

## What I Need to Know

- Many brigades hold a level of equipment that requires the construction of a fire station or central storage facility.
- A Rural Fire Brigade is unable to hold land in its own name; however, as a legal entity, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) does have this capability.
- Land can be acquired in a number of ways, including:
  - freehold (by purchase or donation of a parcel of land);
  - leasehold of private or Government land; and
  - permitted use of Council land.
- For any land to be of use to a brigade, it must be able to be made available for a reasonable number of years. For example, when the QFRS negotiates a lease agreement, it usually seeks a period of 20-30 years, with a renewal period. However, QFRS is willing to negotiate a shorter period, should circumstances require.
- The preferred method of land acquisition is the donation of freehold land, or the lease of freehold land at nominal rent. Crown land is often leased at administration cost; where applicable, it is subject to the extinguishment of native title.
- Permitted use of land is only occasionally pursued. This usually occurs over land owned or controlled by local government. In these instances, QFRS requests Council to permit a brigade to use a parcel of land. Permission is given by either a resolution or by more formal means.
- Purchase of private land can rarely be pursued due to the expense involved. However, as some lease agreements are costly, QFRS is able to pursue freehold acquisition for a similar amount
- For approved properties, QFRS will bear land acquisition costs, including legal and associated costs, survey charges and statutory fees. Brigades may not purchase land in their own right.
- Land acquisition can be a lengthy process; consequently, a brigade should expect the process to take longer than six months. A period of up to two years should be allowed if Native Title has to be considered. A brigade wishing to acquire land should approach the Area Director, Rural Operations. Brigades may not undertake land acquisition negotiations in their own right.
- QFRS is able to search for suitable sites if the brigade has not already done so.

## How I do it

- To acquire land to build a fire station, approach the Area Director Rural Operations (ADRO).
- The ADRO will firstly determine whether the brigade has a genuine requirement to construct a fire station and whether the brigade has the capacity to support the associated costs in the longer term.
- Where an acquisition is supported, area office staff will assist the brigade to locate a suitable site and will liaise with relevant agencies/individuals.

## Reference Materials

- Brigade Land Acquisition Form
- Area Reference Manual – Business Rule: D4.1.4 – Acquire and Develop Land for Brigade Facilities and Infrastructure