

State Recovery Controller Communique # 3

The current wet weather experienced by parts of the State have been an additional challenge for many people already going through a tough time. This is something I am very cognisant of and it has been a focus of our Mid-West public information messaging this week. Through various channels, people were provided with practical information about how to prepare their tarped property and the support available if they are experiencing anxiety and stress.

Having visited the impacted communities over the past 12 weeks and witnessing the extent of damage, I would like to acknowledge the tenacity and resilience people have displayed during this very challenging time, and also remind everyone there is significant financial and welfare support available in person or over the phone.

As we all know there is a long way to go with recovery efforts. As the Chair of the State Recovery Coordination Group it is wonderful to see the linkages across State agencies in providing support to those who need it most. Today I heard the Department of Communities, Department of Education and the Red Cross are collaborating to deliver resilience programs to the cyclone affected primary and high school students. It is these types of programs that can make a real difference to stem the impacts on individuals over their lifetime

The District Recovery Coordination Group (DRCG) met on Thursday 10 July and the State Recovery Coordination Group (SRCG) met on Thursday 17 July. Both groups have now moved to meeting fortnightly on alternating Thursdays. Below is a snapshot of the discussions about current and emerging recovery matters, coordination of recovery efforts and progress updates.

- **Insurance matters** – This week I met with a number of insurance companies to discuss the key insurance issues that have been identified by the local governments and affected residents. The Insurance Council of Australia is currently planning insurance information sessions in the affected regions. These sessions, once confirmed, will enable claimants to meet with an insurance representative to provide process and timeline information with the aim to alleviate the stress of the claim process.
- **Accommodation** – Procurement of temporary accommodation for residents is progressing and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services continues to work through the issues to ensure the solutions are tailored and fit-for purpose for residents needing the accommodation.
- **Community Recovery Officers** – The recruitment process of four Department of Fire and Emergency Services Community Recovery Officers (CRO) is well underway with interviews conducted virtually and in person this week. Work is also being done in securing office space for the four hubs the CROs will be based at.

- **Welfare Support** – The Department of Communities and Red Cross continue to provide welfare support in the regions through the hubs in Northampton, Kalbarri and Morawa as well as the mobile outreach. The welfare team are now located in Mingenew on Mondays at the Community Resource Centre.
- **Local Governments** – I commend the Shire of Northampton for the community event ‘Rollova Seroja’ which was a great initiative for the community to come together and support each other through challenging times. It is a wonderful example of building resilience and recovering together.
- **Roads** – Main Roads is providing roadside clean-up of debris for the Shire of Morawa. This support is welcome news and may be extended to other smaller Shires who really need the help with roadside clean-up.
- **Tourism** – A dedicated State Government Tourism Officer has commenced this week with Tourism WA to work directly with stakeholders in the affected regions. Tourism plays a major role in the economy of the region and this resource will support tourism operators to rebuild and thrive again.
- **Data of damaged infrastructure** – The Department of Fire and Emergency Services continues to work directly with agencies and industry bodies to gain an accurate understanding of the damage to infrastructure across the 16 local government areas. The sharing of information between agencies is critical to inform decision making for the short, medium and long terms recovery needs of the impacted communities.
- **Financial Assistance** – Commonwealth and State financial assistance remains available to people impacted by Cyclone Seroja. Full details of assistance can be found at www.emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery
- **Public Information** – Accurate and timely recovery information for the affected community’s is being regularly published on www.emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery, the DFES Cyclone Seroja Facebook group, and hardcopy flyers are being provided on the ground. We encourage agencies, local governments and community groups to post recovery information in the DFES Cyclone Seroja Facebook group.

For State Recovery information, including financial assistance available, please visit emergency.wa.gov.au/recovery or join the **DFES Cyclone Seroja Recovery Facebook Group**.

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**.

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