



Australian Government

National Emergency
Management Agency

Submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding

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Consent option: Publish Anonymously

Submitted by: Anonymous

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

My responsibilities have been primarily around managing the emergency, collation of evidence and submission of DRFA claims

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

By analyzing the DRFA submissions to determine the greatest need for disaster resilience engagement in the community and providing funding support to that LGA to implement programs and improve related systems.

Supporting proactive work to identify our most at risk residents through a system of community profiling and boost targeted engagement in those spaces. The Vulnerable Persons in Emergencies Policy (DFFH) and similar in other States needs to be holistic and concise whereas at the moment it is disjointed and numerous products do not work together. Vulnerable facilities for example could be placed onto EM-COP (in Victoria) as a single multi agency accessible platform and intel updated annually by LGAs through Intel officers, this could form a restricted access GIS layer to be used for response, relief and recovery for example. This data could also inform community profiling.

Building back better is important for communities as it shows examples of best practice and provides sustainable benefits to all parties.

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

The funding process in my experience is overly complicated, onerous in terms of evidence required, resource intensive and lacking effective support. I took a staff member offline for 6 months to complete a claim that saw Council recoup less than 20k which was not a sustainable outcome. Having to analyze data to find several points of proof for each item is challenging. It would be good if there was a system that agencies could be provided with that allowed for easy data collection that was tailored to the claim process. Councils think twice before agreeing to make submissions as it is often not worth it financially and often provides no practical resilience building benefit to the community.

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

Yes, to those that understand where to look.





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

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback in this space, I can personally say that submitting a DRFA claim is honestly the most labor intensive, and frustrating task I have ever had to complete in my emergency management career.

A further example of frustration with the current system is the simple removal of debris post storm event. As a small Council area the one recovery effort our communities expected post significant storm event was for the excess green waste debris to be managed. Councils with a Council owned facility for the management of waste were able to offer residents free green waste drop off as this was claimable under DRFA however where a third party was involved such as a transfer station with contracts for removal of the waste it was not funded. To provide this drop off service to the community would have cost our Council a lot of money and was not approved post event.

