

**Factsheet: preparing rural business for natural disaster**

# Planning, assessing, learning: building preparedness a long-term approach

PRIMARY producers across industries and regions of Far North Queensland have approached cyclone preparation and recovery in different ways, in the wake of Cyclone Yasi.

Some of those who have managed their recovery effort well are those that have thought ahead. This means considering the farm, the business, the house and personal life, employees, property, suppliers, and customers.

The Bureau of Meteorology has a full checklist for cyclone preparedness and also links to further information available at: <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/about/tc-checklist.shtml>

QFF has long promoted that preparedness and self-reliance are the best strategies for coping with Queensland's highly variable and extreme climate conditions. Every farm business is advised to review these strategies seasonally and make sure that you are up to date with insurances, seasonal risks, market risk mitigation tools, local contacts, etc.

Be familiar with your own industry's website(s) for tips and advice, plus a few key general sites that offer some particularly useful checklists and advice;

<http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au/initiatives/179.htm>

[http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4789\\_4645.htm](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4789_4645.htm)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/>

<http://www.insurancecouncil.com.au/Default.aspx?tabid=1752>


### Business preparedness

- Assess the potential risks to your farm and business. What are your risks? And what works best for you dealing with the risk?
- What are the key documents you must protect and have access to – and do you have duplicate copies?
- Review your insurance. Is it appropriate?
- Assess what critical systems of your business are likely to be impacted by a disaster.
- Assess what you need to keep your business functioning in the event of these systems being impacted.

### Preparation

- Develop a plan to deal with these risks should they occur.
- Develop a plan to deal with natural disasters. Discuss the plan with family and employees.
- Assess what long term strategies you can put in place to deal with exceptional disasters.
- Assess what communication channels could be impacted by a disaster. Develop a plan to maintain communication channels.
- Assess the steps you can take to get your business back up and running quicker.
- Back-up the files on your computer.
- Have a camera handy to take photographs of any damage.

**Pauline McFaul, fisher:** The day before any cyclone is preparation, tying things down, making sure that things can't fly through the air, looking after your supplies. Do you have batteries, do you have a radio to put the batteries in and water, first aid kit. This is something that people in the north know about.



**Charlie Zappala, cane grower:** We've always planned for these events. The extreme weather event is a one-off for us but Cyclone Yasi isn't a one-off for us. We have money put aside and we have been doing that for the last decade, so we have resources there to help us ride through these bad years.

