

2019/20 DRFAWA ELIGIBLE DISASTER PROCLAMATION NOTIFICATION

TROPICAL LOW AND ASSOCIATED FLOODING IN THE GASCOYNE AND PILBARA REGIONS (13 to 14 March 2020).

The above event has been proclaimed an *eligible disaster* under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, Western Australia (DRFAWA) on 2 April 2020, pursuant to clause 5.1 of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) (the *Arrangements 2018*), issued by the Commonwealth Government Department of Home Affairs. The State Government will provide financial assistance to those people who have been affected through joint State and Commonwealth disaster relief and recovery arrangements.

On 9 March 2020 the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) issued advice of a Tropical Low developing near the West Pilbara coast from 13 March 2020. During Friday 13 March 2020 this Tropical Low moved from near the Exmouth Gulf, southwards through the Gascoyne, bringing heavy rain and damaging winds to the area. Most of the rain fell in the Gascoyne Catchment area on Friday 13 March 2020.

BOM weather recordings from this event identified wind gusts exceeding 80 km/h at three (3) separate locations including a maximum of 102 km/h at Thevenard Island (off the coast of Onslow in the Pilbara region). Rainfall recordings exceeding 30mm within a 24-hour period were recorded at seven (7) locations including 70.0mm at Gascoyne Junction, 66.6mm at Lyons River Airstrip, and 62.2mm at Jimba Jimba in the Gascoyne region, with 65.4mm at Thevenard Island and 38.6mm at Onslow in the Pilbara region. The heavy rainfall resulted in areas of flooding across the Gascoyne and Pilbara regions.

Pursuant to subclause 1.1.1 of the *Arrangements 2018*, 'Flood' and 'Storm' are deemed to be an eligible *natural disaster* event.

For the purposes of the DRFAWA this event will be referred to as '***Tropical Low and Associated Flooding in the Gascoyne and Pilbara Regions (13-14 March 2020)***'.

DRFAWA is jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments and administered by the Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), with assistance from other agencies. Through DRFAWA, the Western Australian and Commonwealth Governments provide assistance to people who have suffered the direct impact of a proclaimed disaster event.

The Local Government districts currently subject to this proclamation are as follows:

Included on 16 March 2020

Upper Gascoyne

Included on 19 March 2020

Ashburton

If information becomes available that identifies other local government districts as potentially having been directly impacted by this disaster event, subject to further assessment these local government districts may, at a later date, be included in the affected area.

The eligible costs for this event are anticipated to be largely associated with the restoration and replacement of the road network infrastructure.

Assistance may be available for the following measures (*where appropriate*) typically covered by the DRFAWA:

- **For individuals and families** – Personal Hardship and Distress grants which are administered by the Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support Section). Potential measures include emergency food, accommodation, clothing, temporary living expenses, replacement of essential household contents and housing repairs to return housing to a habitable, safe and secure condition. **Note – some of these measures are subject to income and/or assets testing.**
- **For small businesses** – interest rate subsidies on ‘new’ loans approved by Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions (financial institutions).
- **For Primary Producers** – Assistance may be available toward freight costs, materials for boundary fences (***only where it is demonstrated that public safety is at risk***), professional advice grants and interest rate subsidies on ‘new’ loans approved by Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions. These *eligible measures* are administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Agriculture and Food (Rural Business and Development Group). **Note – Primary Producer Claims should be lodged before (2 October 2020).**
- **For Local Governments & State Government Agencies** – Clean-up costs and the restoration or replacement (to pre-disaster function) of *essential public assets* including local road damage. State road restoration is through Main Roads Western Australia. Only costs incurred that are ‘additional’ costs, and are directly related to the event, will be eligible for reimbursement. **Note - The allowable time limit for eligible claims expires on 30 June 2022.**

Claims in respect of any other *eligible measures* may also be considered.

It should be noted that assistance under the DRFAWA is not designed to supplant, or operate as a disincentive for self-help by way of commercial insurance.

Primary Contacts

Primary contacts for assistance/advice are:

- Department of Communities, Emergency Services (Child Protection and Family Support) by phone on 1800 032 965, or via website [here](#);
- Main Roads Western Australia regional offices for road infrastructure via website [here](#);
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Agriculture and Food) Rural Business Development Group, by phone on 1800 198 231 or via website [here](#); and
- Other enquiries may be directed to the Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services. Contact DRFAWA Administrators by phone on 9395 9973 or 9395 9341, or by email to drfawa@dfes.wa.gov.au

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