

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018 (DRFA)

Information Session

3 Nov 2022

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Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

- Cost sharing arrangement between the State and Federal Governments
- Available to local government to relieve some (not all) of the financial burden after a natural disaster
- There are four categories of funding
 - Category A: Emergency assistance to individuals
 - Category B: Repair of damaged essential public assets
 - Category C: Clean up and restoration grants and Community Recovery Packages
 - Category D: Exceptional circumstance
- Cat C and D require the State to seek Prime Minister approval prior to any expenditure in most instances
- Cat A and Cat B are the most common sources of funding

DRFA Category A (for Individuals)

- Category A measure is one or more of the following forms of emergency assistance for individuals:
 - Emergency food, clothing or temporary accommodation
 - Repair or replacement of essential items of furniture and personal effects
 - Essential repairs to housing, including temporary repairs and repairs necessary to restore housing to a habitable condition
 - Demolition or rebuilding to restore housing to a habitable condition
 - Removal of debris from residential properties to make safe and habitable
 - Removal of green waste from residential properties where volume is significantly greater than normal green waste collection due to event
 - Extraordinary counter disaster operations for the benefit of an affected individual
 - Personal and financial counselling
 - The employment of a Community Recovery Officer.

DRFA Category B (for Essential Public Assets)

- Category B measures is as follows:
 - Counter disaster operations for the protection of the general public
 - Emergency works for essential public assets (defined by the state as an asset which must be transport or public infrastructure asset that is an integral part of state/local infrastructure and normal functioning of a community)
 - Examples of Essential Public Assets – roads (only if owned by Council), footpaths beside roads, nature strips beside roads, bridges
 - Immediate reconstruction works for essential public assets
 - Essential public assets reconstruction works with estimated and State approved reconstruction costs
 - And less commonly -
 - A range of Concessional interest rate loan to small businesses or primary producers, needy individuals and non for profit organisations whose assets have been significantly damaged or have significant income loss as a direct result of disaster (offered at State level)
 - A range of interest rate subsidies, grants and freight subsidies for small business, primary producers, needy individuals and not for profit organisations.

DRFA Categories C and D

- Category C measure is a community recovery package that is intended to support a holistic approach to recovery of regions, communities and sectors severely affected by a disaster and may comprise of one or more of the following:
 - Community Recovery Fund to assist to restore social networks, community functioning and community facilities. Such a Fund is aimed at community recovery, community development and community capacity building. Administered by the State.
 - Recovery grants for small businesses and non-for-profit organisations
 - Recovery grants for primary producers.
- Category D measure is an act of relief or recovery carried out to alleviate distress or damage in circumstances which are, in the opinion of the Commonwealth, exceptional. The Prime Minister has to approve.

DRFA

- Most of Council's claims will be under Cat A and B
- There are time limits for each
 - Cat A activity is within 3 months of date of disaster (but may be extended)
 - Cat B is within 3 months (but may be extended) but up to 24 months
- Can apply for an extension of time for Cat A and Cat B. Time extensions maybe required due to scarce resources, access issues or another event impacting the same location such as landslip
- Any works covered by a third party are not eligible e.g. insurance

DRFA Ineligible Items

- Items that are ineligible under DRFA include:
 - Environmental assets including natural vegetation, waterways, rivers, beaches, forests or undeveloped land
 - Fencing except where related to protection of an essential public asset
 - Fire trails
 - Engineered erosion control structures that only protect open space or private land
 - Costs incurred in restoring or replacing an asset to a more disaster resilient level (betterment) or higher level of service (enhancement), unless otherwise agreed by the State and Commonwealth Governments
 - Restoration work carried out on ineligible essential public assets. These assets include:
 - Sporting, recreational or community facilities (for example, playgrounds and associated facilities, fencing, walking trails, wave energy dissipation structures and piers)
 - Religious establishments (for example, churches, temples and mosques)
 - Memorials

DRFA Ineligible Items

- Items that are ineligible under DRFA include:
 - Restoration or rehabilitation of natural ecosystems
 - Pedestrian facilities other than pedestrian grade separation structures and facilities that are shared cycleways and within the road corridor
 - Restoration of damage located in caravan parks, council-owned vehicles, garden beds, shrubs, trees and grasslands near riverbeds
 - Staff counselling
 - Training where not directly related to conducting DRFA eligible activities
 - Watering of plants
 - Weed control
 - Anything where there is a third party funding source such as insurance.

