarabah, Southern Lamington, Tabooba, Tabragalba, Tamborine, Tamborine Mountain, Tamrookum, Tamrookum Creek, Undullah, Veresdale, Veresdale Scrub, Witheren and Wonglepong.

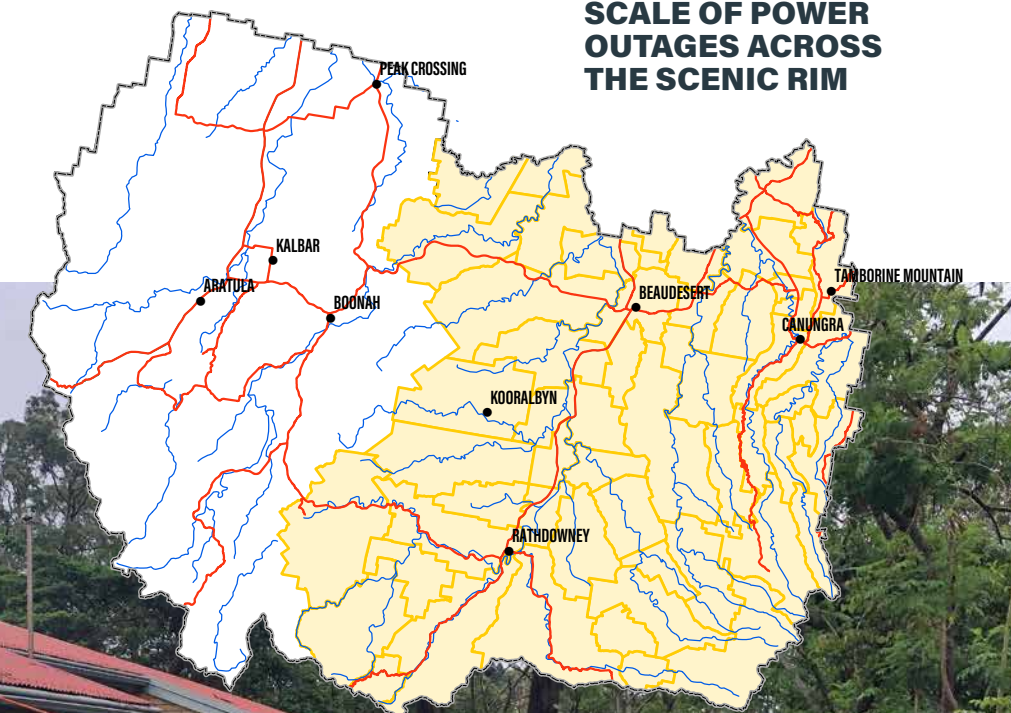
A number of locations were without power for more than five days, with some parts of the region without power for up to fourteen days and without access to essential services.

Scenic Rim SES received 477 requests for assistance in relation to the Christmas storms. The LDMG was activated from 26 December 2023, with recovery arrangements handed over to the Local Recovery Group on 4 January 2024 for continual support and ongoing recovery efforts for the region.

AS OF 8 JANUARY 2024, QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (QFES) DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS FOR PROPERTIES REACHED 346, WITH THREE DESTROYED, 22 SEVERE, 36 MODERATE, 30 MINOR AND 219 NO DAMAGE FOUND. BASED ON THIS, THE IMPACT OF THIS EVENT ON THE COMMUNITY HAS BEEN MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN PREVIOUS EVENTS.

Businesses and operators across a range of industry sectors were impacted both directly and indirectly from the event on Christmas Day, as well as the rain that followed on New Years Eve/Day. These impacts were a result of loss of power, telecommunications and damage to property. Within the retail, tourism and hospitality sectors, this period is typically the highest period of trading for these businesses. These businesses therefore were severely impacted by loss of revenue (sales), and stock, as well as booking cancellations. Additionally unplanned operational costs – generator hire, fuel, repairs/clean up to site. Impact on visitation, with 50% reduction in visitation at the Visitor Information Centre for the month of December.

SCALE OF POWER OUTAGES ACROSS THE SCENIC RIM



RECOVERY NARRATIVE



THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WAS IMPACTED DUE TO POWER LOSS, RESULTING IN THE INABILITY OF PROCESSING, LOSS OF CROPS, SILAGE AND STOCKFEED, IMPACTING LEVEL OF PRODUCTION IN THE SHORT AND LONGER TERM. EROSION AND LOSS OF TOPSOIL ALSO IMPACTING FARMING OPERATIONS. FOLLOW UP WEATHER CONDITIONS WERE UNFAVOURABLE, RESULTING IN ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES.

