

Airport Emergency Sub Plan

Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group

Prepared By

Local Disaster Coordinator

Authorised By

Local Disaster Management Group

Date Prepared

July 2025

Document Control

Amendment Control

The Airport Emergency Sub Plan is a controlled document. The controller of the document is the Burdekin Shire Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this plan should be forwarded in writing to:

Local Disaster Coordinator
Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group
PO Box 974
AYR QLD 4807

The LDC may approve minor amendments to this document. The LDC will ensure that any changes to the document's content will be submitted to the Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) for approval and be endorsed by the Burdekin Shire Council.

Amendment Register

All versions are archived, and this sub plan only references the last two versions.

Amendment		Plan Updated		
No / Ref	Issue Date	Inserted by	Summary of Changes	Date
10	September 2024	Eileen Devescovi	Yearly Review	September 2024
11	July 2025	Eileen Devescovi	Yearly Review	July 2025

Endorsement

This Airport Emergency Sub Plan has been developed for the Burdekin Shire Local Government Area (LGA) and subsequently approved by the Burdekin LDMG. This Plan is a Sub Plan of the *Burdekin Local Disaster Management Plan* (LDMP) and is to be read in conjunction.

The Plan is recommended for distribution by the LDMG and is considered live once approved by the LDMG.



Mayor Pierina Dalle Cort
Chair Burdekin LDMG



Eileen Devescovi
Burdekin Local Disaster Coordinator

The functions of the Local Government were advised in accordance with the *Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003* (DM Act) (s80). This sub plan was formally adopted by the Burdekin Shire Council at the Council meeting through resolution held on 28 October 2025.



Mayor Pierina Dalle Cort

Abbreviation List

Abbreviation	Full Title
AAIT	Aircraft Accident Investigation Team
ADF	Australian Defence Force
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
CASR	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CHAIR	Local Disaster Management Group Chair
DFSB	Defence Flight Safety Bureau (formerly DDAAFS)
DM Act	Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003
LDC	Local Disaster Coordinator
LDMG	Local Disaster Management Group
LDMP	Local Disaster Management Plan
NOTAM	Notice to Airmen
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QFD	Queensland Fire Department (formerly QFES)
QPS	Queensland Police Service
SES	State Emergency Service
TSI Act	Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003

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1. Overview

The Burdekin Shire has two aerodromes and several smaller airstrips, owned and maintained by Burdekin Shire Council.

The Ayr Aerodrome is located on Aerodrome Road, Brandon, 12km from the Ayr central business district. It offers a 1,455m sealed runway capable of accepting light aircraft with a pavement concession of PCN 8/F/A/580(84psi)/U. The aerodrome has a night lighting system with solar-powered lights. Pilots of small and medium-sized aircraft now have the convenience of 24-hour fuelling at the Ayr Aerodrome after installing an on-site fuel facility.

The Home Hill Aerodrome is located on Heatley Road, Home Hill. The Home Hill aerodrome runway is unsealed. Smaller unsealed airstrips are also located near the towns of Clare (at the corner of Dunn Road and George Road), Millaroo (Newman Road) and Dalbeg (Foreman Walsh Road).

1.1 Purpose

This Airport Emergency Sub Plan aims to outline arrangements for the response to an aviation disaster within the Burdekin LDMG area of responsibility.

The implementation of this plan will allow the LDMG to:

- make informed, timely decisions regarding the aircraft accident;
- assist first responders which are typically emergency services personnel (i.e. Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Fire Department (QFD) and Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS));
- outline the reporting requirements for military and civil aircraft accidents; and,
- ensure an orderly release of information to the community.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this sub plan are to:

- Provide guidance to first responders;
- Ensure site coordination and security of the crash site;
- Ensure the containment of dangerous materials, fuels and chemicals;
- Ensure the successful re-opening of the airport;
- Provide effective liaison between all emergency services and supporting agencies; and,
- Prescribe arrangements for testing, evaluation and maintenance of this plan.

1.3 Scope

This sub plan applies to civil and military aircraft disasters occurring within the Burdekin Shire Council area, which are within the capability and resources of the Local Government, Emergency Services and other supporting agencies with a response/lead function and/or responsibility.

1.4 Authority to plan

The Burdekin LDMG has prepared this Sub Plan under the provisions of *section 57* of the DM Act. This sub plan will be managed in accordance with the administrative and governance processes outlined within the Burdekin LDMP including approval, document control, distribution, review and renewal.

1.5 Plan Review and Testing Requirements

This sub plan is to be reviewed annually before the severe weather season or post event to include lessons learned. This sub plan is to be exercised to ensure the effectiveness and scalability of the plan and include involvement, communication and collaboration with identified key local, district and state stakeholders.

