



Customer and Community

Supporting and serving our customers, and the communities in which we operate, have always been priorities for QBE. We continue to seek ways to improve our products and services through innovation, and making them more accessible, while meeting customer needs and expectations. We have a strong history of supporting community resilience through our QBE Foundation partnerships.

Our customers

While QBE is primarily an intermediated business, serving our customers through our partners, we do hold a direct relationship with many consumer and small-to-medium enterprise customers. We gather feedback from our partners and customers through mechanisms that differ across divisions. This provides us with important insights to explore how we can partner for innovative, sustainable and impactful solutions.

Supporting vulnerable customers

To support our personal lines product insurance offering in Australia, we are focused on continuing to identify and support vulnerable customers. QBE completed its first foundational [Financial Inclusion Action Plan \(FIAP\)](#), which outlined 29 initiatives aimed at improving financial inclusion, resilience and wellbeing for our customers, community partners, suppliers and employees, in 2021. In line with the FIAP program terms, our progress towards these initiatives has been independently reviewed and validated by EY, with a [progress report](#) published on the QBE website in the first quarter of 2022.

Throughout 2022, we remained part of the FIAP community with a focus on training our customer interfacing teams. We also provided refresher training to most customer-facing teams on supporting customers experiencing vulnerability. To do this, we partnered with Uniting, consultants that help businesses develop strategies to support vulnerable customers, to develop training to increase awareness of emerging trends in financial vulnerability, and appropriate responses. We continue to explore ways in which we can support our customers experiencing financial hardship and vulnerability. We remain committed to contributing to financial inclusion and resilience across Australian communities.

711

community
organisations
supported

408,698

people reached
in the community

\$308,831

donated by our
employees

Awarded a High
Commendation for
our Disaster Relief and
Resilience Partnership
**Best Strategic
Partnership
at FIA Awards**



QBE Foundation

The QBE Foundation seeks to create strong, resilient and inclusive communities. We work in partnership with community organisations, with a focus on **climate resilience** and **inclusion** - two areas where we believe we can have the greatest impact.

The QBE Foundation invests in the community through funding, pro bono and in-kind support, including workplace volunteering and giving, community grants, and partnerships with charities and community organisations.

We invest in communities globally, and our QBE Foundation operates locally in our Australia Pacific, International (including Europe and Asia) and North America divisions, as well as in Bermuda and in our Group Shared Services Centre in the Philippines. Each division works to bring our vision to life, through local partnerships, grants and employee engagement opportunities.

As well as local partnerships, the QBE Foundation works to support our global Disaster Relief and Resilience Partnership with Red Cross and Save the Children.

This partnership is critical to our ability to support communities to prepare for, anticipate, respond to, and recover from, disasters. We also work with our partners to create strategic local initiatives that support climate resilience and/or inclusion priorities.

In the first three years of our partnership, we:

- activated the partnership in 19 of our 27 countries of operation;
- reached over 490,000 people through the distribution of 46,955 relief items, cash support, and preparedness initiatives;

- supported our partners to deliver their programs and relief efforts through the deployment of \$2.7 million in aid;
- invested \$2 million in the Save the Children Impact Investment Fund; and
- were recognised as Highly Commended in the 2022 Fundraising Institute Australia Awards 'Best Strategic Partnership' category and as a Finalist in the 2020 Shared Value Awards 'Shared Value Collaboration of the Year' category.

On the United Nations' International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction in October 2022, we relaunched the partnership, committing to a further three years of working together and increased funding. Over the next three years, we will grow our focus on climate risk adaptation and mitigation.

QBE AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge

Each year, QBE Foundation partners with Leading Cities to run the QBE AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge, a global competition seeking entrepreneurs whose ventures drive resiliency in cities. Employees have the opportunity to evaluate the entrants' innovation and impact and vote in the People's Choice Award. In 2022, Automedi won the challenge's grand prize of \$100,000 to help bring its technology and services to the international market with the aim of building more sustainable societies. A UK-based manufacturing platform, Automedi is the world's first decentralised circular microeconomy, converting plastic waste into community products at the point of use.

- To find out more about the QBE Foundation, please go to our [website](#).



Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

Cybersecurity

QBE is committed to the ongoing management of internal and external cyber threats to the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our customer and corporate data. Our Cybersecurity Strategy seeks to ensure effective controls are in place across people, process, and technology, including proactive monitoring and response to known and emerging threats.

Our approach

QBE's approach to cybersecurity is guided by our Cybersecurity Framework, which is aligned to the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework. Our framework seeks to help us continually improve our cyber risk identification, prevention, detection, response, and recovery capabilities. It sets out our operating model, security policies and standards, cyber risk culture, metrics and reporting, and risk identification and management processes.

QBE employs a defence-in-depth approach to security coupled with proactive and reactive security controls to protect our environment. This includes threat intelligence, monitoring, vulnerability management and incident response. Our Global Security Operations Centre performs containment activities when malicious activity is detected. We have robust business recovery plans in place that are tested annually.

QBE has a rolling, three-year Cybersecurity Strategy designed to improve the security and resilience of QBE technology and business services against cyber threats or disruption. Importantly, the strategy is adaptive, to enable QBE to pivot activity in response to emerging threats. The strategy's key drivers are technology modernisation, the evolving threat landscape

(including criminal activity and techniques), internal and external risk assessments, and changes in the regulatory environment.

