



Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) – National advisory

Clean-up and debris removal

DRFA national advisories provide additional information to support state, territory and local government recovery practitioners to plan for and deliver specific types/forms of relief and recovery assistance to disaster-affected communities. Where appropriate they include advice on DRFA eligible activities and evidentiary requirements for audit, assurance and claiming purposes. National advisories may be updated from time to time.

Context and key points

The intent of this paper is to provide guidance on the eligibility and evidentiary requirements for expenditure relating to debris removal and clean-up (debris removal) activities under the DRFA Determination 2018 (DRFA 2018), and examples of methodologies available to demonstrate compliance with these requirements.

This advisory provides guidance on using a cost apportionment approach to claim debris removal costs. This methodology enables debris removal expenditure of an area to be claimed against the usage of that area. It was developed in recognition of the challenge that exists in meeting the evidentiary requirements for debris removal activities under the DRFA 2018.

Identified challenges in meeting the evidentiary requirements include:

- it is difficult to evidence that an item of debris was caused by an *eligible disaster*. For example, debris removed from a residential property or essential public asset may have existed prior to the disaster event;
- debris is often collated into central areas prior to collection, resulting in difficulty in evidencing how the debris relates to a residential property or an essential public asset;
- debris is often collated when transported to disposal site, resulting in difficulty in allocating disposal fees to DRFA 2018 categories;
- it is difficult to evidence how an item of debris directly related to an eligible activity. For example, that a fallen tree was in the immediate vicinity of a residential property;
- contractor information (i.e. invoices) and Council payroll information is often insufficiently detailed to be able to draw a direct connection from the information to an eligible activity; and
- a single debris clean up activity may span multiple DRFA 2018 categories. For example, clean up of green waste in a residential area might be undertaken on roads and public paths as well as on residential properties by the same contractor at the same time.



Relevant DRFA Category and clause

Following an *eligible disaster*, states and territories may claim *state expenditure* relating to a range of debris removal activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the following expenditure:

DRFA 2018 Category	Intent	Example expenditure
4.2.2 d) demolition or rebuilding to restore housing to a habitable condition	Debris removal is intended to support demolition and rebuilding an individual's residential home to restore to a safe, habitable and secure condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of disaster damaged related building materials and debris.• Preparing the residential block for the purpose of rebuilding.• Removal of rebuilding related debris.
4.2.2 e) removal of debris from residential properties to make them safe and habitable	Debris removal from residential properties activities is intended to help individuals with the removal of disaster related debris from their home to make it safe and habitable, and therefore preventing displacement. For large private land holdings, or residences within the land holding of a primary production enterprise, debris removal for residential properties only includes the area in the immediate vicinity of the residential property (i.e. the residential block).*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of fallen trees and green waste.• Removal of flood related debris (such as mud).• Removal of bushfire related debris (fire damaged structures, trees etc.).• Removal of storm related debris (debris blown into the proximity of residential properties).• Removal of hazardous material (such as asbestos).• Removal of septic waste.• Removal of disaster damage related building material debris (such as tiles, bricks, and broken glass).
4.2.2 f) and 4.3.2 a) extraordinary counter disaster operations	Debris removal intended to assist in protecting individuals' residential properties to ensure residents can return home, or the general public to ensure public health and safety in public areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cleaning up debris that resulted from an eligible counter disaster operations activity.
4.3.2 b) emergency works for essential public assets	Debris removal is intended to temporarily restore an essential public asset to enable it to operate/be operated at an acceptable level of efficiency to support the immediate recovery of a community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of fallen trees and green waste.• Removal of flood related debris (such as mud).



4.3.2 c) immediate reconstruction works for essential public assets	Note that debris clean up may only be claimed under 4.3.2 c) where there are other immediate reconstruction works required to the asset in addition to debris removal (e.g. pot hole repair, patching, grading, draining repair).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of storm related debris (debris blown onto roads etc.). • Removal of hazardous material (such as asbestos). • Traffic management associated with the above.
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** Ineligible expenditure: This measure is not intended to cover non-essential debris removal activities occurring beyond the immediate vicinity of a residential property (i.e. the residential block). For example, where debris removal is required from a rural block, costs to remove debris beyond the immediate vicinity of the residential property (e.g. 10 metres from the house) but within the rural block would not be eligible.*

In addition to the above, debris removal activities may be included in Category C community recovery packages for regions severely affected by an *eligible disaster* or Category D packages in circumstances, which, in the opinion of the *Commonwealth* (Australian Government), are exceptional.

