



Australian Government



FACTSHEET: Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

Joint Australian - New South Wales government assistance

Cessnock NSW Bushfires – 14 December 2023 – V1

Please note the information in this factsheet is current as at 15 December 2023 and may change

The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) is a jointly funded program between the Australian Government and state and territory (state) governments, through which the Australian Government provides financial assistance to support state governments with disaster recovery costs. Eligible costs include assistance measures for individuals and families, businesses, primary producers, non-profit organisations, and local and state governments.

Under these arrangements, state governments determine what assistance measures will be activated, and the areas in which they will be made available. The Australian Government may then reimburse state governments for up to 75 per cent of these costs. State governments are responsible for administering the DRFA assistance measures.

DRFA ACTIVATED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

In response to the bushfires, DRFA assistance has been activated in one (1) **local government area**:

Cessnock

DRFA ASSISTANCE MEASURES (as activated by the NSW Government)

Assistance for individuals

Immediate assistance: This assistance is intended to meet the essential emergency needs of people who are directly affected by the disaster and have no other means of meeting their immediate needs (such as evacuees who are unable to access their personal finances or arrange alternative forms of assistance). The assistance may be provided during and in the days after the disaster. Assistance is provided through in-kind direct material aid e.g. emergency accommodation or small cash payments to purchase essential items. Immediate assistance is generally provided from evacuation or recovery centres.

Grants for essential household contents: These grants will assist with the cost of replacing household items essential to maintaining a basic standard of living. Examples of essential household contents include bedding, furniture, clothing, and essential electrical items (e.g. refrigerator, washing machine, stove). These grants assist low-income residents, not covered by insurance, who have no other means of restoring their homes to a safe and habitable condition following the disaster event. Grants are subject to income and assets testing. The amount of assistance provided depends on the assessed needs of the affected household and the number and type of items that have been damaged.

Grants for essential structural repairs to homes: These grants provide a contribution toward essential structural repairs to low income homeowners who have no other means of restoring their homes to a safe and habitable condition following the disaster event, and who are not covered by insurance. Grants are subject to income and assets testing. The amount of assistance provided depends on an assessment of structural repairs required and the number of occupants in the home.

- State administering agency: NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Enquiry contact: Service NSW on 13 77 88



Assistance for small businesses, primary producers, and non-profit organisations

Concessional interest rate loans (direct damage) to small businesses and primary producers: Loans of up to \$130,000 at a fixed concessional interest rate may be available to small businesses and primary producers (subject to certain eligibility criteria) that have been directly impacted by a disaster. These loans may be used to meet carry-on requirements or to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance.

- State administering agency: NSW Rural Assistance Authority
- Enquiry contact: NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593

Concessional interest rate loans (direct damage) and grants to non-profit organisations:

Assistance to sporting and recreation clubs: A special scheme is available to assist sporting and recreation clubs in meeting the costs of restoration of essential club facilities that have been damaged or destroyed. The assistance is only made available to clubs that do not have the financial capacity to meet restoration costs from their own resources, and who are unable to obtain assistance through normal channels, but that have the capacity to repay any loan that may be granted. The maximum assistance available is \$12,000, including a grant of up to \$2,000 and the balance by way of repayable advance with interest.

- State administering agency: NSW Treasury for grant assistance
- Enquiry contact: NSW Treasury via email at natural_disasters@treasury.nsw.gov.au

Loans to non-profit organisations: Loan assistance is available to voluntary non-profit organisations for the restoration of essential facilities that have been damaged or destroyed. Assistance is only available to those organisations that do not have the financial capacity to meet restoration costs from their own resources or insurance and are unable to obtain assistance through normal channels. Advances are subject to a maximum of \$25,000 at a concessional interest rate per annum.

- State administering agency: NSW Rural Assistance Authority for loan assistance
- Enquiry contact: NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.

Freight subsidies for primary producers: Transport freight subsidies of up to 50 per cent on the carriage of livestock and fodder, and 25 per cent on the carriage of fodder for dairy cattle, are available to help primary producers. The maximum subsidy available is \$15,000 per annum.

- State administering agency: NSW Rural Assistance Authority
- Enquiry contact: NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593

Assistance for state agencies and local councils

Counter disaster operations: This assistance helps state agencies and councils with the costs associated with delivering exceptional relief and recovery measures within impacted communities which go beyond the capacity of the state or local government. This may include activities to render damaged properties or threatened houses safe and habitable and certain fire fighting activities such as the construction of fire breaks to protect residential properties.

- State administering agency: NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Enquiry contact: NSW Reconstruction Authority on 9212 9200.

Restoration of essential public assets: This measure provides financial assistance to help with the costs of restoring or repairing eligible essential public assets damaged as a direct result of a disaster to their pre-disaster standard.

- State administering agency: Transport for NSW and Public Works Advisory
- Enquiry contact:
 - For assistance to restore public roads, road infrastructure and bridges, councils should contact their regional representatives in Transport for NSW
 - For assistance to restore other essential public assets, councils should contact their regional representatives in Public Works Advisory.



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Other assistance

The NSW Government may also claim costs associated with certain other disaster assistance measures undertaken by state agencies and councils including the establishment and operation of evacuation and recovery centres, personal and financial counselling services, engagement of community recovery officers and debris removal from residential properties.