

MEDIA RELEASE

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Locals in the spotlight as North West Queensland councils Get Ready for the wet

Six councils from across North West Queensland have developed a new online resource, bringing together local experience and know-how to help locals and visitors prepare and respond during the wet season and beyond.

Carpentaria, Cloncurry, Doomadgee, Flinders, McKinlay and Richmond councils developed the platform (www.GetReadyNWQ.com.au), through the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC), teaming up with local leaders, agencies, business and community to create the content.

Chair of NWQROC and Carpentaria Shire Mayor Jack Bawden said a key part of the online resource are short videos filmed across the region featuring people from local communities.

“This is the first time we’ve ever undertaken something like this. As you’d expect it was a pretty big task with filming wrapping up at the end of January - just as the heavens began to open up!” Cr Bawden said.

“We know that natural disasters don’t stop at council boundaries. So Get Ready NWQ provides one easy step to direct links to council disaster dashboards, websites and social media channels.”

“From Flinders Shire, to the NT border, and up to the Gulf, there’s a big difference across our region when it comes to the environment and how natural disasters may unfold. That’s why we want to put local experience and advice front of mind this wet season – or any season.”

“You might be surprised at some of the responses. One of the questions we asked across the region was: ‘What’s ‘one thing’ that should be top of the list when getting ready but may often be forgotten’. Out of more than 40 interviews, most people had a different take on what that was.”

“Water, getting back to basics with long-life food, and fuel for generators and cars topped the list along with some pretty strong mental health and community messages which was great to see. It was also good to hear throughout discussions the ‘if it’s flooded, forget it’ message coming through loud and clear.”

Cr Bawden said that the project helped support the council’s role as coordinators of their Local Disaster Management Plans and their responsibilities to provide information and direction to their communities.

“Get Ready NWQ is a way to connect people to their communities and councils, help them get prepared and provide them with information on what support is available,” Cr Bawden said.

“This will be a great resource for our communities. We’ll keep updating and sharing videos, hints and tips from locals around the region as well as through council social media.

“Jump online and take a look at what people in our communities have to say. Whether you’re local or travelling to our region bookmark www.GetReadyNWQ.com.au so you can easily find the information when you need it.

“And thank you to everyone across our communities who took the time to participate in filming. We hope the recent rain has marked the beginning of a good, steady wet season. And hopefully it also marked a reminder for everyone to make sure they are prepared and have a ‘What If’ plan,” Cr Bawden said.

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Each council across Queensland has a Local Disaster Management Plan and also coordinates its Local Disaster Management Group. Members include council, emergency services and community representatives. Through the work of the Local Disaster Management Group councils are committed to providing leadership in disaster management with support from district and state-level groups.

The website and resources have been developed with support from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority as part of its Get Ready Queensland initiative.

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Contact: Greg Hoffman PSM - Executive Officer, NWQROC | 0418 756 005 | nwqroc@carpentaria.qld.gov.au

Image: Videographer, Mark Swaddling gets Liam and Brent ready for their close-ups at Julia Creek Early Childhood Centre.

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