Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Councils Count Flood Costs

Local Councils are counting the cost of damage from persistent wet weather and flooding over much of Australia and many will struggle to finance the necessary flood repair and recovery actions.

Floodplain Management Australia (FMA) President Ian Dinham said FMA has major concerns about the excessive red tape and delays for Councils seeking government assistance from the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Assistance (NDRRA) program.

"The damage to property and infrastructure is running to tens of millions of dollars, and recovery for flood affected communities will take years."

"After floods and storms the community expects its local Council to manage the clean-up and repair swiftly. Over recent years an increasing number of essential post-flood activities carried out by Councils have become ineligible for government assistance, and the approvals process is unnecessarily delaying recovery actions" Mr Dinham said.

"While the financial pressures on the Commonwealth Government from repeated natural disaster claims are understood, the present list of ineligible activities severely impacts on a Council's ability to act responsibly in the flood recovery phase - being swift, pragmatic and compassionate."

"We applaud Federal Minister Keenan’s efforts following the Productivity Commission Report on Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements to redirect funding to mitigation so that savings in future flood damage can be made. That is the long term goal that FMA shares. In the meantime, local Councils are the lowest level of Government and the least able to afford to maintain their assets, let alone fix them after natural disasters."

Natural disasters are costing Australia over $560 million a year, and flooding is the most costly, yet manageable, natural hazard.

Floodplain Management Australia brings together experts from across Australia and overseas to help build a more flood resilient nation. Members include over 120 councils, catchment management authorities, businesses, and professionals involved in urban and rural flood risk management.

About

For more information on Floodplain Management Australia, visit floods.org.au.

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