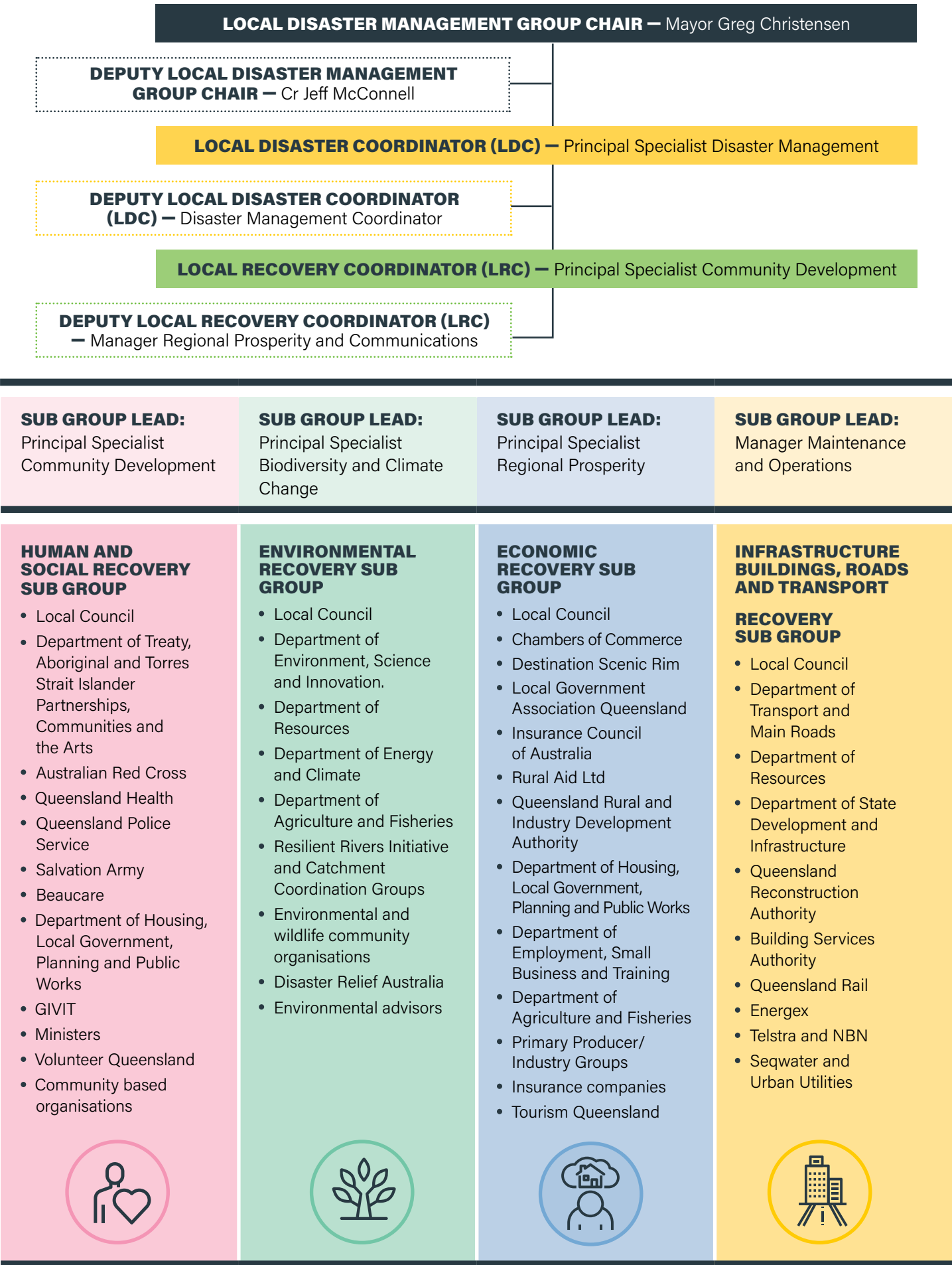


SUMMARY OF KEY IMPACTS

Residential dwellings, private property, businesses, and public infrastructure have been impacted to varying degrees. Impacts were further experienced to essential services including water treatment plants, sewerage treatment plants, telecommunications and electricity infrastructure.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Australian Red Cross, Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Communities and the Arts (DTATSIPCA), Beaucare, Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), Chambers of Commerce, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Department of Education (DoE), Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI), Department of Housing, Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport (DTIS), Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR), Destination Scenic Rim, Energex, Gold Coast Health, Metro South Health, NBN Co, Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), Queensland Health, Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA), Rural Fire Services Queensland (RFS), Salvation Army, Scenic Rim community (individuals, businesses and community groups), Scenic Rim Regional Council, Seqwater, State Emergency Services (SES), Telstra, Urban Utilities.



