



## Building flood resilience: Jason and Chelsea Kidd Primary producers in the Western Downs region operating a mixed cropping and cattle enterprise

### An Industry Recovery and Resilience Program case study

*The Industry Recovery and Resilience Officer Program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.*

## Background

Jason and Chelsea Kidd are primary producers in the Western Downs region of Queensland, where they operate a mixed cropping and cattle enterprise. Their property was significantly impacted by the rainfall and flooding events throughout 2022, resulting in significant soil erosion, and crop and infrastructure damage leading to challenges in operations and reduced productivity.

As a result, Jason and Chelsea recognised the need for a more comprehensive, long-term preparedness, and recovery strategy, to address flood risks and improve their business' resilience. They have achieved these outcomes through their successful engagement in the Industry Recovery and Resilience Officer (IRRO) Program.

## About the IRRO Program

Queensland Farmers' Federation IRRO Eloise Cosgrove provided support for flood impacted primary producers, such as Jason and Chelsea Kidd, to meet their short to long-term recovery needs and , increase their overall business resilience. Having met Chelsea at the IRRO hosted 'Resilience in Agriculture' workshop in Dalby, Eloise followed up by visiting Jason and Chelsea's property near Inglestone where she observed first-hand the flood impacts, recovery works and resilience building strategies being implemented on-farm.

As a result of working one-on-one with producers like Jason and Chelsea, the IRROs were able to support 102 primary production business to develop industry-specific, risk-based, on-farm Flood Management Plans (FMP's) that met the individual needs of the businesses and their goals for increasing preparedness, recovery, and resilience.



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*Eloise helped us throughout the entire process. In March, Eloise made us aware of the [Primary Producer Flood Management] grant at the 'Resilience in Agriculture' workshop in Dalby. We appreciated her empathy and her understanding of family farms. We valued her presence on farm and her interest in the state of our paddocks. She was a great resource and incredibly easy to work with throughout the entire process.*

**Chelsea Kidd**

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## The Flood Management Plan

The Flood Management Plan (FMP) is a customised, comprehensive document that provides each business with a tailored approach to flood preparation, prevention, response, recovery and increasing long term resilience. The FMP included an Action Plan section detailing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound) goals to aid in the recovery and increase flood resilience for future events.

Within the plan, Jason and Chelsea identified strategies including prioritising the improvement of soil health and obtaining professional agronomic advice. The priority strategy they identified was the utilisation of ag tech resources and professional technical advice in undertaking a LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) mapping project on their property.

LiDAR mapping allowed the generation of detailed topographical maps of their property, providing a precise overview and understanding of the terrain and drainage patterns during flood events. This data was crucial in planning for earthworks projects that would help manage the flow of water during intense rainfall and flooding, aiming to prevent erosion long term, therefore, increasing the business' flood resilience significantly.



## QRIDA Flood Management Grant

With the FMP in hand, Jason and Chelsea successfully applied for the Queensland Government's Primary Producer Flood Management Grant, administered by the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA), which was made available to eligible primary producers to cover the costs for up to \$7500 for flood recovery and resilience related 'technical advice'.

“*My husband and I feel very grateful for recently being successful with our application for The Primary Producer Flood Management Grant... we are continually battling the cost of production and balancing input costs with land management. As with all farms the cost to recover and 'improve' infrastructure and paddock structures to create long term resilience is high and often feels unattainable. But with this grant money and breaking large projects into smaller more manageable ones we are optimistic.*

**Chelsea Kidd.**

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## Implementation of earthworks projects

The Kidds utilised the LiDAR mapping and related technical advice in planning for a series of earthworks projects which were designed to mitigate the impacts of flooding.

With the technical advice sought and funded through the grant, Jason and Chelsea were then able to self-fund the implementation of key suggestions and plans such as levelling paddocks in strategic areas to improve the overall efficiency of water infiltration and drainage during periods of heavy rainfall. By reshaping the land through levelling, constructing contour banks and drainage channels as proposed, they were able to minimize the greatest impacts caused by intensive rainfall and flooding, being erosion and topsoil loss leading to decreased soil health, pasture and crop production.

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*Our goal is to secure our most important asset; the soil. We plan to continue to look after our soil through advancements in land management software and redesigning paddocks to avoid catastrophic damage during high rainfall events. This should result in less cumulative damage across the entire property. Most importantly, we want to improve our future resilience so that we can continue to manage and look after the country that looks after us.*

**Chelsea Kidd**

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## Outcomes and long-term benefits

Engagement in the IRRO program and the implementation of these flood mitigation measures has significantly increased the flood resilience of Jason and Chelsea Kidd's property and business overall. Reducing soil erosion, improving drainage and continually improving and maintaining flood management strategies as detailed in their FMP, has had a positive impact on their flood preparedness and long-term business resilience, allowing Chelsea and Jason to continue farming with greater confidence, even in the face of unpredictable weather patterns.



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## Watch the Industry Resilience and Recovery Officer program video

To celebrate the successful completion of the Industry Recovery and Resilience Officer (IRRO) program, which provided crucial support to flood-impacted producers, QFF and BMRG discuss their experiences and learnings from the program. The video also features conversations with primary producers who share the first-hand impacts of flooding on their operations and reflect on the importance of building resilience to future events.



## Farm Business Resilience Program

The Farm Business Resilience Program (FBRP) is available to primary producers in Queensland. The Program helps you review all aspects of your business and identify strategies to address your risks through the development of a Farm Business Resilience Plan.

The FBRP can also assist you to access grants and loans through the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) or private financiers for projects that help your business develop drought and disaster preparedness. Improving your farm's long-term business resilience helps you absorb and recover from challenges that have a negative impact on production and financial returns. Find out more at the link below or scan the QR code.



[www.qff.org.au/projects/farm-business-resilience-program/](http://www.qff.org.au/projects/farm-business-resilience-program/)

## Additional helpful resources

- Queensland Disaster Impact Survey  
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/a65512900348401a812e57d743e4c104>
- QRIDA website - Find information about funded programs [www.qrida.qld.gov.au](http://www.qrida.qld.gov.au)
- Check your local Disaster Dashboard  
[www.qra.qld.gov.au/recovery-hub/disaster-dashboards-queensland](http://www.qra.qld.gov.au/recovery-hub/disaster-dashboards-queensland)