

Funded non-government organisations Disaster impact assessment, relief and recovery activities

March 2011

Dear Colleagues

As you know the Department has been telephoning organisations which are in or near areas affected by recent disasters to discover the extent of any damage they might have suffered or in what other ways they have been impacted during the ordeals. To support both individuals and organisations affected by the disasters, the Department has worked to activate various categories of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

For **individuals**, the Department activated:

- Personal Hardship Grants to a maximum of \$850 per family which is not means tested
- Two grants which are means tested:
 - Essential Household Contents Grants to a maximum of \$5,120 per household
 - Structural Assistance Grants for homeowners to a maximum of \$10,500 for individuals or \$14,200 for families
- A new Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme to a maximum of \$5,000 per household to enable utilities to be reconnected,

Additionally, some of the Department's **usual products** are available for disaster affected people, including:

- Bond Loans
- Rental Grants
- Mortgage Relief Loans, and
- Temporary/emergency accommodation
- Home Assist Secure
- Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Services

The Community Recovery Referral and Information Centres established in disaster affected locations are the best placed for individuals to access these grants. If, however, the recovery centre has closed, please call **1800 173 349** or visit the Department's website for further information at <http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/community/community-recovery/support-assistance/support-assistance.html#sag>

As the natural disasters have affected some organisations directly, the Department has contributed to activating one-off grants and loans for **not-for-profit organisations** to assist them to restore services.

This scheme, which is co-funded by the Australian and Queensland governments, will provide financial assistance to eligible NGOs to help restore operations to enable service delivery to the community. Restoring operations could mean using funds for clean up costs, the replacement, restoration and repair of equipment and essential items and leasing temporary premises to enable restoration of services. The scheme has two components:

- A recovery grant of up to \$25,000 (\$5,000 in the first instance and up to a further \$20,000 where damage is more significant), and

- A concessional interest loans of up to \$100,000, including a further grant of up to \$5,000 when a loan of over \$25,000 is accessed (by way of combination of loan and grant in the ratio 5:1).

The Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA) will administer these schemes on behalf of the Queensland Government under a new Regulation which is being created. Application forms, eligibility criteria and guidelines for the schemes are available on the Queensland Government's Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA) website: www.qraa.qld.gov.au. QRAA can also be contacted on Freecall 1800 623 946.

Other assistance is available for eligible organisations through the Departments Sport and Recreation Flood Fightback Plan for equipment, Sport and Recreation Flood Fightback Plan for infrastructure and HACCC services for Restoring facilities owned by NGOs, where the Department has a financial interest.

Should your organisation need to adjust its outputs and deliverables under its service agreement because of the effects of the floods, there are options under amendments such as a change of purpose or redirection of funding. Please contact your regional office to discuss these options in the first instance.

Some funded organisations have responded to higher levels of service demand in disaster affected areas. The Department will provide limited targeted funding for the purpose of addressing this demand. The reporting would be as per normal service agreement arrangements and the outputs funded are likely to be one or more of those in the following list:

- Financial advice, information and referral
- Housing/tenancy information, advice and referral
- General service availability, information, advice and referral
- Individual advocacy
- Needs assessment and management of case/service plans
- Mutual support and self-help
- Crisis counselling
- Counselling, other
- Transitional accommodation
- Crisis accommodation
- Respite care
- Home maintenance
- Personal assistance
- Domestic assistance
- In-home accommodation support
- Social support, escorting, visiting and personal transport

Should your organisation need to use interpreters to ensure that services for disaster affected people are provided in languages that people understand and usually use, the established arrangements for the payment for interpreter services is contained on the Department's website at <http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/department/funding/interpreting-services/index.html>

If you have any queries in regard to community sector recovery activities, please contact the department at: sdfedback@communities.qld.gov.au or via telephone on 07 322 48090.

I look forward to working with the community sector to ensure it supports Queensland to get back on its feet as quickly as possible.

Regards
Linda Apelt
Director-General
Department of Communities