



Australian Government

National Emergency
Management Agency

Submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding

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Consent option: Publish with name

Submitted by: Anglicare NSW South NSW West and ACT

Q1. What experience have you had with Commonwealth disaster funding support?

Anglicare NSW South NSW West & ACT was awarded a Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant \$1,589,675 in March 2022. This funding supports the following programs: Starting FRESH Batlow youth program, Financial Counselling, Early Years post disaster therapeutic service and Cobargo Resilience and Wellbeing hub.

Q2. How could Commonwealth funding support communities to reduce their disaster risk?

Invest ongoing funding into existing trusted NGOs that are embedded into their communities. This encourages collaboration with other external services for better outcomes for residents and communities. These trusted providers have an in-depth knowledge of their local communities and have established relationships with a broad range of services as well as state and local governments. They either are the go-to people or They know the go-to people and They are an incredibly valuable resource. They know how to navigate the service system and other supports, who to refer people to, who else can help locally, and They know how to be flexible and how to provide practical assistance to local people in times of disaster. There is a difference between Natural Disasters and man-made disasters. Yet both can impact a local community and Need a disaster response process. the community Preparedness holistic models Need to plan for both.

Q3. Please describe your understanding of Commonwealth disaster funding processes.

Wait for an announcement by Government that there is a grant available; download grant information and selection criteria; formulate a targeted response based on known needs in the local community; submit grant application and await outcome. This process does not assist with the immediate needs of communities in the direct aftermath of a disaster.

Q4. Are the funding roles of the Commonwealth, states and territories, and local government, during disaster events clear?

For those communities directly impacted and traumatised, there is no structure or clear guidelines. There is much confusion around a) what funding is available b) the government agency responsible for the funding (as there have been so many departmental structural changes and name changes, and c) what funding is available. Communities need trusted NGOs on the ground to help them navigate the





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complex service system and to advocate on their behalf. In times of disaster people are in shock and they do not have the bandwidth to know where to turn for assistance.

Q5. Is there any further information you would like to provide?

It is vital that Federal, State and Local Government departments develop strategic plans with longer term funding options available to embed NGO services in communities. Once the funding ends, so much knowledge, intelligence and skill is lost and when another disaster occurs the community just has to start all over again from scratch. It is clear that natural disasters are on the increase so it is imperative that funding for disaster preparedness activities continue and that communities are empowered to be equipped and ready and to have action plans in place. In rural communities where local NGO agencies are known for their emergency relief where the first ones called upon for disaster relief. This was evident in the floods at Parkes. It would be beneficial to support rural communities preparedness models to include flipping "Emergency Relief" into "Disaster Response" and then back again when the response phase is over. It is often the most vulnerable who are impacted the most by Disasters. For example Caravan parks filled with low socioeconomic families alongside the riversides. It is also important that the ANZPAA interagency critical incidents common approach be socialised and interacted with each local community in their community preparedness so shared decisions are best understood in this space

