

What I Need to Know

- The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) State policy for road accident rescue has been developed to provide direction for Local Disaster Management Group to determine the appropriate service to carry out road accident rescues in each area.
- No single organisation has primary responsibility for road accident rescue in Queensland. Each Local Disaster Management Group must decide this, taking into account speed of turnout and unit capacity in terms of staff numbers, training and experience and equipment.
- As a general principle, it is considered inappropriate for rural fire brigades to be designated as road accident rescue authorities. While there is provision within the current State Road Accident Rescue Policy for rural brigades to assume this role, it is almost exclusively exercised by either urban brigades or, where there are no brigades, designated SES units.
- Rural fire brigades will be considered for this role only where an urban brigade or SES unit is unavailable in a particular area. Where this situation exists, consideration may be given to allocating the Road Accident Rescue (RAR) role to a rural fire brigade in the Local Government Counter-Disaster Plan, subject to approval by the Assistant Commissioner (Rural Operations).
- Where the RAR role is assigned to a rural fire brigade in a Local Government Counter-Disaster Plan, it will be the responsibility of the QFRS Rural Operations to:
 - ensure the provision of the appropriate level of accredited training;
 - ensure the provision of appropriate equipment;
 - ensure the provision of the appropriate support mechanisms, such as defusing and debriefing procedures, access to peer support and trauma counselling services; and
 - monitor and maintain the service provided by the brigade at the appropriate level.
- As a general principle, it is considered appropriate for rural fire brigades to exercise a support role to other designated RAR authorities and to be identified as such in the Local Government Counter-Disaster Plan.
- There are several secondary functions:
 - **Police:** The Police Service has overall charge of RAR incidents and is responsible for co-ordinating emergency services at the incident.
 - **Ambulance:** The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is responsible for on-site patient care and transportation of casualties. It is recognised that, in the short term, some QAS units will continue to have a rescue function, but these will be the exception.
 - **SES:** In areas where the SES is not the primary rescue authority, SES units should provide a support or secondary role where:
 - the primary authority is not available;
 - there are simultaneous multiple accidents; or
 - the primary resources at a major accident need to be supplemented.
 - **Fire Service:** Where an urban or auxiliary brigade is not the primary rescue authority at a RAR, it will be responsible for firefighting at an accident scene.

How I do it

RAR Role

- As a general principle, it is considered inappropriate for rural fire brigades to be designated as road accident rescue authorities, however where a need exists for a Rural Fire Brigade to take on the role rural fire brigade the following will be required:

- satisfactory evidence that the brigade and its members have been consulted, have had the full ramifications, expectations and obligations of the role explained to them and have voted as a brigade to accept the role at a properly constituted meeting of the brigade called expressly for this purpose;
- evidence of a demonstrated ability and capacity to exercise the role;
- evidence that the brigade has sufficient members prepared to undergo the necessary training and skills maintenance;
- documented support for the application from the Area Director, Rural Operations, Regional Manager, Rural Operations and Counter-Disaster Committee Chairperson.

RAR Support Role

- To be identified for a support role at RAR incidents, seek the approval of your Area Director who will ensure that the brigade:
 - has been consulted, has had the full ramifications, expectations and obligations of the role explained and has voted as a brigade to accept the role at a properly constituted meeting of the brigade called expressly for this purpose;
 - has demonstrated the ability and capacity to exercise the support role and undergo the necessary training and skills maintenance.
- Where a rural fire brigade is identified in a Local Government Counter-Disaster Plan as exercising a support role, it will be the responsibility of Rural Operations to ensure the provision of:
 - the appropriate level of accredited training;
 - appropriate equipment; and
 - the appropriate support mechanisms, such as: defusing and debriefing procedures, access to peer support and trauma counselling services.
- Functions generally considered appropriate for rural fire brigades exercising a support role to the designated RAR authority are:
 - basic vehicle stabilisation, if first on the scene;
 - emergency care, if first on the scene;
 - fire control;
 - traffic control; and
 - scene clean up and wash down.
- Functions considered inappropriate for rural fire brigades exercising a support role to the designated RAR authorities are:
 - medical services, other than preliminary first aid;
 - extrication from the vehicles involved; and
 - retrieval and handling of human remains and body parts.
- The responsibility for monitoring and managing these processes and the implementation of the appropriate procedures remains with the Area Director.
- If a rural fire brigade, at a properly constituted meeting called for that purpose, determines that the brigade will no longer exercise its role as designated in the Local Government Counter-Disaster Plan, the brigade shall notify the Area Officer who will have the Local Counter-Disaster Plan amended accordingly.