DRFA Ineligible Items

- **Betterment** is the restoration and replacement of an essential asset to a more disaster resilient standard than its pre-disaster standard,
- Betterment works are not funded under Category B.
- Detailed Victorian Government Guidelines
 - <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/natural-disaster-financial-assistance/events-post-1-november-2018>

DRFA

- All expenditure incurred by Council must be captured including works or programs that may be considered ineligible
- Council's program of works will be scrutinised by the State and Commonwealth
- Paper trail and evidence will be audited
- Lack of documentation may result in Council not being reimbursed or only receiving partial payment
- There may be other sources of funding Council can access such as Council Support Fund
- Councils must follow their own Procurement Policies as this will be audited

Tips and Tricks

- New Storm Recovery Directorate created
- Staffed with 35 dedicated team members who were recruited specifically to these roles (mostly from within Council)
- 29 FTE Funded from Council Recovery Fund. 6 FTE funded through DRFA
- DRFA funded positions require detailed Position Descriptions and pre-approval from DRFA assessor.

RECOVERY DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE

6 April 2022

DIRECTOR RECOVERY
Jane Sinnamon

Recovery Secretariat
Stephanie Reynolds

Recovery Secretariat
Administration
Kristal Johnson

MANAGER RECOVERY
SUPPORT
Belinda Arnott

MANAGER BUILT & NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT
Alison Fogarty

Manager Community Recovery
Guy Masters

RECOVERY FINANCE

Snr Financial Accountant -
Penni Thomas

Finance Administration -
Mel Ricou

RECOVERY FINANCE

Communication &
Engagement Coordinator
- Joanne Hammond

Recovery Media &
Communications Officer
Derek Schlennstedt

REPORTING & EVALUATION

EO Evaluation & Reporting
-David Booth

Data Management Officer-
Zac Zorn

RECOVERY PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Program Support
Officer
Hannah Grant

Public Infrastructure
Rehabilitation Officer
Josh Sanders

RECOVERY ENVIRONMENT

Biodiversity
Rehabilitation Officer
Scott Allen

Tree Clean-up
Coordinator
Ben O'Leary

RECOVERY PLANNING

Planning & Rebuilding
Coordinator - Marcella
Simone

Senior Strategic
Planner -
Paula Newman

Statutory Planning
Officer -
Viesha Lalic

Statutory Planning
Officer -
Thushari Wollbrandt

Planning
Administration -
Samantha Duddridge

RECOVERY BUSINESS & TOURISM – Operating out of Economic Development

Business & Tourism
Destination Coordinator
- Alex Hill

Tourism & Destination
Officer - Amanda Bunn

Business Recovery
Officer -
Sujayne Downie

Business Recovery
Officer -
Leila Tangestani

Business Recovery
Officer -
Melissa Bennett-
Monteiro

CULTURAL RECOVERY - Operating out of Community Wellbeing

Cultural Recovery
Coordinator- vacant

RECOVERY COMMUNITIES

Community Recovery
Committee Coordinator
Tracey Reid

Community Recovery
Coordinator
Linda Snell

Recovery Program
Officer -
Jess Adams

Recovery Program
Officer -
Deb Sargentson

RECOVERY CENTRES

Recovery Centre
Coordinator - Sue Jack

Recovery Case
Support Officer – Lee
Clunes

Recovery Case Support
Officer – Lyra
Lautenbach

Recovery Case Support
Officer – Kay
Henderson

CSF funded = 29 Full time equivalent (FTE)

DRFA Cat A funded = 4 FTE

DRFA Cat B funded = 2 FTE

Tips and Tricks

- Use Adobe Acrobat to annotate photos and invoices. Manual annotation can be hard to read and is time consuming. Correct and clear annotation is essential

[Examples of invoices\Annotated invoice 13312 Ace Tree 140721_Cat A Claim_invoice_July works.pdf](#)

- If some costs on an invoice are not being claimed (such as being ineligible or Cat A and Cat B costs on one invoice), prepare a spreadsheet for that invoice alone showing how the amount claimed is being calculated.

[Examples of invoices\13312 invoice reconciliation.jpg](#)

- Keep your own spreadsheet of claims submitted. DRFA claims are given random codes like MC93CD4E. We (very imaginatively) started at 1 and went on from there so it was easy to identify the claims internally, and our spreadsheet showed which DRFA claim code was relevant to each claim.

– For example

- Claim 1 \$445,000 MC93CD4E
- Claim 2 \$499,000 MC93AB5F etc

Tips and Tricks (continued)

- Submit regular claims up to \$500,000 as it shows you are making progress and keeping on top of claims.
- Submit Cat A and Cat B claims separately for ease of assessment – do everything you can to make the assessor's job easier .
- Keep a reconciliation of all costs associated with the event, including those which are not being claimed. Reasons might be that you don't have any evidence, work might have been done in a park etc. Don't claim things you know aren't eligible – this just wastes the assessor's time.

[Full reconciliation 31 Mar 2022.xlsx](#)

- Maintain regular contact with the assessor – that relationship is key to a successful claims process

Tips and Tricks (continued)

- Keep track of your claims progress and your progress in reviewing invoices.

[Examples of invoices\Invoice status.jpg](#)

- Document your processes so when the next event comes around the lessons learnt are not lost because staff have moved on

Questions?