

# Remote Area Incentive Scheme (RAIS)

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The QTU has pursued a Remote Area Incentive Scheme (RAIS) and other improvements in conditions for country teachers for many years. There were various QTU proposals and working parties from at least the late 1970s, but it wasn't until 1991 that a limited version of specific conditions applying only to very remote schools was introduced.

The securing of the original RAIS and any subsequent improvements have come from the QTU working with and for members. Significant activity of members in Far North Queensland in 2000, and again in 2005, secured additional entitlements. The 2005 industrial action of 450 members in 27 schools in the Torres Strait and Cape and Gulf branches gained government commitments to delivering:

- a 10 per cent increase in the total budget available for RAIS
- protection of all current benefits and entitlements in RAIS centres
- increased compensation and incentive benefits.

These commitments served to address what was ostensibly a nine year freeze on RAIS funding.

The version of RAIS recognisable today was introduced in January 1997, applying to teachers located in educational facilities with a transfer rating (TR) of 5, 6 or 7. Teachers in facilities with a TR of 4 were included in the scheme from January 1998.

The scheme has the following core elements:

- compensation cash benefits – to offset the cost of travel to and from the school community for teachers and their dependent family members.
- incentive cash benefits – an incentive payment for service beyond the minimum period required.
- extended emergent leave provisions
- induction programs for teachers appointed to a facility with a TR of 6 or 7.

## Compensation cash benefit

Teachers based in schools with a transfer rating (TR) of 5, 6 or 7 receive a cash payment from the time of appointment to that location. The compensation cash payment comprises the nominated payment to the teacher and an additional payment for declared dependants.

The compensation component is intended to offset the calculated cost of travel to Brisbane and to a nominated major centre once a year.

The adult cash benefits are the same for both the teacher and adult dependants. Non-adult dependants receive the following benefits:

Child < 14 years of age: 50 per cent of adult benefit

Child 14-16 years of age: 75 per cent of adult benefit

Student 17-24 years of age: 75 per cent of adult benefit.

The TR 7 compensation benefit has three levels of benefit, which were established by grouping together the range of costs incurred by an officer in travelling out of those centres. The table below outlines the compensation benefits:

Transfer rating	Cash benefit
Level 7 A	\$6,000
Level 7 B	\$4,800
Level 7 C	\$3,000
Level 6	\$2,100
Level 5	\$1,200

**Reimbursement of flight costs that exceed compensation cash benefit.**

**Please note** that for teaches not participating in the flight booking service arrangement, if costs for the one return flight to Brisbane and the one return flight to their nominated provincial centre per

annum exceed the compensation benefit, then the current practice of reimbursing these additional costs will continue. Advice on the process can be found in department's [Remote Area Incentive Scheme \(RAIS\) policy and procedure document](#).

Pro-rata payments are made to permanent employees who serve less than 12 months in a TR 5, 6 or 7 location.

Teachers employed in a temporary capacity for a continuous period greater than the equivalent of 60 days (non-working days included) will also receive a pro-rata payment.

### Incentive cash benefit

Teachers based in TR 4, 5, 6 or 7 schools also receive an additional payment (incentive benefit) to encourage them to remain in that RAIS location for a period greater than that required under the teacher transfer guidelines policy.

The incentive cash benefit concept is aligned with the accelerated points feature of the transfer rating system. As a result, teachers in TR 7 facilities receive the payment in their third, fourth and fifth years of service. Teachers in TR 6, 5 and 4 facilities receive an annual payment in their fourth and fifth years of service.

The table below outlines the incentives benefits.

Transfer rating	Years of service				
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
			\$	\$	\$
7			6,000	6,000	6,000
6				4,800	4,800
5				3,600	3,600
4				2,400	2,400

To be eligible to receive the initial incentive payment, teachers must complete the required minimum service period for their location, plus an additional period equivalent to two terms.

Both the compensation and incentive cash benefit rates are gross payment amounts, and tax is deducted at the time of payment. Payments are scheduled for the last pay of March and September each year. The compensation cash benefit is paid in two equal instalments, while the incentive cash benefit is paid in the second fortnight in September.

