

Preparing Australian Communities Program – Local

Priority Locations and Hazards

The National Emergency Management Agency - NEMA (formally the Emergency Management Agency and National Recovery and Resilience Agency) and the Australian Climate Service (ACS) have developed and prepared this document to help you understand how and why we have nominated priority locations for the Preparing Australian Communities Program for projects of local significance (PACP Local).

This document offers general advice on evidence that you can use to address the assessment criteria. It should be read in conjunction with the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (Guidelines) and other information for PACP Local provided at business.gov.au/PACPL. This document does not revoke, replace or amend the Guidelines.

The Guidelines include all the information you need to apply.

What is a priority location?

A priority location is a Local Government Area (LGA) that has been assessed as having high exposure to bushfire, tropical cyclone or flood, relative to other LGAs across the country. This assessment takes into account the effects of climate change on hazard risk and was informed by the [ACS](#), NEMA and state and territory governments. Round 1 includes 160 priority LGAs. Applications for projects within a priority LGAs will receive an additional 20 points in the assessment process.

Why does the Preparing Australian Communities Program have priority locations?

The PACP Local includes priority locations to ensure funding is targeted to areas most at relative risk of bushfires, tropical cyclones and/or flood. This does not mean that LGAs not in the list of priority locations are not at risk of natural hazards. Rather, when considering the three components of disaster risk (hazard, exposure, vulnerability) to the extent possible with nationally consistent data, these LGAs are considered to have lower disaster risk relative to priority areas.

The priority list may be reviewed for future rounds.

How were priority locations determined?

The [Australian Climate Service](#) and the now [National Emergency Management Agency](#) developed the list of priority LGAs with input from state and territory governments. Priority LGAs are considered to be most at risk of bushfire, tropical cyclone and/or flood when comparing all LGAs nationally, or in some cases, as identified by state and territory governments using their data and information where available.

For each LGA, we considered the potential severity of each natural hazard in the area, and the potential damage to the LGA if the disaster were to occur. This was based on scientific modelling. The effects of climate change on the severity of natural hazards were also taken into account where possible.

We considered severity and potential damage differently for each type of natural hazard because the data available for each type of hazard is different. There are also several different factors that influence severity and potential damage for each type of hazard. Please see Table 1 below for the description of the information used to rank LGAs based by hazard, based on scientific modelling.



Table 1 Information used to rank LGAs

Natural hazard	Information used
Bushfire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The total number of houses that could be lost under the worst case bushfire scenario• The share of houses that could be lost under the worst case bushfire scenario• The share of houses in the LGA that are considered to be in a bushfire prone area
Tropical Cyclone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Likelihood of extreme wind speeds• Structural vulnerability of houses
Flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The total number of residential properties exposed to flooding

In addition to scientific modelling, we considered how many bushfires, tropical cyclones and floods have occurred in each LGA in the past. We used Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) activations to understand disaster history in each LGA. Under DRFA, the state or territory governments determine which areas receive assistance and assistance is available to individuals and communities following a disaster event. We incorporated disaster history because scientific modelling might not capture areas that have been affected in the recent past.

We undertook a national comparison based on scientific modelling and disaster history. The top 30 LGAs (or where there were very similar LGA rankings, more than 30) were selected for each natural hazard. As noted above, this does not mean the LGAs outside the top 30 are not at risk of natural hazards.

We then incorporated additional local knowledge and contextual information from state and territory governments, to include additional LGAs in the priority list.

My LGA has experienced multiple disasters over the last 5 years, why weren't we considered a priority area?

The priority LGAs have been selected in consultation with the ACS and with state and territory governments, who have considered available hazard data and informed the selection.

As the PACP Local is focussed on disaster preparedness and addressing the impacts of climate change, we have determined priority LGAs on a number of factors. Disaster history is just one of those factors. We considered the potential severity of each natural hazard in the area, and the potential damage to the LGA if the disaster were to occur. The effects of climate change on the severity of natural hazards were also taken into account where possible. The priority LGAs have been assessed as having high comparative risk when taking into account both historical and future trends across the country.

It is important to note that if an LGA is not identified as a priority LGA, this does not mean that the LGA is not at risk of natural hazards. When considering the three components of disaster risk (hazard, exposure and vulnerability) together to the extent possible with nationally consistent data, these LGAs are considered to have lower disaster risk relative to priority LGAs. For example, an area that has a high likelihood of experiencing extreme wind speeds may not necessarily be assessed as having relatively high tropical cyclone exposure and may not be considered a Priority LGA, as the area may have a large number of buildings that have been built to better withstand cyclonic winds.

If part of the project is in a priority LGA will I receive the additional points?

Yes. Applications with project activities addressing the hazard risks in an LGA that is identified in the Guidelines as a priority LGA will receive an additional 20 points in the assessment process. Refer to Appendix A in the Guidelines for the full list of priority LGAs.

Why are only bushfire, flood or tropical cyclone-related risks eligible?

Round One of PACP Local focuses on bushfires, tropical cyclones and floods as these hazards all cause major impacts on homes and infrastructure. Information from the Insurance Council of Australia indicates that floods, cyclones and bushfires are in the top five hazards for insurance loss. These hazards are also in the top five hazards for fatalities, according to PerilAUS (developed by Risk Frontiers), a national database of impacts and consequences of natural hazards.

Future rounds of the program may consider different or additional natural hazards.

My project addresses the impacts of flooding associated with tropical cyclones. Is this eligible?

Yes. You are eligible to apply if your project addresses flooding associated with tropical cyclones.

Can my project cover multiple hazards?

Your project can cover one or more of bushfire, flood and tropical cyclone (and tropical cyclone related flooding) hazards. Your response to relevant application questions and the assessment criteria (1a and 1b) will need to address each of the hazards you intend to cover. More information on how to address the assessment criteria can be found at <https://nema.gov.au/programs/preparing-australia-program/preparing-australia-communities-program-local>