2. Governance

2.1 Activation of Sub Plan

The LDC of the Burdekin LDMG will activate this plan in the event of an aircraft incident or accident to support the coordination and conduct of response and recovery operations.

This sub plan is supported by the:

Burdekin LDMP;

Burdekin LDMG Communication Sub Plan;

Burdekin LDMG Community Information & Warnings Sub Plan; and

Burdekin LDMG Evacuation Sub Plan

LDMG personnel and Emergency Services personnel are specifically requested to follow the checklist provided by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) on their website when and wherever possible:

- [ATSB Aviation Accident Site Checklist](#) (Also included in [Annexure A](#) of this Sub Plan).

2.2 Use of Sub Plan during Operations

Transport accidents are inevitable, and depending upon size and complexity, these accidents could involve coordination of efforts and resources across several emergency response authorities.

Only light aircraft land at the Burdekin Shire's aerodrome and airstrips. There are several light aircraft in the area, and the possibility of an accident does exist.

This plan will be activated when an event requires liaison between relevant authorities and coordination of investigation and response activities in the event of an aircraft incident or accident.

2.3 Functional Responsibility

The LDC is to ensure all agencies and members of the LDMG are aware of these procedures.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Lead Agency	Supporting Organisations	Roles and Responsibilities
QPS (Until arrival of ATSB or DFSB) <u>Contact:</u> Officer in Charge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site coordination • Evacuation of persons if required • Security of specific areas for public protection and investigation purposes • Crowd control • Coordination of search operations
	ATSB (civil) DFSB (military) <u>Contact:</u> Officer in Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations into cause of any aircraft accident
	Ayr District Hospital <u>Contact:</u> District Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of health care response
	Burdekin Shire Council <u>Contact:</u> LDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply of equipment and personnel as requested by the lead agency.
	Marine Rescue Queensland <u>Contact:</u> Communications Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct sea search and rescue if required
	QAS <u>Contact:</u> Officer in Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial treatment of casualties • Transport and evacuation of casualties
	QFD <u>Contact:</u> Officer in Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of rescue operations for trapped or stranded persons when fire ground is declared • Control of fires • Extrication of trapped personnel • Safety of persons in relation to fire
	State Emergency Service (SES) <u>Contact:</u> Local Controller / Deputy Controller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist evacuating trapped persons • Provision of emergency communications and lighting • Provision of labour and equipment • Search operations • Provision of welfare support as required

3. Concept of Operations

While there are mandatory requirements in the [Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003](#) (TSI Act) in regard to civil transport accidents, the guidance material contained in this document does not override specific policies or procedures developed by QPS, emergency services or other agencies, such as airport authorities.

3.1 Safety Bureaus

3.1.1 Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB)

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is an independent Commonwealth Government statutory Agency. A Commission governs the ATSB and is entirely separate from transport regulators, policymakers and service providers.

The ATSB have developed a safety publication, which provides guidance for QPS and emergency personnel in the event of an incident or accident. See [Hazards at Aviation Accident Sites](#).

3.1.2 Defence Flight Safety Bureau (DFSB)

The Defence Flight Safety Bureau (DFSB) is accountable to the Chief of Air Force in his capacity as the Defence Aviation Authority for the strategic management of flight safety in Defence. The DFSB provides Defence with independent aviation investigation, research and analysis, safety training and safety promotion capabilities. Accordingly, DFSB is the centre of expertise for flight safety within Defence.

3.2 Hazards at Aviation Accident Sites

The first people to arrive at an aircraft accident site can render valuable assistance to minimise injury and loss of life, reduce property loss through damage and prevent the loss of clues and evidence that are vital to determining the reason for the accident.

Often, emergency services personnel (QPS, QFD, QAS and their Defence Force equivalents) are the first trained personnel to arrive at aircraft accident sites. The [Hazards at Aviation Accident Sites](#) resource has been prepared by the ATSB and the DFSB to assist these personnel to:

- understand the reporting requirements for military and civil aircraft accidents;
- have an awareness of hazards at an aircraft accident site;
- consider how to manage the various hazards;
- understand the requirements of the TSI Act and the [Defence Aviation Safety Program Manual](#); and,
- manage and control the accident site to preserve essential evidence necessary for the ATSB or DFSB to conduct an effective investigation.

