



Disaster Assistance Loans (Essential Working Capital) Guidelines Primary Producers

For disaster events pre 2025

1. About the program

The objective of this assistance measure, provided under the *Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements*, is to support communities to recover after an *eligible disaster*.

The Essential Working Capital Loans Scheme provides concessional loans to *primary producers* who have suffered a significant loss of income as a result of an *eligible disaster*.

Loans are provided for continuing the normal operations of the *primary production enterprise*.

2. Available funding

2.1 The maximum loan amount is **\$100,000**; and

- a) the amount available is based on an assessment of an applicant's financial position, including any amount recovered under an insurance policy; and
- b) cannot be more than the amount of essential working capital reasonably required.

3. How funding may be used

3.1 Loan funds provided are to be used as *essential working capital*, this includes:

- a) paying salaries or wages;
- b) paying creditors;
- c) paying rent or rates;
- d) buying goods, for example – fuel essential to carry-on the primary production enterprise;
- e) buying fodder or water for livestock or produce;
- f) transporting livestock or produce.

3.2 Loan funds are not provided to:

- a) compensate for loss of income suffered as a result of the disaster; or
- b) provide assistance relating to direct damage suffered as a result of the disaster.

4. Eligibility criteria

4.1 To be eligible for a loan:

- a) the applicant must be a *primary producer*;
- b) before the eligible disaster, the applicant carried on a primary production enterprise in the defined disaster area;
- c) the applicant has suffered a significant loss of income as a result of the *eligible disaster*.



4.2 To be eligible applicants must also:

- a) provide adequate security and loans must be secured by:
 - i. a mortgage of land and other assets satisfactory to QRIDA; and
 - ii. any other security considered necessary, for example – a Specific Security Agreement over plant and machinery, crops, livestock or a General Securities Agreement
- b) continue to carry on the primary production enterprise in the defined disaster area;
- c) have reasonable prospects for carrying on the primary production enterprise on a viable basis with the assistance given;
- d) have used all liquid assets and all normal credit sources up to normal credit limits (this will be assessed in relation to the expected cost of recovery and projected cash flow shortfalls);
- e) have no reasonable prospects of obtaining commercial finance to carry on the enterprise;
- f) have not received another concessional loan for loss or damage that was related to the eligible disaster;
- g) have not taken excessive risks in carrying on the primary production enterprise.

5. Interest rates and loan terms

5.1 The term of the loan is decided by QRIDA up to a maximum of ten years.

5.2 An interest only period of up to two years may be granted.

5.3 The initial annual interest rates for these concessional loans are:

Rate	Eligible disaster
1.79%	Tropical Cyclone Kirrily, associated rainfall and flooding, 25 January – 26 February 2024
1.79%	South Queensland Severe Storms and Rainfall, 24 December 2023 – 3 January 2024
1.79%	Tropical Cyclone Jasper, associated rainfall and flooding, 13 – 28 December 2023
1.79%	Northern Queensland Bushfires, 18 October – 8 December 2023
1.79%	Southern Queensland fires, 8 September – 7 November 2023

6. How to apply

6.1 To be considered for a loan please submit a completed application form, accompanied by the documentation stated on the application form.

6.2 Application forms and related information can be accessed at qrda.qld.gov.au.

6.3 Complete applications are assessed in order of receipt and QRIDA may request further information to help assess an application.

7. Terms and conditions

7.1 Loans given are subject to an annual review and the necessary financial information must be provided when requested each year by QRIDA.

7.2 If QRIDA considers an applicant's financial position has improved, it may increase the interest rate up to a commercial rate.

7.3 Loan recipients must provide *evidence of expenditure* in relation to amounts drawn against the loan when requested by QRIDA.

7.4 Penalties apply, including call-up of the loan provided apply where false or misleading information is provided.

8. Conflicts of interest

8.1 A conflict of interest may arise due to a business dealing with QRIDA, if the applicant's private interests conflict with their obligations under the agreement. Conflicts of interest could affect the awarding or performance of the applicant's agreement. A conflict of interest can be:

- a) real (or actual);
- b) apparent (or perceived); or
- c) potential.

8.2 QRIDA will ask the applicant to declare, as part of the application, any business dealings that may be considered an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest or that, to the best of the applicant's knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. If the applicant later identifies that there is an actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to the agreement, the applicant must inform QRIDA in writing immediately.

