

Criteria - Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA)

Preamble

The Department of Housing and Community Development has responsibility for administering grants to local government bodies for the recovery of local government assets and services.

Financial assistance is subject to funding availability and is made in accordance with the NDRRA principles and assessment criteria which are applied to each application.

There is no longer a need for a State of Emergency or State of Disaster to be declared for applications for assistance to be considered. If the NT has incurred total expenditure after a disaster or event of \$240,000 or more then relief and recovery arrangements can be instigated.

Councils are encouraged to ensure they maintain all local government services where possible and this may include substantial recovery work after a natural disaster. All claims provided to the department by councils will be considered on a case by case basis in collaboration with NT Treasury and the Commonwealth Government.

Claims under NDRRA for relief and recovery assistance measures should **NOT** include betterment or improvements to existing essential public assets.

An essential public asset is defined in the [NDRRA Determination 2017](#) as “an asset which must be a transport or public infrastructure asset of an eligible undertaking which, the state considers and the department (Commonwealth) agrees, is a necessary part of a state’s infrastructure and is integral to the normal functioning of a community.” Public infrastructure is also defined as “an asset that is an integral part of a state’s financial infrastructure and is associated with health, education, justice or welfare.” (Refer also [Guideline 1-Essential public asset restoration or replacement](#) as issued by the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department July 2017)

Eligibility for NDRRA

NDRRA can provide financial disaster relief and recovery assistance to local government bodies for repairs to internal community roads and other non-insurable essential public assets. Specifically a claim for damage to the local road network, these roads must be assessed as being essential public assets.

For restoration or replacement works to essential public assets which are estimated to cost over \$1million, prior approval must be sought. An [essential public assets approval form](#) is required to be completed.

For restoration or replacement works to essential public assets which are estimated to cost under \$1million, an eligibility enquiry should be sought to determine for example if certain outstation access roads are eligible essential public assets. An [eligibility enquiry form](#) may need to be completed.

Local government bodies which provide resources for other community relief and recovery efforts in a natural disaster may also be eligible for reimbursement under NDRRA.

Assistance may be in the form of a grant or a direct reimbursement to council for expenditure already incurred. Financial assistance must be in accordance with the NDRRA principles. To be eligible for financial disaster recovery assistance, the applicant must;

1. Be a local governing body.
2. Have informed the department, through the Regional Managers or the Manager Grants Program, of the potential damage or any expectations of relief and recovery costs [as soon as possible](#) after they have occurred and prior to submitting any claims (estimated costs will suffice initially).
3. Forward to the department within two months of the disaster, a completed financial disaster recovery application with all documentary evidence in relation to damage, including any rectification work that has already been carried out or intended, and completed eligibility enquiry forms and or essential public asset approval form.
4. Use suitably qualified personnel to conduct the asset inspection and assessment report that is provided.
5. Applicants must be able to provide evidence of the pre-disaster standard and the level of functionality or utility prior to the event. (i.e. photographs, road maintenance and asset inspection reports)
6. Demonstrate that all other avenues of financial assistance have been examined and exhausted. This is not just limited to own council sourced funds and insurance.
7. Be capable of demonstrating that it can complete the restoration works and expended within the allowable time limit of the event. The allowable time limit is 24 months after the end of the financial year in which the relevant disaster/event occurred.

Assessment

All applications will be assessed in accordance with the NDRRA guidelines. Accurate record keeping by the applicant is absolutely essential and all documentation must be tied to a specific disaster. (Also refer [Acquittal requirements for NDRRA](#))

Detailed are the major considerations the assessment process will cover.

- All applicants expending funds on eligible measures under the NDRRA are to maintain separate financial records in respect of that expenditure for the purposes of accountability.
- Applicants that have expended their funds on repair work need to ensure all supporting financial records, [sufficiently annotated and referring to the disaster](#), are maintained and copies are provided to the department for accountability purposes.

Correct financial records include:

- Separate financial records specific to NDRRA;
- Tax invoices;
- Road damage reports (*example road report format available on department's web*)
- Contract/tender documents;
- Before and after photos that have geocoding details;
- Overtime documents; and
- Quotations and costing for planned repair work.

- Financial assistance under **is not** available for the restoration or replacement of an essential public asset above the pre-disaster standard. Such improvements apply to the 'betterment' provisions and is not assessed by the Department of Housing and Community Development due to the cost benefit analysis and evidence required to justify the claim and should therefore be referred to the Department of Treasury and Finance.
- Financial assistance **is not** available for salaries and wages or other administrative type expenses, which would have been incurred irrespective of the disaster.
- Financial assistance **is not** available for internal cross hire charges in relation to plant and equipment - if resources and capabilities are within the councils control then costs should not be claimed.
- Financial assistance **is not** available for food and drink for disaster workers.
- Assessment by the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics, the Local Government Association of the NT and if required by the Department of Treasury and Finance can fall into one of three categories:
 1. supported
 2. further consideration required
 3. not supported
- The assessment process should take 6-8 weeks from receipt of the application, but is dependent on Commonwealth approval that the assets claimed are approved as essential public assets for the purposes of NDRRA for restoration and repair.
- Completed submissions to be sent to: lg.grants@nt.gov.au