



State Recovery Coordination Group Partnership Forum Communiqué – 16 June 2021

A wide range of matters across the gamut of recovery were discussed at the latest meeting of the State Recovery Coordination Group (SRCG) Partnership Forum held on Wednesday 16 June. Collaboration between local government authorities, State agencies not-for-profits and other interest groups to progress community recovery remains a unified purpose for the Forum.

Feedback from the City of Swan and Shire of Mundaring indicated that the key issues faced by the two local governments include housing and the rebuilding of homes, Bushfire Attack Level assessments, and building and planning processes. Issues are also starting to emerge regarding the economic impacts on small businesses and small trade. There was discussion around whether there is an opportunity to request Dr Margaret Moreton, an experienced practitioner in community resilience and recovery, to assist with gaining a better understanding of the business impacts. Her offer to conduct a scoping study and make recommendations will be tabled at the respective local government Social Recovery subcommittees.

Additionally, the Department of Communities recovery team were commended on their work forging links and relationships with the local community to provide much needed support.

With regards to the residential clean-up program, steady progress has been made despite the challenging weather of late. At the time of the meeting, 44 properties had been cleared out of the 137 registered (three properties have been withdrawn as the residents have reported that they no longer need assistance). Contractors anticipate demolition activities will be complete towards the end of August.

Western Power are also progressing with recovery efforts in the area. They have set up a recovery depot in Gidgegannup with more than 200 personnel on site every day in order to complete the construction works and enhance the network.

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) provided some useful feedback from its members. Further discussion will take place between the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the ICA on the clean-up completion dates for the insured properties to assist in the ICA in managing enquiries from members.

Members of the Forum were advised that 80 per cent, or approximately \$13 million, of the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund has now been disbursed to people impacted by the Wooroloo bushfire. The total amount raised speaks to the generosity of Western Australians and their willingness to help those in need.

GRAF Australia Limited have also been very generous and have donated 35 water tanks with a 1,000 litre capacity. As a result, the City of Swan are putting out a second round of offers for water tanks to the community, with priority going to community members living in temporary on-site accommodation without an additional water source.

One exciting enterprise on the horizon is a community landscaping and environmental forum, which State Recovery is working on with the Swan and Mundaring local governments. Set to take place in Gidgegannup on Saturday 31 July, the forum will provide information relating to bushfire property standards, establishing fire-wise gardens, cultural fire practices and aboriginal cultural heritage, and fauna and habitat restoration. Josh Byrnes, an industry expert and ABC tv personality has confirmed his availability to attend.



The Minister for Emergency Services, Hon. Reece Whitby MLA hosted a special housing roundtable on Monday 14 June to discuss the recovery of areas impacted by the Wooroloo Bushfire and Tropical Cyclone (TC) Seroja. Three guests from the roundtable, Mr John Gelavis from the Master Builders Association, Mr Aaron Sice from the Housing Industry Association and Mr Eamon Moore from the Construction Training Fund (CTF), were special guests at the June SRCG Partnership Forum and are keen to be involved and assist where needed. They are all now engaged in the SRCG Partnership Forum process.

News of another worthwhile initiative was brought to the forum by the CTF's Mr Eamon Moore. A special recovery package will be rolled out to help combat the skills and labour shortages affecting the building and construction industries, which has a flow on effect for recovery and rebuilding. The package is targeted to areas impacted by the Wooroloo Bushfire and TC Seroja, and includes financial incentives for contractors working in these areas to encourage more apprenticeships. Overall there will be an investment of \$2.5M to \$3M annually over the next two years to support training and aid recovery.

The next meeting of the SRCG Partnership Forum is scheduled for Wednesday 14 July 2021.