DAMAGE AND IMPACTS

HUMAN AND SOCIAL



ENVIRONMENT



ECONOMIC



INFRASTRUCTURE (BUILDING, ROADS AND TRANSPORT)



- Cumulative psychosocial impacts on the community as a result of storms on Christmas Day, exacerbated by heavy rainfall and more storms on New Year's Eve, causing loss of power and telecommunications over multiple days.
- Complex mental health issues exacerbated by storm and rainfall events.
- Significant impact over the busiest holiday season of the year – families expected to be at home, increased population base due to tourism/holiday season.
- **Other psychosocial impacts on the community include:**
 - Displacement of residents due to partial or complete damage of dwellings.
 - Disruption to immediate support services.
 - Community members unable to attend work and some residents unable to access essential medical supplies due to road closures, power loss, compromised access to properties due to fallen trees and isolation.
 - Increased stress due to insurance issues including cost and delays due to multiple disaster events in Queensland
 - Feeling of a 'loss of hope' for residents given multiple events/incidents that have occurred over the past ten years.
- **Loss of community connectedness due to the cancellation/postponement of:**
 - Sports, community meetings and recreation events.
 - School holiday programs and community events.
 - Health services, GPs, aged care, retirement villages and nursing home outings, programs, and activities.
 - Gatherings for religious worship.
- **Potential public health risks resulting from:**
 - Excessive mosquitoes from standing water.
 - Fallen debris, safe removal of asbestos and building debris.
 - Possible food poisoning due to loss of power.
 - Significant loss of food for residents and businesses due to power loss.
 - Assistance with medication at Recovery Hubs, and for isolated vulnerable people.
 - Concerns regarding potentially contaminated water supply from water tanks as power loss to non-reticulated areas caused water tank filters to fail.
- **Increased financial burden for impacted individuals and families due to:**
 - Some properties not being insured and some properties being under-insured.
 - Not being able to work (employed and self-employed) due to having to care for family members experiencing psychosocial and other event related impacts (such as accessibility and loss of essential services).



- Significant loss of native vegetation.
- Loss and injuries to wildlife due to falling trees and hollows.
- Increase erosion and soil.
- Threats to water quality, including erosion along creeks and water ways.
- Significant environmental damage to reserves, parks and landcare sites e.g. Tamborine Mountain Regional Botanic Gardens.
- Significant impact to Tamborine National Park, parks closed.
- Felled trees in road corridors.
- Potential contamination threat due to asbestos exposure, commonly on private properties.
- Increase in mosquitos due to standing water and increased risk for fire ants.
- Disruption to waste facility and establishment of temporary green waste site at Tamborine Mountain.
- Temporary skip bins set up at Tamborine Mountain and Tamborine for food waste.
- Elevated fire risk due to increased fuel loads.
- Significant impact to wildlife corridors.

- **Increased financial burden for impacted individuals and families due to:**
 - Some properties not being insured and some properties being under-insured.
 - Not being able to work (employed and self-employed) due to having to care for family members experiencing psychosocial and other event related impacts (such as accessibility and loss of essential services).
- **Increased financial burden for:**
 - Small producers and primary producers due to damage and loss of infrastructure, crops, and production.
 - Tourism and related business closures across the region due to lack of essential services (electricity, telecommunications, water and sewage), staff/ customers and accessibility to businesses and goods
 - Additional operational costs due to impact of event, e.g. hiring of generators and fuel.
- Increased financial burden for Council needing to activate additional staff to respond to event.
- Significant impact over the busiest holiday season of the year; increased population base due to tourism/ holiday season resulting in reduction in revenue in what is the typically highest visitation period of the year.
- Loss of income/profits for Council as a result of event cancellations, e.g., school holiday bookings.
- Individuals and businesses needing to access financial support (e.g., essential working capital loan) which would not have otherwise been required.
- Perception that the entire Scenic Rim region is unsafe to visit and holiday; impact being loss of visitor expenditure and cancelled bookings.
- Businesses/environment are not ready to receive holiday makers and tourists, however, resources are limited due to need of immediate recovery activities.
- Lack of businesses having business continuity plans to support basic operations post-event.
- Loss of income due to closure of the Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens.

- Landslip experienced on Tamborine Mountain Road resulting in closure near Skywalk.
- Tamborine Mountain Road (Goat Track section) temporarily closed.
- Closure and/or restrictions to Council and public facilities and venues such as waste facilities, Visitor Information Centres, Community Centres, public swimming pools, public parks including Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens and public toilets.
- Local and main road closures as a result of being impacted by debris (fallen trees) and flooding.
- Damage to roadside furniture (road signage).
- Road pavement damage sustained across the region.
- Multiple high voltage power lines damaged/destroyed.
- Power poles on private properties damaged/destroyed.
- Fencing and infrastructure on properties damaged/destroyed.
- Signage and recreational infrastructure damaged/ destroyed.
- Understand Council-owned building infrastructure damage/destroyed.
- Damage Assessments (DA) completed By Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to private properties, resulting in 3 structures totally destroyed, 22 structures severely damaged, 36 structures moderately damaged, 30 structures minor damaged and 219 structures found with no damage.