Evidentiary requirements

There are two approaches to meeting the evidentiary requirements for debris removal.

These options have been developed to:

- reduce the administrative burden of evidencing debris clean up following an *eligible disaster*
- reduce uncertainty regarding what will be considered sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of *State Assurance Activities and Commonwealth Assurance Activities* under the DRFA 2018; and
- provide additional flexibility in the methods available to states and territories to demonstrate the eligibility of debris clean-up activities.

Option 1: Cost apportionment methodology: all eligible debris clean up expenditure is allocated across DRFA 2018 categories based on the use type of land within the area affected by the *eligible disaster* (e.g. residential properties, business, primary production, public infrastructure). It may be more efficient to use this methodology in the event of a disaster that has impacted on a large number of homes; OR

Option 2: Standard evidence methodology: evidence is kept for each individual activity against each relevant DRFA category claimed to support eligibility under the DRFA 2018. In the case of an event that impacts a smaller number of homes it may be more efficient to use this methodology.

A state or territory must select **one** of these options for each *eligible event* and apply the methodology consistently for the entirety of that *eligible event*.

Overview of cost apportionment methodology

The cost apportionment methodology involves the use of state or territory land use data to apportion debris removal costs across appropriate land use categories and subsequently allocate costs to eligible DRFA 2018 subcategories. The following table provides examples of the types of



evidence that can be provided by states and territories when using this methodology to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the DRFA 2018:

DRFA 2018 requirement	Evidentiary requirement	Example evidence
<i>State expenditure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All expenditure must meet the definition of <i>state expenditure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contractor/supplier invoices that detail the nature of work carried out, the Local Government Area (LGA) the work was undertaken in, and when the work was undertaken.Contracts that detail the scope of works carried out (where insufficient detail is included within invoices).For Category B debris removal measures associated with essential public assets i.e. 4.3.2 b) and 4.3.2 c).<ul style="list-style-type: none">Timesheets for internal salaries and wages that includes the hours worked by each employee, the nature of the work carried out, the LGA the work was undertaken in, when the work was undertaken, and the applicable salary classification/award for the employee. It is also expected that evidence of review and approval of timesheets is available.For other Category A/B debris removal measures associated with demolition and rebuilding and counter disaster operations i.e. 4.2.2 d), 4.2.2 f) and 4.3.2 a).<ul style="list-style-type: none">Timesheets for internal salaries and wages that includes the extraordinary (i.e. overtime) hours worked by each employee, the nature of the work carried out, the LGA the work was undertaken in, when the work was undertaken, and the applicable salary classification/award for the employee. It is also expected that evidence of review and approval of timesheets is available.It is considered unlikely insurance will apply to debris clean up. However, consistent with the definition of <i>state expenditure</i> any costs recoverable through insurance (or any other means) must be excluded from the claim. Evidence must be available to support this.
<i>Connection to eligible event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Debris removal activities must have sufficient connection to an <i>eligible event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Flood mapping or burn scar data that demonstrates the area affected.Geotagged and date stamped photographs of damage (Note: These may be representative across the area of damage, and not for every individual item of debris across every individual location).



DRFA 2018 requirement	Evidentiary requirement	Example evidence
Connection to DRFA 2018 subcategory claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All expenditure must have a sufficient connection to the specific DRFA 2018 subcategory claimed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use data held by the state or territory planning agency that shows the LGA land by residential property, primary production, roads, parkland etc. Calculation that shows the allocation of total costs based on land use data.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of evidentiary requirements. It includes only those directly related to debris removal. All evidentiary requirements (e.g. relating to disaster activation) must continue to be complied with as per the DRFA 2018.

