

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting

19 September 2022

An extraordinary meeting of National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting (NEMMM) was held in Brisbane on 19 September 2022 to coincide with the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR).

The NEMMM was Chaired by Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Commonwealth Minister for Emergency Management who acknowledged the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. The Chair welcomed Ms Mami Mizutori, Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Hon Kieran McAnulty, Minister for Emergency Management (New Zealand) to provide guest addresses. Both Ms Mizutori and Mr McAnulty highlighted the importance of collaborating to strengthen disaster risk reduction across the Asia Pacific region, in line with the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*.

Ministerial focus and key priorities

The Chair provided an update on the formation of the National Emergency Management Agency, including the appointment of Coordinator General, Mr Brendan Moon AM.

Members noted that the *Emergency Response Fund Act Amendment (Disaster Ready Fund) Bill 2022* was introduced into Parliament on 7 September 2022 to operationalise the Disaster Ready Fund, and that consultation with stakeholders will commence in October 2022. Members also expressed an interest in broader work to build all hazards resilience, to be discussed at a future NEMMM meeting.

Members received a briefing on a proposal for a Fire and Emergency Service Overseas Medal from the Hon Jaclyn Symes MP (Victoria). Members expressed support for the proposal which will be progressed by officials as appropriate outside the NEMMM.

Members were updated on preparedness for the upcoming High Risk Weather Season which would be a third consecutive La Nina season. Members noted the increasing reliance on the Australian Defence Force in a disaster context, and noted that this issue would be explored in further detail at the next NEMMM in November 2022.

Members noted that, following consideration by the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee in October 2022, a formal Progress Report on the Priority

Actions under the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* would be submitted for consideration at the next NEMMM before the end of 2022.

Members noted the completion of Australia's Sendai Midterm Review (Review) and its role at the APMCDRR. The Chair thanked states and territories for their contributions to the Review, which is an important milestone to capture Australia's progress toward reducing disaster risk by 2030. The Chair noted that the Review would be submitted to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction by 30 September 2022.

Members agreed to consider, out of session, a number of proposals to streamline processes under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, including off-the-shelf funding packages and a new process for activating Category C and D assistance. Members agreed to work collaboratively to progress further streamlining initiatives, including an initial program of work aimed at enhancing awareness and national consistency, improving administration and simplifying access to DRFA assistance for disaster affected individuals.

The Chair invited observer, Senator Tony Sheldon, the Australian Government Special Envoy for Disaster Recovery to discuss current flood recovery efforts. Senator Sheldon highlighted the importance of community led recovery and collaboration among jurisdictions.