



PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MS20-000065

14 JAN 2020

Cr David Wright  
Mayor  
Ballina Shire Council  
PO BOX 450  
BALLINA NSW 2478

Dear Mayor

I am writing to confirm the Australian Government's commitment to make an immediate \$1 million payment to Ballina Shire Council, to provide financial support to your community and enable recovery efforts to commence as soon as possible. The payment will be delivered through the state government.

This is a new funding commitment. It provides direct financial assistance to your Council, so you can start addressing the recovery and rebuilding needs in your area. Local governments know their local community best and can direct this funding to where it is needed most.

By supporting local councils to rebuild vital infrastructure, or hold events which bring the community together and bring tourists back to town, this immediate payment will also assist local small businesses, farmers and trades as communities rebuild, restock, replant and recover. You could also use some of the funding to employ a local bushfire recovery coordinator, to ensure the recovery efforts of governments, charities and others are informed by local needs priorities.

While the full extent of the damage is not yet known, I trust this payment provides your Council the confidence to make quickly on commitments and decisions to help address the impact of the bushfires in your region.

I know many areas have been hard hit, and it will be a long recovery. We will be there with you the whole way, as you rebuild your community and your economy.

As you may be aware, the Government has established a new National Bushfire Recovery Agency to lead and coordinate a national response to rebuilding communities affected by bushfires. The Agency, led by Mr Andrew Colvin APM OAM, former Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, will report to me through Minister Littleproud.


Parliament House CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Telephone (02) 6277 7700  
[www.pm.gov.au](http://www.pm.gov.au)

11.2 Notice of Motion - Federal and State Government Bushfire Funding

This is the first tranche of assistance, and Mr Colvin, as the National Bushfire Recovery Coordinator, will engage with local governments to ensure the Agency's national recovery efforts are tailored to the unique needs of affected communities.

Relevant government officials will be in touch with you shortly to provide further detail on this payment, including reporting arrangements.

Yours sincerely



SCOTT MORRISON



**Australian Government**  
**National Bushfire Recovery Agency**

Cr David Wright  
Mayor  
Ballina Shire Council  
PO Box 450  
BALLINA NSW 2478  
council@ballina.nsw.gov.au

Dear Cr David Wright

I am writing to advise you of the Australian Government's decision to provide the Ballina Shire Council with an additional payment of \$225,000 to support recovery from the Black Summer bushfire season.

It builds on the \$1 million Australian Government payment to your Council last month. The severity of the impact of the bushfires on the Ballina Shire Council has been considered in determining the quantum of this payment.

This assistance will assist you lead local recovery efforts as you see fit.

Consistent with the previous payment to your Council, I request that a Program of Works for the allocation of this assistance be developed within three months and that you inform the National Bushfire Recovery Agency in 12 months' time on how the funding was used.

This assistance supplements the range of other support measures that are being provided by the Australian and State Governments, including but not limited to direct financial grants and concessional loans to fire affected small businesses and primary producers.

Should you require further information, please contact the National Bushfire Recovery Agency's NSW Liaison Officer, Jennifer Vinton, on [Contact@bushfirerecovery.gov.au](mailto:Contact@bushfirerecovery.gov.au).

I trust this assistance is welcome and I wish you and your community all the best for its recovery.

Yours sincerely,

  
Andrew Colvin APM OAM  
National Bushfire Recovery Coordinator

12 February 2020

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Postal Address: PO Box 6500, CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Telephone: +61 2 6271 5085 Fax: +61 2 6271 1234 [www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au](http://www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au) ABN: 18 108 001 191

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**The Hon. John Barilaro MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Regional New South Wales  
Minister for Industry and Trade

Clr David Wright  
Mayor  
Ballina Shire Council  
PO Box 450 BALLINA NSW 2478

Dear Clr Wright

The bushfire crisis our State is facing is unprecedented; and requires an unprecedented response. My number one priority is assisting communities on the long road to recovery.

Over the last few months I have heard firsthand from hundreds of families, business owners, and volunteers all impacted in different ways by the devastating bushfires. I have observed the resilience, dedication and positive spirit that makes NSW an extraordinary place to live, visit and run a business.