### Emergent leave

The department refers to this leave as additional discretionary leave. The department's RAIS procedure states:

*“ Additional discretionary leave has been made available as part of the rural and remote package and is intended to support teachers in remote centres. Addition discretionary leave may be used to assist in attending medical or personal business that cannot be conducted in the remote centre ”*

Teachers in TR 4, 5, 6 or 7 facilities are eligible for RAIS emergent leave benefits as outlined in the table below (total days available per calendar year).

TR4	TR5	TR6	TR7
2	4	5	5

RAIS emergent leave is intended to be used to support teachers in remote centres, and applications for RAIS emergent leave **should be approved** unless a substantial reason exists for not doing so.

RAIS emergent leave may be used to assist in attending urgent/non-urgent medical or personal business that cannot be conducted in the remote centre. Where non-urgent business is to be conducted, principals are to be given appropriate advance notice so as to maximise the opportunity to obtain a replacement. Where such advance notice is not provided, the principal may determine not to grant the leave.

It may also be used to assist in offsetting the time needed to travel to conduct such business. For example, leave to attend a specialist appointment in Brisbane might require two days' travel to attend the appointment, with the appointment being taken as sick leave and the travel being taken as RAIS emergent leave. Alternatively, leave to attend an appointment with a solicitor might require three days of RAIS emergent leave, two for travel and one for the appointment.

RAIS emergent leave can also be used in the same way as special discretionary leave, in that it may be accessed to attend to urgent/non-urgent medical or personal business in the employee's current location, subject to the same conditions outlined above. The total number of days on RAIS emergent leave quoted does not include the five days' discretionary leave (formerly emergent/compassionate leave) entitlement provided to all public sector employees.

Approval of RAIS emergent leave immediately prior to or after a vacation period is subject to the principal's discretion, but should normally be approved only in exceptional circumstances.

RAIS emergent leave does not accumulate and, if not used, the entitlement is lost.

Once the allocation of RAIS emergent leave on full pay has been exhausted, there will be no further entitlement to paid RAIS emergent leave until the following calendar year. Entitlements to RAIS

emergent leave are regained for each calendar year.

In the event that a dispute arises over the approval of an application to access RAIS emergent leave, the following dispute resolution procedures will apply.

- Discussion should occur between the teacher and the decision-maker with a view to resolving the dispute.
- Should no satisfactory outcome be achieved, the matter will be referred in writing to the regional office for consideration by a panel comprised of the principal personnel officer and the QTU Organiser. This panel will make recommendations to the principal on the appropriate course of action in relation to the leave application.
- In the event that the teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of this process, a grievance procedure commenced in respect of the approval of RAIS emergent leave will be considered to commence at stage two, in recognition of the mediation processes already undertaken.

Changes to public service discretionary leave entitlements have resulted in general emergent leave entitlements changing to an allocation of five days of discretionary leave per year, per reason. This does not affect the basis for calculating RAIS emergent leave. For further information, please refer to the QTU information brochure on [Special Leave](#).

### Period of service.

Service must be continuous (excluding leave) and completed in the location of appointment, except in cases of required transfer to another TR 4, 5, 6 or 7 school.

Where this service is terminated at the teacher's request, payment of the incentive payment ceases and a new qualifying period must be served before the benefit becomes available again.

### RAIS Induction programs

Specific induction programs are provided to teachers newly appointed to TR6-TR7 locations. Induction programs are provided to help teachers prepare for service in remote area schools.

From 2019, these programs will be conducted centrally, providing the opportunity for all teachers new to TR6-TR7 locations to receive comprehensive induction to teaching and living in remote communities.

### Special incentive cash benefit

The Special incentive benefit only applies to teachers appointed to TR6 and TR7 schools prior to 22 May 2006.

Late in 2002, as a result of a concerted campaign of QTU members in the Torres Strait Branch, the department agreed to install the special incentive cash benefit as an element of the RAIS.

Teachers in schools in TR 6 or 7 centres prior to 22 May 2006 are eligible to receive a special incentive cash benefit for the seventh and successive years of service in that centre.

Payments of the special incentive cash benefit will be made in the same fashion as the incentive cash benefit.

The special incentive cash benefit is set at the following amounts.

TR6	TR7
\$1,200	\$1,500

The special incentive cash benefit is an entitlement in addition to the payment of the compensation cash benefit and the entitlement to RAIS emergent leave.

