

## State Recovery Controller Communique # 7

The wellbeing of community and those working in the recovery space are top of mind for the Governor-General - His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC. I joined him and his wife Her Excellency Linda Hurley on a video call last week, along with the Kalbarri Community Recovery Officer and two proactive community members who established the Northampton Cyclone Response Committee. His Excellency enquired about the affected community and how they are recovering, as well as acknowledging the work of local efforts in the recovery journey. Their Excellencies passed on a message of hope and want the community to know they are not forgotten.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services Community Recovery Officers have hit the ground running and have been busy attending community events, meeting community members to share stories and information, and providing support to the Local Recovery Coordination Groups. In Geraldton this week I met with the recently appointed Department of Communities Aboriginal Liaison Officer who is doing some great work with impacted Aboriginal communities.

The State Recovery Coordination Group met on Thursday 23 September and the District Recovery Coordination Group is scheduled to meet on Thursday 30 September.

- ❖ **Primary Producer Recovery Support** – The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) are administering the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Primary Producer Recovery Grant\*. Applications can be submitted via the DPIRD website. In addition, DPIRD is also administering the DRFA assistance measures for primary producers\* which includes grants for assistance with freight costs, replacing and restoring fencing to preserve public safety, as well as obtaining professional advice. DPIRD continues to work 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 for Uninsured Residents\***  
The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is working with the local governments who have requested clean-up assistance for their uninsured residents. Initial feedback from local governments has led to further considerations on how this will be implemented.
- ❖ **Clean-up Assistance for Insured Residents**  
Insured residential property owners are eligible for assistance with their property clean-up, repairs and resilience building activities through the Recovery and Resilience Recovery Grants Program\*. Residents who submitted an expression of interest in the program have been contacted by the Recovery and Resilience Grants Team who are providing support through the

application process. Expressions of interest for this program can be submitted via: [emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery](https://emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery).

❖ **Heritage and Cultural Asset Clean-up and Restoration Support**

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) has released Cyclone Seroja Heritage and Cultural Assets Clean-up and Repair Grant Program\* guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions. The program supports the clean-up and repair of eligible local and State heritage places including any identified Aboriginal Heritage place. Registrations of interest have now been transferred to the grant platform and public promotion of the grant program will commence shortly. Expressions of interest remain open and can be submitted via: [emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery](https://emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery).

- ❖ **Welfare Support** – The recruitment process for Department of Communities and Red Cross staff to deliver the Community Welfare and Outreach Program\* is in progress. The Department of Communities have been working in conjunction with DFES and Red Cross to ensure joint attendance at all regional community and agricultural shows to meet affected residents and to discuss and showcase the supports available to them. 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. Additionally, Department of Communities continue to administer Cat 3 and Cat 4 Financial Assistance for eligible applicants.

❖ **Temporary Accommodation for Workers**

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services continues to work with the local governments to resolve the complex issue of temporary accommodation for workers in the impacted areas. A proposal is being developed that deals with, and acknowledges, the individual challenges and requirements of each local government.

- ❖ **Local Government** – The Shire of Mingenew, Shire of Morawa, and the City of Greater Geraldton have established their Local Recovery Coordination Groups. These groups will provide support for the recovery processes by assessing the consequences of the event and coordinating recovery activities to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate the social, built, economic and natural environments within their communities.

- ❖ **Public Information** – The Community Recovery Officers are providing one-to-one recovery information to community members. The [emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery](https://emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery) website continues to be the online portal for all recovery information. The DFES Cyclone Seroja Facebook Group now has over 950 members and with a focus on regular recovery updates and community initiatives from the State Recovery Controller which is resulting in great engagement. Communication strategies have been developed for each of the DRFA grant programs with a focus on providing relevant on-the-ground communications for stakeholders and community.

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

Melissa Pexton – DFES Cyclone Seroja State Recovery Controller

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