



Australian Government

National Emergency
Management Agency

Submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding

Response ID: IRCDF_882_12

Consent option: Publish Anonymously

Submitted by: Anonymous

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

Through my previous work within Local Government - fire and flood recovery funding and through personal experience in supporting family members who lost their homes during the fires.

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

Whilst I understand that land use planning is the responsibility of State and Territory Governments, I believe that there needs to be national leadership in this space due to the political impact at the state and local level in taking the responsible decisions. There should be NO further development permitted on sea level rise impact zones, flood prone or fire prone land. Those areas that are currently developed in these risk zones should be offered assistance to protect where possible, mitigate where practical and to relocate if the risk is severe. Commonwealth leadership could take the form of funding incentives to State and Territory Governments to drive changes in land use planning law and increased levels of mitigation and adaptation or relocation to address existing risks. We have the knowledge about the areas at risk and the predictions of the increasing occurrences and severity so action now will assist in reducing impacts of natural disasters as they unfold in the future. Primary producers need to be supported and impelled to move to sustainable practices. This may require additional agricultural subsidies which would be politically acceptable if it meant that Australia's food bowl production status was able to be upheld sustainably. Preparedness for drought, flood, locust and other pest incursions and biodiversity protection and enhancement are some of the critical elements to reducing disaster risk.

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

Disaster funding by the Commonwealth is driven by requests from State and Territory Governments. The process is often slow and reactive with difficult to navigate pathways for assistance for those most impacted on the ground. Funding does not acknowledge the long time line for recovery with many of those impacted not able to make cogent decisions about their needs due to the mental impact of the event/s. Ongoing support including for reconstruction, health and mental health is too short and needs to have a much longer horizon to be effective and to not leave people behind who are too traumatised to access the assistance they need, often until the funding and support windows close.



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

121 Marcus Clarke Street, (PO Box 133) Canberra ACT 2601
Level 10, 10 Felix Street, (PO Box 15084) Brisbane QLD 4000



Australian Government

National Emergency
Management Agency

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

No. most people do not understand the responsibilities of the various levels of government let alone during disaster events. There are several entities involved at the Commonwealth level that do not appear to be able to monitor the efficacy of their funding. State and Territory governments are often slow to respond and are reactive instead of proactive. Local government is left to pick up the pieces after development has been permitted and continues to be permitted in risk zones and the multiple impacts of disasters at levels previously not experienced nor predicted, destroy infrastructure, lives, livelihoods and mental health for years after the event/s.

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

It will take a wide range of good strategies and more importantly, political will to change the current trajectory, hopefully this report can drive the necessary change.