Examples of cost apportionment methodology

The following example shows how the cost apportionment methodology can be applied to apportion debris removal expenditure to land use categories and subsequently allocate them across applicable DRFA 2018 claim categories:

Land use	Land use %	Expenditure (%)	Claim category
Total debris clean-up cost		\$100,000	
Residential property	65	\$65,000	4.2.2 e) removal of debris from residential properties to make them safe and habitable.
Primary production	15	\$15,000	Ineligible unless covered under a relevant Category C/ D package.
Roads to enable operation at an acceptable level	10	\$10,000	4.3.2 b) emergency works for essential public assets.
Parkland etc.	10	\$10,000	Ineligible unless covered under a relevant Category C/ D package.
Total claimable cost	75	\$75,000	

The following table outlines the required supporting documentation for this example when using the cost apportionment methodology to support the eligibility of debris removal expenditure in accordance with the requirements of the DRFA 2018.



DRFA 2018 requirement	Example
<i>State expenditure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invoices from contractors that detail the works relating to debris clean up from flooding, the LGA the work was undertaken in, and when the work was undertaken. Council tip logs that show total volume of debris material disposed of, and the usual fees for this disposal (where these fees were waived for <i>eligible disaster</i> related debris).
Connection to <i>eligible event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood mapping data from the incident control room that shows the LGA directly impacted by flood waters.
Connection to category claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use data held by the state or territory planning agency that shows the LGA land by residential property, primary production, roads, parkland etc. Calculation that shows the allocation of total costs based on land use data.

Note: This is an example only that demonstrates the minimum level of evidence required. Other types of evidence may apply based on the state or territory’s response to an event and information capture practices.

Option 2: Standard evidence methodology

The standard evidence methodology requires evidence to be maintained for each residential property and essential public asset where debris removal activities have been performed. A key point with this methodology is that specific evidence must be available to demonstrate the connection between the expenditure incurred and the DRFA 2018 subcategory claimed (rather than the apportionment of costs by land use category). For example, states and territories must provide sufficient evidence when claiming ‘4.2.2 e) removal of debris from residential properties to make them safe and habitable’, to demonstrate that debris removal was undertaken in the immediate vicinity of a residential property.

The following table depicts examples of the types of evidence that can be provided by states and territories when using this methodology to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the DRFA 2018.

DRFA 2018 requirement	Evidentiary requirement	Example evidence
<i>State expenditure</i>	All expenditure must meet the definition of <i>state expenditure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor/supplier invoices that detail the nature of work carried out, the address the work was undertaken at, and when the work was undertaken. Contracts that detail the scope of works carried out (where insufficient detail is included within invoices).



DRFA 2018 requirement	Evidentiary requirement	Example evidence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timesheets for internal salaries and wages that includes the hours worked by each employee, the nature of the work carried out, the address the work was undertaken at, when the work was undertaken, and the applicable salary classification/award for the employee. It is also expected that evidence of review and approval of timesheets is available. Note: if overhead allocations have been applied to employee costs, evidence of the overhead methodology must be available.• It is considered unlikely insurance will apply to debris clean up. However, consistent with the definition of <i>state expenditure</i> any costs recoverable through insurance (or any other means) must be excluded from the claim. Evidence must be available to support this.
Connection to <i>eligible event</i>	Debris removal activities must have sufficient connection to an <i>eligible event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flood mapping or burn scar data, storm surge data, or weather reports that demonstrate the area affected.• Geotagged and date stamped photographs of damage (Note: These may be representative across the area of damage, and not for every individual item of debris across every individual location).• Damage inspection or hazard inspection reports of residential property or essential public assets.• Contractor/supplier invoices that specify the address of the works carried out (minimum street level).• Incident or call logs that relate to the reporting of the damage (e.g. State Emergency Service call centre incident log).• Application forms from property owners (if applicable).
Connection to DRFA 2018 subcategory claimed	All expenditure must have a sufficient connection to the specific DRFA 2018 subcategory claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Damage inspection or hazard inspection reports of residential property or essential public assets.• Contractor/supplier invoices that specify the address of the works carried out (minimum street level).• Incident or call logs that relate to the reporting of the damage (e.g. State Emergency Service call centre incident log).



DRFA 2018 requirement	Evidentiary requirement	Example evidence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application forms from property owners (if applicable).• Media releases/news articles etc. (e.g. notices regarding road closures).

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of evidentiary requirements. It includes only those directly related to debris removal. All evidentiary requirements (e.g. relating to disaster activation) must continue to be complied with per the DRFA 2018.