

## State Recovery Controller Communique # 6

After one week in the job the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Community Recovery Officers (CRO) are already making a big difference on the ground. Based at the Community Recovery Hubs in Geraldton, Kalbarri, Northampton and Morawa, you will also find them out and about in the community chatting with people and providing assistance. CRO Samantha Edwards attended the Chapman Valley Show over the weekend, along with Red Cross and crew from the State Recovery Team. She met with plenty of community members to hear their experiences, listen to their concerns, and setup grant application appointments. Look out for Samantha's friendly face along with the Recovery Team will at this Saturday's annual Northampton Show.

The District Recovery Coordination Group met on Thursday 2 September and the State Recovery Coordination Group has moved from fortnightly to monthly, with the next meeting scheduled for 23 September 2021.

- ❖ **Primary Producer Recovery Support** – Applications are open for the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Primary Producer Recovery Grant\*. DPIRD is promoting the grant through its channels and networks. Applications can be submitted via the DPIRD website. DPIRD is working with the Grower Group Alliance and Regional Development Commissions to identify issues that have emerged from the impacts of TC Seroja on agribusinesses and primary industries.
- ❖ **Small Business Clean-up Support** – The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) continues to provide remote business support to affected small businesses. Details of the Small Business Recovery Grant\* are close to being finalised. SBDC are currently accepting expression of interests for the grant via their website.
- ❖ **Clean-up Assistance Program for Uninsured Residents**  
The Department of Fire and Emergency Services recently met with some of the local governments CEOs to discuss a proposed approach for this clean-up program. The feedback received is currently being incorporated, including developing options for the service delivery of the program.
- ❖ **Clean-up Assistance for Insured Residents**  
Insured residential property owners are eligible for assistance with their property clean-up and repairs through the Recovery and Resilience Recovery Grant Program. The Recovery Grant reimburses underinsured homeowners who incurred costs because their insurance policy did not cover the total cost of repair works. The Resilience Grant reimburses homeowners for building works not covered by their insurance policy to improve the resilience of their property against future cyclones. Expressions of interest are currently open for insured residents requesting assistance with clean-up via [www.emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery](http://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery).
- ❖ **Heritage and Cultural Asset Clean-up and Restoration Support**  
The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) are finalising the details of the Cultural and Heritage Asset Clean-up and Repair Grant Program. The program supports the

clean-up and repair of eligible local and State heritage places including any identified Aboriginal Heritage place. DPLH are currently accepting registrations of interest in the program via their website.

- ❖ **Insurance matters** – Last week the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) and insurance company representatives travelled through the Mid-West to meet with community members to hear the personal stories of insurance issues being experienced.
- ❖ **Welfare Support** – The recruitment process for staff to deliver the Community Welfare and Outreach Program\* is currently underway. There are plans for positions within Red Cross and WA Country Health to be advertised shortly. The Department of Communities Aboriginal Liaison Officer has commenced in the Mid-West region and is working closely with Aboriginal communities to enable their recovery efforts and delivery resilience programs.

The Department of Communities and Red Cross are providing welfare support in the regions through the hubs in Northampton, Kalbarri and Morawa as well as the mobile outreach. The welfare team are also located in Mingenew on Mondays at the Community Resource Centre. Additionally, Department of Communities continue to administer Cat 3 and Cat 4 Financial Assistance for eligible applicants.

A reminder that community members experiencing personal hardship or distress as a direct result of the cyclone can phone the Department of Communities' Disaster Response Hotline on **1800 032 965**.

- ❖ **Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund** – On 30 August 2021 the Perth Lord Mayor announced further funding has been made available to owner/occupiers who suffered major damage to their homes greater than \$100,000. Additionally, applications for \$5000 are now being accepted for owners where their second home or investment property was damaged.
- ❖ **Public Information** – There is a focus on promoting the financial assistance available through paid advertising in local papers and newsletters. Last week the State Recovery Controller spoke with ABC Mid-West radio about the commencement of the Community Recovery Officers and how they will work directly with their local community members. The DFES Cyclone Seroja Facebook Group has reached 942 members and growing by the day. A DFES story about mental wellbeing from a Kalbarri resident and professional paddleboarder reached 8000 people, the most viewed and engaging post to date.

For all the latest State Recovery information including all the available financial assistance please visit [emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery).

Melissa Pexton – DFES Cyclone Seroja State Recovery Controller

*\* Funded by the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.*