

FACT SHEET

Community Recovery Officer

Referenced in Section 4.2 and outlined in further detail in Schedule A, section 9, of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements – Western Australia (DRFA-WA).

The Community Recovery Officer is also defined in Section 1.1.1 of the DRFA-WA as:

“One twelve month full-time equivalent officer per eligible disaster employed by the State to work with affected communities to:

- *Identify recovery needs*
- *Assist in accessing relevant information and resources to develop community recovery programs, and*
- *Provide community capacity building as required”*

Description

In circumstances where a disaster meets Australian Government eligibility criteria, the WA Government may provide a temporary Community Recovery Officer (CRO), or a full-time equivalent period of up to 12 months, to work with the disaster-affected community.

The provision of CRO is reserved for disasters where the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements – Western Australia (DRFA-WA) administrators are satisfied that the Australian Government’s criteria have been met, that there is a need to employ such an officer, and their functions cannot be completed by existing local government and community services sector personnel in the disaster-affected community.

Role Summary

The role of CRO is to support community recovery from disasters by working with the community to identify recovery needs, assist in accessing information and resources to develop local recovery programs and provide community capacity building as required. Potential activities which may be undertaken by the CRO are:

- Liaison between state and local recovery coordination
- Assess, in consultation with affected LGs, the need for DRFA-WA Category C/D funding
- Support the DRFA-WA Category C/D application process, if required
- Support the recovery needs analysis process
- Understand information and resource needs in the local recovery space
- Assess and develop recovery capacity in affected communities
- Support the development of community recovery programs and ensure they align with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery
- Support short, medium and long term recovery planning
- Foster collaborative partnerships to deliver recovery activities
- Guide monitoring and evaluation of community recovery programs and activities

Eligible Events

This assistance measure may be provided to communities following the declaration of a eligible disaster by the WA Government, and where the disaster event meets the Category A eligibility criteria as set out in the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

FACT SHEET

Community Recovery Officers may be provided on a temporary basis to assist communities that have been affected by an eligible disaster event as described above, and which meet the eligibility criteria shown below.

Eligibility Criteria

The minimum Category A measures which must be activated before a CRO can be employed are:

- a) emergency food, clothing or temporary accommodation
- b) repair or replacement of essential items of furniture and personal effects
- c) essential repairs to housing, including temporary repairs and repairs necessary to restore housing to a *habitable* condition.

Exclusions

Funding is provided to establish new temporary CRO roles, to respond to specific disasters.

Assistance will not be provided to fund or augment existing community development, emergency management or similar roles within the local government or community services workforce.

Costs associated with the CRO using existing assets are not eligible. Examples of these costs include existing office accommodation, vehicles, facilities, computers, telecommunications infrastructure and any other resources that would have been available for use, even if the CRO had not been employed.

Amounts Available & Mode of Delivery

The CRO's role may vary depending on the capacity of the local community service network and the blend of government and community-based organisations operating in the disaster-affected area.

DFES Recovery will consult with affected local government/s to ensure a role description that is appropriate for the community, and to identify a suitable organisation or partnership of organisations to undertake the employment, management and supervision of the CRO.

The CRO may be employed and managed by local government, an existing non-government organisation or WA Government agency (including DFES Recovery).

The scope of work for each CRO will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services Recovery Directorate (DFES Recovery), in consultation with affected local government(s), for each eligible disaster, in accordance with the DRFA-WA.

The employment of the temporary CRO may be for a maximum full-time equivalent period of up to 12 months.

As a general rule, only one (1) CRO may be employed for each declared disaster, irrespective of the number of Local Government Areas that have been affected by the disaster.

In the event that the nature, scale and circumstances of the declared disaster warrants the employment of one or more additional CROs, DFES Recovery may submit an application to the Australian Government to seek additional funding for this purpose. To demonstrate the need for additional CROs, local councils and other community organisations may be required to provide information about the effects of the disaster.

FACT SHEET

Conditions of Assistance

Where funding is provided to employ a CRO, an Engagement Agreement will be executed between the auspice organisation(s) and DFES. This agreement will outline the conditions of funding and the service specification.

Any variation to the agreement will require approval of both parties. The funding arrangement between the State and Commonwealth governments (e.g. under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements) must be acknowledged on all written materials.

The service provider must hold records locally of all grant monies spent on the employment of the CRO. A copy of the records must be provided in full to DFES Recovery.

Funding for the support service will depend on the service model, however costs may include provision for the following items, subject to the exclusions discussed above:

- Salaries and on costs for staff as per award
- Travel and other relevant allowances as per award
- Operating costs (including program and service development costs)
- Communications costs
- Temporary office accommodation costs where required
- Temporary motor vehicle hire where required
- Essential establishment costs as negotiated with DFES Recovery

Coordinating Agency

DFES Recovery will be the coordinating agency for this assistance measure in the first instance.

The CRO role will be established in consultation with local recovery governance mechanisms (e.g. the Recovery Committee) and key human services representatives from government and non-government agencies in the disaster affected community.

Claims Process, including timings

The Engagement Agreement will specify the process by which DFES will provide funds to the organisation that employs and manages the CRO.

In general, the employing organisation will be required to pay the agreed employee related expenses and overheads for the CRO and seek a reimbursement from DFES on a monthly basis.

Invoices from the employing organisation must be submitted monthly and in accordance with the Engagement Agreement.

Please contact DFES Disaster Recovery Funding Officers to discuss payment processes.