### Certified agreement changes to RAIS

During 2006, the Union successfully negotiated changes to the RAIS. These changes included enhancements to the RAIS but no more than a 10 per cent increase in the total RAIS funding pool. The agreement embedded new clauses into the certified agreement.

Part 10 of the Department of Education and Training State School Teachers' Certified Agreement 2016 states:

- "10.1 The benefits to teachers in schools located in rural and remote areas of Queensland are contained in the procedure *"Remote Area Incentive Scheme"*.
- 10.2 The parties acknowledge that the department is reviewing the Remote Area Incentive Scheme with the purpose of proposing a range of strategies to attract and retain quality teachers in rural and remote Queensland.
- 10.3 The parties commit to trial a range of initiatives arising from the review of RAIS in identified centres as agreed between the parties from the commencement of the 2017 school year. These initiatives will be reviewed by the RAIS advisory committee no later than July 2018 and extended to other RAIS centres in accordance with aggregate expenditure and as agreed between the parties.

- 10.4 The parties acknowledge that the RAIS advisory committee will continue in its roles of advising the department on proposed strategies to continue attracting and retaining quality teachers in rural and remote Queensland and reviewing compensation benefits on an annual basis.
- 10.5 The aggregate expenditure associated with the RAIS incentives and compensation benefits (including human resource, monetary and leave incentives and those applying to alcohol management plan communities) will be provided at a level no less favourable than provided at the time of certification.
- 10.6 Any proposed ongoing changes to current initiatives arising from the trial and review will be the subject of agreement of the parties."

For the most up-to-date information on RAIS, please go to department's Remote Area Incentive Scheme procedure at <https://education.qld.gov.au/about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/state-schools/core-funding/rais>

### **Centres subject to an alcohol management plan (AMP)**

In addition to the benefits outlined above, QTU members working in centres subject to an AMP can opt for an additional flight out of the centre each year (for a total of three flights).

Two flights to the major provincial centre (in most cases Cairns) and one flight to Brisbane.

Access to the increased flight allocation is subject to advance notice being provided to the

department about the dates on which you intend to fly and is provided in lieu of the cash compensation payment.

Any teacher who wishes to maintain the cash compensation payment may choose to do so.

All teachers in RAIS centres subject to an AMP will receive correspondence from the department at the beginning of each year requiring them to express a preference for either the payment of the cash compensation amount or the three flights.

Members in centres subject to an AMP should read this brochure in conjunction with the QTU information brochure on "[Living and working in AMP communities](#)".

### **Identified location incentive**

Teachers working in identified locations are also entitled to receive an additional incentive payment upon commencement and for each year of service in identified Indigenous communities, for up to five years (see attached list). This benefit recognises the specific conditions associated with employment in these locations and offers an additional \$1,000 per annum on top of existing cash incentives and compensation, paid at the same time as the incentive benefit, in the second fortnight in September.

### **Union assistance**

In the first instance inquiries regarding payment/non-payment of RAIS benefits should initially be directed through your school to regional office.

Should the issue not be resolved, you should request assistance either via the QTU website, [www.qtu.asn.au](http://www.qtu.asn.au) or by calling the Queensland Teachers' Assist Desk on 1300 11 7823.