3.2.1 Role of First Responders

There are three main components to the work of first responders to the scene of an aviation accident:

1. Reporting the accident to the ATSB or DFSB;
2. Coordination of the accident site including rescuing any survivors, managing fire and hazardous materials and ensuring that the site is secured; and,

3. Protection of the aircraft wreckage and associated evidence so that an effective investigation can be conducted.

The ATSB guide [Hazards at Aviation Accident Sites](#) assumes that first responders will apply their own expert training to deal with victims, manage hazards and control the site. It offers specific advice that may be helpful in identifying and managing the hazards and risks associated with an aircraft accident. It also contains important advice about preserving evidence at the site.

3.2.2 Aviation Accident Site Checklist

LDMG personnel and Emergency Services personnel are specifically requested to follow the checklist provided by the ATSB on their website when and wherever possible:

- [ATSB Aviation Accident Site Checklist](#) (Also included in [Annexure A](#) of this Sub Plan).

3.3 Reporting of Aviation Accidents and Incidents

The owner, operator or crew of the aircraft must report the accident or incident immediately. If members of the public, emergency services personnel or Council Officers witness an aircraft accident, they too are required to report the incident if the owner, operator, or crew are unable to report to the ATSB.

3.3.1 Reporting of Civil Aircraft Accidents/Incidents

The ATSB must be notified of all aviation accidents and serious incidents.

Classification	Reporting Process
Civil	All civil aircraft accidents must be reported to the ATSB via the toll-free number: 1800 011 034

Aircraft type and registration letters usually begin with VH- followed by three letters. If the aircraft has no VH prefix, it may be a foreign civil or sports aviation aircraft, although, beware fire may have consumed any VH prefix. The registration appears typically on the side of the fuselage (main body), the fin/rudder combination and the wings. Operator details and aircraft type identification may also be printed on the aircraft. For a foreign civil aircraft, provide as much information as possible. In any case, give as much information as possible. All information may be useful.

3.3.2 Reporting of Military Aircraft Accidents/Incidents

The ATSB must be notified of all aviation accidents and serious incidents. In the event of a Military Aircraft accident, the DFSB Duty Officer will take your call and activate the military aircraft accident response plan.

Classification	Reporting Process
Military	Contact the DFSB Duty Officer: 02 6144 9199 . IF PRACTICABLE, also contact the nearest military base: 1300 DEFENCE (1300 333 362)

Provide the Duty Officer with the aircraft type, serial number and side number. There may be an N prefix (Navy) or A prefix (Air Force or Army) on the side of the fuselage and some form of a squadron or unit identification. It may be difficult to identify a foreign military aircraft, but as a rule, military aircraft serial numbers are painted on either side of the fuselage.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) maintains a multi-tiered aviation safety organisation, including a 24-hour rapid response Aircraft Accident Investigation Team (AAIT). Qualified personnel are available at all military bases where aviation activity takes place; these personnel will usually be the first to arrive at an accident site until they are relieved by qualified AAIT personnel. QPS is the responsible agency for securing the accident site until an officer/s from AAIT arrives.

3.3.3 Notification of LDMG

It is important to notify the Chair or LDC of the LDMG via Burdekin Shire Council of any accidents or incidents at any of the aerodromes within our Shire.

Organisation	Contact Number
Burdekin Shire Council	07 4783 9800

Council has a dedicated Aerodrome Officer, who will be immediately notified. Please refer to Burdekin Shire Council Emergency Contact List for numbers (not available for public release).

4. Accident Site Coordination and Security

QPS will normally coordinate the aircraft accident investigation.

The emergency organisation arriving first at the aircraft accident site may be a volunteer or permanent fire brigade under the QFD or a Defence fire brigade unit. In any case, initiative and liaison will be needed, particularly in the early stages when fire control is critical. A key consideration at accident sites is that the rescue personnel do not themselves become casualties. Individuals sometimes place themselves at considerable risk of injury or death. Caution and awareness of hazards at hand should be practised.

All accident sites must be secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering the area. This is based on common sense and respect for casualties, protection of valuable, important, or classified equipment, preservation of evidence to establish factors that contributed to the accident, and prevention of unnecessary exposure to hazards.

The [ATSB website](#) provides guiding resources to assist with site coordination and security.

4.1 Protection of Aircraft Wreckage

The ATSB and ADF understand that QPS and emergency services personnel have a duty to act immediately after they arrive at the scene; however, it is important to determine the factors that contributed to the accident that wreckage, ground scars and the accident site are disturbed as little as possible.

Authorisation is not required to:

- ensure the safety of persons, animals, or property; or
- protect the environment from significant damage or pollution.

