1. Traditionally, the bushfire season in Queensland commences in the north of the State in August and concludes in December of each year. A number of factors can influence the length and severity of the bushfire season, including the timing and nature of the previous wet season and the current climate outlook.
2. Queensland has experienced continued mild and wet conditions since the start of 2022, with significant rainfall and flooding affecting most of the state. The Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook: June – August 2022 noted that rainfall for winter would be average for the far northern east coast between Cairns and Coen, and an 80% chance of above average rain across Queensland.
3. The forecast temperatures show most of the state seeing below average maximum temperatures, except the far north which will see above average maximum temperatures. The relative root zone soil moisture map shows most of the state has average to above average available water, except the Savannah region, coastal areas from Mackay down to Bundaberg and inland to Blackall regions.
4. Whilst above average rainfall and soil moisture indicates normal or below normal fire potential for most of Queensland, the forecast conditions and root zone soil moisture balances across the state will continue to promote grass fuel loads and increase the future potential fire risks.
5. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and its partners in bushfire mitigation and response have transitioned to a year-round mitigation program known as Operation Sesbania which will run for three years.
6. This change enables bushfire mitigation activities to be conducted year-round across Queensland, commensurate with the variable fuel and weather conditions and safety of undertaking such activities.
7. All Queensland Government agencies and relevant Government-owned Corporations have business continuity plans in place and continue to exercise these plans.
8. Cabinet noted the 2022 bushfire season update and preparation and mitigation activities.
9. *Attachments*:
* Nil.