As the Minister responsible for Disaster Recovery I am working closely with the Commonwealth Government to take action and secure funding that is necessary for the recovery effort. This includes:

- Setting up a one-stop-shop for bushfire assistance via [service.nsw.gov.au](http://service.nsw.gov.au) or 13 77 88
- Agreeing with the Commonwealth to split clean-up and waste management costs 50:50
- Significantly increasing the number of school counsellors in bushfire affected communities
- Committing \$1 billion to repair and rebuild vital infrastructure, such as roads, rail-lines, bridges, schools, health facilities and communications facilities
- Establishing \$75,000 special disaster grants for primary producers and a \$50,000 recovery grant for small businesses to help with clean-up and reinstatement measures
- Loss of income payments for RFS and SES volunteers

I know that more needs to be done and that you need assistance urgently.

A key priority is to ensure resources are flowing to communities and I am pleased to advise that an immediate payment of up to \$100,000 is now available to Ballina Shire Council under the joint NSW and Commonwealth Government funded **Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Funds: Phase 1**. Phase 1 funding is meant to be quick and flexible in order to meet the immediate recovery needs of local communities. Details of how your council can quickly access this funding is included in the Guidelines sent with this letter.

Under the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, this small-scale funding is only one step in supporting your community as you recover from these bushfires. Further information on the next phase of support will be available in the coming weeks.

If council need support in the development or roll-out of any local project or initiative, please contact Lenna Klintworth at [lenna.klintworth@dpc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lenna.klintworth@dpc.nsw.gov.au) or 0436 649 098.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Barilaro', written in a cursive style.

**The Hon. John Barilaro MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Regional New South Wales  
Minister for Industry and Trade

Cc: Paul Hickey, General Manager, Ballina Shire Council

GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001 ■ P: (02) 8574 5150 ■ F: (02) 9339 5530 ■ W: [nsw.gov.au](http://nsw.gov.au)

## Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund

### PHASE 1

#### GUIDELINES



### Overview

The funding for the *Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund* (BCRERF) is provided through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Funding will be made available to bushfire affected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in New South Wales following unprecedented bushfires from August 2019 onwards.

Phase One of the BCRERF is focused on delivering immediate, small-scale funding to local councils that will start the community and economic recovery following the bushfires. The funds will deliver locally-led recovery activities led by councils in partnership with other organisations.

Phase Two of the BCRERF will be for larger-scale, regionally focused and more targeted projects that support the same objectives of Phase One. The design and delivery of the next Phase will be developed in consultation with councils and other key local stakeholders involved in the bushfire recovery process.

Funding will be administered by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment *Regional NSW Group* under an arrangement with NSW Office of Emergency Management, and in consultation with Emergency Management Australia.

### Objective

The objective of Phase One of the BCRERF is to deliver quick, flexible, small-scale grants to local councils for immediate, locally led community and economic recovery activities. The purpose is to support local business recovery and assist communities overcome the economic and social impacts of the bushfires.

### Funding

Phase One has immediate payments of a minimum \$100,000, up to a maximum \$250,000 available to eligible bushfire affected LGAs in NSW. Official Building Impact Assessment numbers (held by NSW Public Works Advisory) have been used to guide the funding amount offered to each council. This includes both damaged and destroyed residential and other properties.

Classification	Funding
> 100 damaged or destroyed buildings from official Building Impact Assessment	\$250,000
< 100 damaged or destroyed buildings from official Building Impact Assessment	\$100,000

Funding amounts for each council are subject to change pending further fire events; changes to Building Impact Assessment numbers; or in response to other clear and urgent community needs as they arise.

Funding will be available from late January 2020. Funding Deeds will be executed within 5 days and payments made shortly after. All required documentation needs to be complete and submitted before payment will be released.

## Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund

### PHASE 1

#### GUIDELINES



## Eligibility

### *Applicants*

Local Government Areas in New South Wales that are natural disaster-declared relating to bushfires from 31 August 2019 onwards, and eligible for Category C funding assistance under the Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, will be offered funding. Local councils are the only organisation eligible for Phase One funding.