QBE's Cybersecurity Strategy is overseen by QBE's Group Board. Division-specific activities are also reported to divisional Executive Management teams and Boards. QBE also conducts internal and external assessments on security control effectiveness to assist us to prioritise investment and areas of focus.

QBE has a comprehensive cybersecurity capability, including security architecture and design, data security, cyber engineering, governance and assurance, identity and access management, and cyber safety awareness. These capabilities are delivered via a central, global function that enables strategic direction for, and common security goals with, our people, partners and regulators. Activity is delivered via divisionally based subject matter experts, who tailor solutions to meet local business requirements and regulations.

QBE's cybersecurity risk and compliance activities are aligned with the QBE Group Risk and Compliance Frameworks, which seek to ensure that cyber risks are consistently assessed, monitored and managed in line with wider enterprise risks and compliance obligations.

Ransomware

Ransomware is a prevalent threat to organisations worldwide. While ransomware attacks are pervasive, there was a significant increase in their volume and sophistication globally as organisations moved to mass working-from-home arrangements in 2020 due to COVID-19. Research¹ indicates a 1,070% increase in ransomware attacks between July 2020 and June 2021. This trend continued throughout 2022.

In response, QBE has dedicated programs focused on ransomware business resiliency. We prioritise application recoverability for core business processes across all technology dependencies. Internal and external assessments are regularly conducted to test controls.

Culture and awareness

We invest in a comprehensive, multi-channel global awareness program to empower our people to understand cyber risks at work and at home. The program includes regular phishing simulations, which aim to mimic real-world, sophisticated phishing attacks, to train our people to recognise and report malicious emails (often the entry point of cyberattacks).

The program also encompasses online compliance training, face-to-face presentations, and cyber safety communications to assist our people to stay safe online and in their everyday business interactions. We also conduct tailored training for specific roles that have a heightened risk of being targeted by cybercriminals, given the nature of the information/access connected to the role. Key metrics used to measure secure behaviour, including phishing simulation results and compliance training completion rates, are reported to senior leaders and Group and divisional Boards.

¹ www.fortinet.com/content/dam/maindam/PUBLIC/02_MARKETING/08_Report/report-ransomware-survey.pdf



Innovation and technology

Our customers and employees rely on technology to access, or deliver, our products and services. Our focus remains on delivering an environment that is stable, secure and sustainable as part of our overall approach to organisational resilience.

Throughout 2022, we have continued modernising our information technology (IT) systems, with ongoing upgrades to foundational capabilities and further investments in digitisation. Our technology priorities are aligned with divisional business strategies and form part of the overarching technology strategy overseen by QBE's Group Board. A clear emphasis within this strategy is on keeping our IT current to mitigate against security and stability risks arising out of exposure to older technologies. We are also focused on automating operational processes – such as testing, deployment and security scanning – to improve our delivery speed, consistency and quality.

To do this, QBE maintains divisionally aligned technology teams responsible for the technology assets of the local business, supported by shared services functions providing enterprise-wide capabilities such as service management, security services, networks, infrastructure support and workplace technologies. We use trusted third parties to provide a range of application development and management services. We leverage our Third-Party Risk Management Framework and related policies, such as our Group Material Outsourcing Policy, to govern these arrangements. We have increasingly invested in our own internal technology capability, for example, by establishing an automation 'centre of excellence' in our Group Shared Services Centre, to provide a range of sourcing options to increase flexibility and resilience.

QBE's technology teams operate in accordance with the IT Risk Management Framework (part of QBE's overall Risk Management Strategy), with Minimum Control standards in place across the IT delivery life cycle, including expectations for ongoing disaster recovery and security testing. Adherence to control standards is tested annually through the Risk and Control Self-Assessment process to identify areas requiring improvement. Key Risk Indicators and Service Level Agreements are monitored monthly across both external partners and internal teams to ensure effective delivery of activities within our risk appetite and against stakeholder expectations.

Innovation and technology will continue to be central to QBE's overall purpose and strategy. Increasing digitisation and automation of processes are fundamental to meeting customer and partner expectations, as well as supporting our overall organisational effectiveness. Digitisation relies on data, and we are investing in strengthening our approach to the acquisition, management and governance of data at both a divisional and Group level with the:

- establishment of a Group Data Office; and
- development of an overarching enterprise-wide data strategy to promote our effective use and control of data assets.

This data team will play an important role in the insurance-associated emissions projects to meet our net-zero underwriting commitments.

QBE Ventures

QBE Ventures is our venture development and investment arm, which invests in technology start-ups and venture funds that are aligned to QBE's purpose of enabling a more resilient future. In October 2022, QBE Ventures invested in an early-stage Australian-based tech firm, *iluminr*, whose award-winning SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) platform helps organisations identify and manage crises and threats through a set of cloud-based simulation, compliance, and response tools. Using gamification, automation and data insights, the platform provides microsimulations that enable companies to uplift their resilience against crises such as cyberattacks, supply chain disruptions, natural disasters, and COVID-related challenges. Since COVID-19, organisations have changed significantly, and *iluminr* helps them to prepare and respond to disruptions in a way that accommodates the new hybrid work environment.

i Find out more [here](#).

