

# Townsville 2019 Weather Event Timeline

**26 January**

BoM Report – Tropical Low expected to dump heavy rain over Townsville into next week

**29 January**

Paluma records 230mm of rain in 24 hours. Bruce Highway is cut at Gumlu. Major flood warning for the Haughton River catchment is issued

**Ross River Dam 75.6% capacity**

**31 January**

12.00pm Alligator Creek Bowls Club established as evacuation centre

1.58pm Alligator Creek reaches major flood levels, residents told to move to higher ground

**Ross River Dam 128.7% capacity**

**1 February**

6.00am BoM prediction that Ross River Dam was expected to receive 308mm of rainfall over next 48 hours

10.00am Preparations begin for manual gate operations

10.51am Flood warnings and emergency alerts issued due to expected flooding from Ross River

11.17am Police and SES begin door knocking homes, Defence and Council crews help with sandbagging

11.30am Ross River Dam gates transitioned to manual operation. All 3 gates opened to 2.75m

12.00pm Heatley Secondary College established as evacuation centre

8.12pm Flood warnings and emergency alerts issued due to expected flooding from Ross River

9.06pm Decision announced to further open Ross River Dam gates to 3.25m after advice that 196mm of rainfall over the dam was expected

Over 36,000 sandbags deployed around Townsville today

**Ross River Dam 190.6% capacity**

**3 February**

12.30pm Ross River Dam gates returned to automatic operation in line with EAP as dam levels increase

4.22pm Residents warned the dam spillway gates may open to their full setting between 8.30pm and 6.00am

4.42pm Ross River Dam closed to the public

5.04pm - 6.06pm Repeated evacuation warnings sent to the public regarding flood levels and potential for dam gates to fully open

7.24pm Residents warned the dam spillway gates are expected to open between 8.00pm and 8.30pm

8.09pm Residents warned to evacuate as dam gates are fully opened in line with the EAP

11.11pm Ross River Dam catchment rainfall predictions upgraded, residents warned 450mm could fall over the catchment in the 24hrs to 9am

11.23pm Ignatius Park College evacuation centre is at capacity

**Ross River Dam 245.8% capacity**

**5 February**

12.36am Flash flooding warning for Bluewater, Bluewater Park, Toolakea Beach, Saunders Beach

Ignatius Park Evacuation Centre closes

**Ross River Dam 203.7% capacity**

Total rainfall for the seven days to 9am: 1015mm

**7 February**

Commonwealth assistance available for residents whose homes are affected by water.

Rain gauge and other data indicates flood levels in the Ross River were greater than a one-in-500-year event and rainfall in the dam catchment as a one-in-2000-year event

**Ross River Dam 166.8% capacity**

**28 January**

Experts warn of a significant rain event for North Queensland Tropics for next week

24hr monitoring of Ross River Dam starts

**Ross River Dam 65.6% capacity**

**30 January**

Bluewater homes are under 300mm of water after severe flash flooding overnight

11.00am TLDMG moves to 'Alert', Council closes Castle Hill due to landslips

1.00pm TLDMG moves to 'Stand Up'

1.36pm Ross River Dam gates open automatically in line with EAP as water level approaches and exceeds 100%

3.30pm Bluewater Community Centre established as evacuation Centre

6.05pm TLDMG activates disaster response call centre

**Ross River Dam 112% capacity**

**2 February**

1.31pm Police and Defence personnel door knock homes in Oonoomba, Idalia, Rosslea, Hermit Park, Railway Estate, South Townsville, Cluden, Townsville City and some areas in Hyde Park to warn residents of potential flooding risk

All access to Castle Hill closed

2.00pm Ignatius Park College established as evacuation centre

5.00pm BoM prediction that Ross River Dam would receive 204mm of rainfall over the next 24hrs

5.30pm Ross River Dam spillway gates opened further to 3.75m

**Ross River Dam 216% capacity**

**4 February**

7.20am Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk warns further heavy rainfalls predicted

About 1000 people take refuge in Townsville's evacuation centres and more than 850 SES requests are made in 24 hours

LRRG is moved from 'Lean Forward' to 'Stand Up'

11.00am Ross River Dam flooding expected to peak and last until at least midnight

YWAM Evacuation Centre established

GIVIT managing donations for Townsville residents

Bluewater Community Centre downgraded to a drop-in centre

4.00pm 14,500 homes remain without power

5.00pm A severe weather warning issued for heavy rainfall and damaging winds

**Ross River Dam 247.6% capacity**

**6 February**

10.00am News of Townsville's flooding disaster has reached Buckingham Palace with Queen Elizabeth passing on a message of support to Townsville

**Ross River Dam 182.1% capacity**

**11 February**

TLDMG moves back to 'Alert'

**Ross River Dam 182.1% capacity**

## Levels of Activation as defined in the State Disaster Management Process:

**Alert** A heightened level of vigilance due to the possibility of an event in the area of responsibility. No action is required however. The situation should be monitored by someone capable of assessing the potential of the threat.

**Lean Forward** An operational state characterised by a heightened level of situational awareness of a disaster event (either current or impending) and a state of operational readiness. Disaster coordination centres are on standby; prepared but not activated.

**Stand Up** The operational state whereby resources are mobilised, personnel are activated, and operational activities have commenced. Disaster coordination centres are activated.

**Stand Down** Transition from responding to an event back to normal core business and/or recovery operations. There is no longer a requirement to respond to the event and the threat is no longer present.

**BoM** Bureau of Meteorology  
**EAP** Emergency Action Plan for the Ross River Dam  
**TLDMG** Townsville Local Disaster Management Group; comprises of core members including TCC, Ergon Energy, QAS, QPS, QFES, SES, TEL and the Townsville Hospital & Health Service.  
**LRRG** Local Recovery & Resilience Group; comprises of core members including Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Department of Housing and Public Works, Department of Environment and Science, Department of State Development, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Australian Red Cross, and Queensland Health.

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