### *Projects and activities*

Phase 1 funding is meant to be quick and flexible in order to meet the immediate recovery needs of local communities. Councils are asked to undertake activities in the two categories below:

- Economic Recovery – events or initiatives to support local business and industry recovery
- Community Resilience – events or initiatives to support community recovery and wellbeing

Projects will need to contribute to one or more of the following Disaster Recovery Outcomes:

- The needs of vulnerable groups are addressed in disaster recovery
- The community is aware of the disaster recovery processes
- The community can express its changing disaster recovery needs
- Community members are aware of the risks of future disasters
- The community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters
- Business and not-for-profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risks and threats
- Government, private sector and civil society and organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery

Councils are encouraged to partner with Business Chambers and other local organisations to design and deliver local initiatives.

Where possible, the extension or leveraging of existing initiatives and events will be supported.

## Example Projects

Ideas for funding could include, but are not limited to:

- Locally focused recovery support services for impacted small businesses such as business advice workshops
- Training and skills development for small business continuity/contingency planning to help individual businesses to survive in the short to medium term.
- Localised industry recovery events, planning and workshops
- Small projects that help with the recovery of the communities through capacity and resilience building to understand how to be better prepared for hazards into the future
- Neighbourhood and community strengthening activities that focus specifically on capacity building and planning for the future

### *Not eligible for funding*

- Application that seek support for supplementing, increasing or continuing ongoing service delivery that is the core business of the council.
- Applications that request ongoing program funding

## Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund

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- Applications for projects and/or activities that are not related to the community or economic recovery attributed to the bushfire event.
- Covering existing debts or budget deficits.

### How to Apply

Councils will be provided a link to fill in a simple online application form in SmartyGrants. Information required includes:

- Basic Council details including Public Liability Insurance certificate
- Proposed activities and projects costs
- An invoice

Only one application is allowed per council. Multiple projects or activities may be included as part of an application.

Councils will need to enter into a simple legally binding grant agreement with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (NSW Government) to receive funding.

At the completion of the project(s), Councils will be asked to provide a brief summary of the activities that were funded and evidence of expenditure via the SmartyGrants portal.

### Review Process and Timeframes

Applications will be reviewed to ensure:

- All required documentation is complete and submitted
- Proposed projects align with Fund objectives.

Funding Agreements will be executed with within 5 days and payments released soon after. Councils can begin spending the funding allocation and be reimbursed for suitable activities.

Councils are asked to submit the online form as soon as possible. Phase One funding will be open for council applications until 31 March 2020. Extensions may be granted upon request to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Councils are asked to complete funded projects by 30 June 2020. Extensions may be granted upon request to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

A short completion report and evidence of expenditure will be required to be submitted within 2-months of project completion.

### Contact

General enquires: For more information, please contact Regional NSW on 1300 679 673 or email [Regionalnsw.Business@dpc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Regionalnsw.Business@dpc.nsw.gov.au)

### Public Acknowledgment

Under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, all initiatives under the BCRERF must appropriately acknowledge and recognise that it is jointly funded under the Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Councils must acknowledge the funding contributions of the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments at any public events, in announcements, or any other promotional material or publicity relating to the projects or activities funded the BCRERF.

These publications must also include both the State and Commonwealth Government logos and the following disclaimer: 'Although funding for this product has been provided by both the Australian and

## Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund

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New South Wales Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either Government'.

### Governance

#### Record keeping

For expenditure under the BCRERF, eligible councils must keep an accurate audit trail for seven (7) years from the end of the financial year in which the expenditure is claimed, or until such time as the claim is acquitted by the Australian Government. This will require transaction listing of eligible expenditure that reconcile to the claimed amount, and support each transaction.

For assurance purposes, the Australian may at any time, through the NSW Office of Emergency Management request documentation from eligible councils to evidence the state's compliance under the Disaster Recovery Funding Agreements.

#### Assurance activities

The Australian Government may at any time undertake assurance activities to reconcile audited state claims either directly or via an independent advisor. Eligible councils may be required to provide documentation to support assurance activities.

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