There is also a requirement to:

- prohibit the removal of fatalities until the arrival of QPS, coroner's representative and medical authorities;
- prevent interference with rescue and associated operations;
- admit only authorised personnel to the accident site; and,
- keep bystanders outside the established zone of safety.

4.2 Dangerous Materials and Hazards

Both civil and military aircraft may contain dangerous materials, hazardous fuels, explosives, magnesium and aluminium metals, composite materials, toxic gases, high-pressure containers, oxygen and other dangerous cargo that can harm the assisting personnel. All care must be taken not to interfere with dangerous or hazardous materials. Some materials may become dangerous when involved in a fire.

4.3 Re-opening of Airport

In the event of an aircraft accident on the runway or on any other part of the aerodrome where aircraft land, taxi and park, there is to be a comprehensive checklist inspection by certified personnel for full serviceability before re-opening the airport. It may be necessary to sweep the runway for foreign matter or debris that could cause damage to other aircraft at some time in the future. This re-open advice is sent out as a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM). The Airport Reporting Officer shall liaise with QPS, QFD and any other organisation investigating the crash site before any decision.

5. Debriefing

It is important for all personnel involved in assisting and rescue services at an aviation accident site to attend a full debriefing session.

6. Counselling Services

Some personnel may require counselling services.

Related Documents

- [ATSB Aviation Accident Site Checklist](#)
- [ATSB Hazards at Aviation Accident Sites](#)
- [Defence Aviation Safety Program Manual](#)
- [Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003](#)
- [Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003](#)

Annexure A – ATSB Aviation Accident Site Checklist

[aviation-accident-site-check-list-2017.pdf \(atsb.gov.au\)](https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/aviation-accident-site-check-list-2017.pdf)

HAZARDS AT AVIATION ACCIDENT SITES

IF FATALITIES HAVE OCCURRED:

- Check with the coroner or their representative (usually the police) before taking any action to remove bodies ☐
- Check with the ATSB or Defence Investigator-in-Charge to determine if there are any special requirements for in-situ pathological examination before removing bodies ☐
- Carefully record the posture and position of each victim, with photographs, video and/or sketches
- Photograph or sketch any marks on the ground or wreckage that may be affected during the removal of any victims or the actions of attending emergency services personnel ☐
- Leave the wreckage as undisturbed as possible when removing victims ☐

NOTES

CHECKLIST

AVIATION ACCIDENT CHECKLIST

Australian Government
Australian Transport Safety Bureau

CIVIL Ph: 1800 011 034

Australian Government
Department of Defence

MILITARY Ph: 02 6144 9199

WARNING

Be aware that an accident site may contain potential hazards. Do no more than is necessary to preserve life without endangering your own. Seek advice from the ATSB or Defence on any hazards that may be present.

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HAZARDS AT AVIATION ACCIDENT SITES

GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

WHAT TO DO:

Emergency response

Ensure normal emergency response notifications are completed:
Police, Fire (including HAZMAT), Ambulance; telephone: **000**
ATSB: **1800 011 034** or DDAAFS: **02 6144 9199**.

REMEMBER:

- Exercise extreme caution: aviation accident sites contain potential hazards including flammable and toxic materials and may also contain explosives ☐
- Approach the aircraft cautiously, from upwind. This will help reduce your exposure to fumes and particulates. If possible, approach from the opposite direction of the aircraft's flight path ☐
- Do no more than is necessary to preserve life without endangering your own. Seek advice from the ATSB or Defence on any hazards that may be present ☐

NOTHING should be disturbed other than that necessary to rescue survivors or preserve life and suppress post-crash fires.

- Within the limits imposed by actions necessary to preserve life, photograph, video, sketch or make mental notes of wreckage to pass to the investigators, before disturbing it. DO NOT become a casualty yourself ☐

- Note the location and condition of safety harnesses and positions of occupants before they are moved. Cut rather than unbuckle safety harnesses ☐
- Every piece of the aircraft, its location and exact position, is important in determining the sequence of events and the contributing factors that led to the accident ☐
- Secure the accident site by placing a cordon around all scattered wreckage (50 m), as well as other evidence such as marks made by the aircraft, and ground scars— important evidence can be gained from instrument readings, soot and fire patterns, the location of fatalities, ground scars and so on ☐
- Obtain names, addresses, contact numbers and intended movements of witnesses, and note in particular any witnesses who may have photographic or video evidence of the accident ☐
- If the aircraft is carrying chemicals (such as an agricultural aircraft) consult Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and approach the aircraft cautiously, from upwind: this will help reduce your exposure to fumes ☐
- Be aware of powerlines that may have been struck during the accident—they may be lying on the ground and could be live ☐