9. Fraud

9.1 QRIDA takes fraud and corruption seriously. Suspected fraud will be referred to Queensland Police Service (QPS) and/or the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC).

9.2 Fraud and corruption is a criminal offence under Sections 408C, 408D and 87 of the *Criminal Code 1899* (Qld). For corporations, directors and company officials, Sections 596 and 184 of the *Australian Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) will also apply.

9.3 Providing false and misleading information or documents in the QRIDA application process is an offence. Penalties may apply under Sections 41 and 42 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* (Qld).

9.4 By signing the application form, you acknowledge that the information you provide is true and accurate, and agree to be bound by the scheme's guidelines and provisions.

9.5 QRIDA reserves the right to pursue and recover funding provided under fraudulent and dishonest circumstance.

10. Privacy

10.1 QRIDA's Privacy Policy, available at qrda.qld.gov.au/privacy, sets out general information on how QRIDA collects, uses, and discloses individuals' personal information.

10.2 The application form for this Scheme contains specific information on how personal information will be collected, used and disclosed.

11. Defined disaster areas

Eligible disaster	Defined disaster areas	Application closing date
Tropical Cyclone Kirily, associated rainfall and flooding, 25 January – 26 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulia Shire Council • Burdekin Shire Council • Burke Shire Council • Charters Towers Regional Council • Cloncurry Shire Council • City of Moreton Bay • Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council • Etheridge Shire Council • Lockyer Valley Regional Council • McKinlay Shire Council • Mount Isa City Council • Richmond Shire Council • Townsville City Council • Western Downs Regional Council • Winton Shire Council 	31 December 2025
South Queensland Severe Storms and Rainfall, 24 December 2023 – 3 January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Gold Coast Council • Logan City Council • Scenic Rim Regional Council 	31 December 2025

Tropical Cyclone Jasper, associated rainfall and flooding, 13 – 28 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns Regional Council • Cassowary Coast Regional Council • Cook Shire Council • Douglas Shire Council • Hinchinbrook Shire Council • Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council • Mareeba Shire Council • Tablelands Regional Council • Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council • Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council 	31 December 2025
Northern Queensland Bushfires, 18 October – 8 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council • Flinders Shire Council • Mareeba Shire Council • McKinlay Shire Council • Tablelands Regional Council 	31 December 2025
Southern Queensland Fires, 8 September – 7 November 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bundaberg Regional Council • Central Highlands Regional Council • Gladstone Regional Council • Maranoa Regional Council • North Burnett Regional Council • South Burnett Regional Council • Southern Downs Regional Council • Toowoomba Regional Council • Western Downs Regional Council 	31 December 2025

12. More information

For more information on the Disaster Assistance Loans Scheme or to get in touch with one of QRIDA's Regional Area Managers (RAMs), contact us on **1800 623 946** or email contact_us@qrda.qld.gov.au.

13. Definitions

Defined disaster area for an *eligible disaster* means the area that the appropriate Minister has defined for the purpose of activating the *Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements*. These are published on QRIDA's website (also see Section 11 above).

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements means the funding arrangements as agreed between the Commonwealth and the State for providing financial assistance to communities affected by an *eligible disaster* (available on the Australian Government Disaster Assist website).

Eligible disaster means a bushfire, cyclone, flood, earthquake, storm surge, landslide, meteorite strike, tornado, tsunami, storm – including hail, rain and/or wind event or terrorist act.

Essential Working Capital means, money that is necessary to continue the normal operations of the *primary production enterprise* for up to one year.

Evidence of expenditure means a tax invoice showing full details of goods or services (identifiable as relating to damage from the *eligible disaster*) and the corresponding official receipt. The relevant cheque butt or bank transfer documentation is required if unable to provide an official receipt.

Primary producer means

- a sole trader who spends the majority of their labour on, and derives the majority of their income from a *primary production enterprise*; or
- in relation to a partnership, company or trust that carries on a *primary production enterprise*, the partners in the partnership, shareholders in the company or beneficiaries of the trust who spend the majority of their labour on, and derive the majority of their income from, the *primary production enterprise*.

Primary production enterprise means a business that is carried on by a *primary producer* and involves primary production, including the agricultural, apicultural, aqua-cultural, commercial wild-catch fishing, forestry, grazing and horticultural industries.