**Schools/centres at which RAIS benefits apply**

Location	TR	Location	TR	Location	TR	Location	TR
Abercorn	4	Dimbulah	4			Spinifex	5
Agnes Water	4	Dingo	4	Lockhart River <sup>1</sup>	7B	Springsure	4
Alexandra Bay	4	Dirranbandi	6	Longreach	5	St George	5
Alpha	6	Doomadgee <sup>1</sup>	7A	Lowmead	4	St Lawrence	5
Anakie	4	Drillham	4	Lundavra	5	St Pauls <sup>1</sup>	7A
Aramac	6	Duaringa	4	Mabuiag Island <sup>1</sup>	7A	Stamford	7B
Arcadia Valley	6	Dulacca	4	MacKenzie River	5	Stephen Island <sup>1</sup>	7A
Augathella	6	Dunkeld	6	Malu Kiwai <sup>1</sup>	7A	Stonehenge	7B
Auburn River	5	Durong South	4	Mapoon <sup>1</sup>	7B	Sunset	5
Aurukun <sup>1</sup>	7B	Dysart	4	Marlborough	4	Surat	5
Badu Island <sup>1</sup>	7A	Eidsvold	4	Meandarra	5	Talwood	5
Bamaga <sup>1</sup>	7B	Emerald	4	Mer <sup>1</sup>	7A	Tambo	6
Baralaba	5	Eromanga	7C	Middlemount	4	Tara	4
Barcaldine	5	Eulo	7C	Millaroo	4	Taroom	6
Barkly Highway	5	Evesham	7B	Mistake Creek	6	Teelba	6
Bauhinia	5	Forsayth	6	Mitchell	5	Texas	5
Bedourie	7B	Georgetown	6	Monogorilby	5	Thallon	6
Begonia	6	Gindie	4	Monto	4	Thargomindah	7B
Birdsville	7B	Glenden	4	Moonie	5	The Gums	4
Blackall	5	Glenmorgan	5	Moranbah	4	Theodore	4
Blackwater	4	Goondiwindi	4	Mornington Is <sup>1</sup>	7A	Thursday Island <sup>1</sup>	7A
Bloomfield River <sup>1</sup>	7C	Greenvale	6	Morven	6	Tieri	4
Bluff	4	Gregory Downs <sup>1</sup>	7A	Mt Fox	5	Townview	5
Bollon	6	Grosmont	5	Mt Garnet	4	Tresswell	6
Boulia	7B	Guluguba	5	Mt Isa	5	Urandangi <sup>1</sup>	7A
Boynewood	4	Gumlu	4	Mt Perry	4	Valkyrie	5
Bungunya	5	Hamilton Island	4	Mt Surprise	6	Wallumbilla	4
Burketown <sup>1</sup>	7A	Hannaford	5	Moura	4	Wandoan	5
Burra Burri	4	Happy Valley	5	Muckadilla	4	Wanpa-rda Matilda	5
Bwgcolman <sup>1</sup>	7C	Hayman Island	4	Mulgildie	4	Warraber Island <sup>1</sup>	7A
Bymount East	5	Healy	5	Mundubbera	4	Wartburg	4
Cameron Downs	7B	Hebel	7C	Mungallala	6	Weipa	7B
Camooweal	7B	Homestead	5	Murgon	4	Westmar	5
Camp Fairbairn	4	Hopevale <sup>1</sup>	7C	Mutchilba	4	Windorah	7C
Capella	4	Horn Island <sup>1</sup>	7A	Muttaborra	6	Winton	6
Carmila	4	Hughenden	6	Nebo	4	Woorabinda <sup>1</sup>	7C
Charleville	5	Ilfracombe	5	Normanton	7B	Wowan	4
Cherbourg <sup>1</sup>	5	Inglewood	4	Orion	5	Wyandra	6
Chillagoe	5	Injino <sup>1</sup>	7B	Pentland	5	Wycombe	6
Clarke Creek	5	Injune	5	Pormpuraaw <sup>1</sup>	7B	Yam Island <sup>1</sup>	7A
Clermont	4	Irvinebank	4	Poruma <sup>1</sup>	7A	Yaraka	7B
Cloncurry	6	Isisford	6	Prairie	6	Yarrabah <sup>1</sup>	5
Cockatoo	6	Jericho	6	Proston	4	Yelarbon	4
Coen	7B	Julia Creek	6	Quilpie	7C	Yorke Island <sup>1</sup>	7A
Collinsville	4	Jundah	7B	Ravenswood	4	Yowah	7B
Comet	4	Kalkadoon	5	Richmond	6	Yuleba	4
Condamine	4	Karumba	7B	Riverleigh	4		
Cooktown	7C	Kilcummin	6	Rolleston	5		
Coppabella	4	Kindon	5	Roma	4		
Croydon	7B	Kioma	5	Rossville	7C		
Cunnamulla	7C	Kowanyama <sup>1</sup>	7B	Saibai Island <sup>1</sup>	7A		
Dajarra	7B	Kubin <sup>1</sup>	7A	Scottville	4		
Darnley Island <sup>1</sup>	7A	Lakeland	7C				
Dauan Island <sup>1</sup>	7A	Laura	7C				
Denison	4	Lochington	6				

<sup>1</sup> - locations where teachers receive the identified location incentive