

NSW Natural Disaster Assistance Schemes

The following schemes are available under the NSW Disaster Assistance Arrangements. More information on these schemes can be found in the *NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines*, available through the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services website: www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance

The Ministry for Police and Emergency Services can provide disaster relief grants to eligible individuals and families whose homes and essential household items have been destroyed or damaged by a natural disaster. People with limited financial resources and no insurance may be eligible for assistance for essential household items and structural repairs to the home.

Inquiries about the disaster relief grants and the eligibility criteria may be made by calling 1800 018 444.

Website: www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/disasterassistance

Primary Producers- Loans

Loans of up to \$130,000 are available (subject to certain eligibility criteria), at a concessional interest rate for those in urgent need. These loans may be used to meet carry-on requirements and the replacement and repair of damage not covered by insurance. The NSW Rural Assistance Authority administers this scheme. Inquiries should be directed to the Authority on 1800 678 593.

Website: www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Primary Producers- Transport Subsidies

Transport freight subsidies of up to 50 percent on the carriage of livestock and fodder are available to help primary producers, with the exception of fodder/supplements for dairy cattle, which only attracts a subsidy of 25 percent. The maximum subsidy available is \$15,000 per annum. Inquiries should be made to the nearest Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPA) office. For general enquires, call (02) 6391 3242.

Website: www.lhpa.org.au

Small Businesses

Loans of up to \$130,000 are available at a concessional rate to small businesses affected by disasters and which meet certain eligibility criteria. This finance is available to those unable to obtain assistance through normal channels. The NSW Rural Assistance Authority administers this scheme. Inquiries should be directed to the Authority on 1800 678 593.

Website: www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Assistance for Councils

Grants are available to meet the additional costs of emergency work to restore essential services, including the provision of emergency levee banks, which are in excess of normal operations. Grants are available to meet 100 per cent of eligible emergency works and 75 per cent of eligible restoration works up to \$116,000 with 100 per cent cost recovery beyond that level. The Department of Finance and Services (NSW Public Works) administers this assistance. The contact number is (02) 9372 8871.

Website: <http://publicworks.nsw.gov.au>

Grants are available to help Councils to permanently restore roads and bridges to pre-disaster standards. These grants meet 75 per cent of the first \$116,000 expenditure and 100 per cent beyond that level. This assistance is administered by the NSW Roads and Maritime Services. The contact number is (02) 8588 5655.

Website: www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Trustees of Parks and Reserves

Provided the facilities concerned constitute "public assets", grants may be made available to those parties (i.e. community volunteer trustees) responsible for managing Crown land, parks and reserves, who do not have the financial capacity to meet restoration costs from their own resources.

Department of Trade & Investment - Crown Lands Division administers this scheme. For information and claims please call (02) 4920 5085.

Website: <http://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au>

Sporting Clubs

A special scheme is available to assist sporting clubs in meeting the costs of restoration of essential club facilities that have been damaged or destroyed. The assistance is made available to those clubs which do not have the financial capacity to meet restoration costs from their own resources, but which have the capacity to repay any loan that may be granted. Under these arrangements the maximum assistance available is \$12,000, including a grant of up to \$2,000 and the balance by way of repayable advance with interest. NSW Treasury administers this scheme. The public enquiry number is (02) 9228 5181.

This finance is available to those unable to obtain assistance through normal channels.

Churches and Voluntary Non-profit Organisations

Loan assistance is available to churches and voluntary non-profit organisations for the restoration of essential facilities that have been damaged or destroyed. Eligible groups will usually perform a service for the community or environment and are funded by grants or donations.

Non-profit organisations that perform a commercial function, charge a fee for a service or represent commercial or industrial groups, e.g. industry bodies are not eligible for assistance. These organisations can recover costs from their members or through fees. As with other schemes, assistance is only available to those organisations which do not have

the financial capacity to meet restorations costs from their own resources, insurance and are unable to obtain assistance through normal channels. Advances are subject to a maximum of \$25,000 at a concessional interest rate per annum. NSW Treasury administers this scheme. The public enquiry number is (02) 9228 5181.

Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Arrangements

The schemes listed above are eligible for Australian Government financial assistance, usually by way of partial reimbursement of actual expenditure, under the joint Australian Government/NSW Government Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. Under the cost sharing formula, NSW pays for the first \$140,469,750 of natural disaster costs in 2013-14, and can claim from the Australian Government half of all eligible Personal Hardship and Distress costs within this first threshold. The Australian Government then matches NSW expenditure for eligible costs between \$140,469,750 and \$245,822,063 and beyond that may covers up to three quarters of eligible costs.

Other assistance

Motor Vehicle Stamp Duty Relief

Motorists whose cars have been written off as a result of a natural disaster may be eligible for a stamp duty refund on their replacement vehicle. Refunds are made where the written off vehicle was comprehensively insured and the insurance does not cover duty for a replacement vehicle. The Office of State Revenue administers these refunds and can be contacted on 1300 139 814.

Website: www.osr.nsw.gov.au

Insurance

If you have a query relating to insurance you can call the Insurance Council on 1300 444 557. This service is available to all.

Legal Assistance

Legal Aid NSW helps people with their legal problems. Legal Aid NSW lawyers can provide free legal advice and minor assistance to people affected by disasters on a range of issues including insurance, tenancy and credit and debt problems. You can call LawAccess NSW on 1300 888 529 to discuss any legal problems and what assistance may be available from Legal Aid NSW, Community Legal Centres and other free legal assistance services in your area.

Website: www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au