



# Our Future Northern Rivers Lismore Citizens Flood Review Group

City View Drive, Lismore NSW 2480

## **RECOVERY & RECONSTRUCTION GUIDING PRINCIPLES GOING FORWARD**

- That the needs and welfare of the community are paramount in all aspects of decision making
- That coordination across the entire project is a critical component
- That Reparations are seen as an Investment in the Future as opposed to a Cost

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **1. NATURAL DISASTER PRECINCT**

That the Richmond/Wilsons river catchments including the Byron, Ballina, Richmond Valley, Lismore and Kyogle LGAs (and ?? Tweed) be declared a natural disaster precinct

#### **1.1 TIMEFRAME:**

That the duration of the precinct be for at least the next 6 years but up to 10 years dependent on implementation of outcomes

#### **1.2 REQUEST/REQUIREMENTS:**

That requests and requirements applied to designated issues be deemed "priority" throughout every step of the Recovery and Reconstruction Project

#### **1.3 PROGRESS:**

That issues associated with funding, red, green tape and any other sort of constriction be expedited throughout every step of the Recovery and Reconstruction Project

### **2. PILOT PROJECT**

That all aspects of the Regional Recovery and Reconstruction be considered as a PILOT PROJECT with a Build Back Better focus and flexibility to plan, develop, implement and evaluate all elements and systems to ensure the best possible outcomes in future disaster management across the nation

### **3. COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE MODEL**

That the Reconstruction Corporation operate under a Collaborative Governance Model to be established between ? NRRA & NSW Treasury overseen by a Collaborative Governance Committee made up of NSW & Federal government agencies and community stakeholders

#### **3.1 FUNDING**

That the allocation of funding from the involved agencies be determined by the Collaborative Governance committee

### 3.2 STRUCTURE

That the four connected resilience domains of Social, Economic Environmental and Built, form the basis of a coordinated adaptation rebuild of the region as per the National Climate Resilience & Adaptation Strategy

### 3.3. STRATEGY

That a whole of system Strategic Plan with short, medium and long term goals be developed as a priority.

### 3.4. EXPERTISE

That CSIRO expertise be embedded in the Reconstruction Corporation and Resilience NSW and invested with the task of eliciting the goals, options, assessments, responsibilities, data and investments required for the management of natural disasters into the future

## 4. WORKING TOGETHER

That all State and Federal government Departments and agencies with a remit for Recovery and Resilience be brought together with the community, Rous Water and local government and other relevant agencies in order to resolve the way forward on this complicated issue

## 5. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### 5.1 KNOWLEDGE HUBS

That local technical and community Knowledge Hubs be initiated as soon as possible incorporating interested parties in each of the four pillar areas.

### 5.2 REPRESENTATION:

That community Knowledge Hub representation be included throughout all key aspects of the planning, design, development and implementation of the Recovery and Rebuild project.

### 5.3 SUPPORT

That the CSIRO Enabling Resilience Investment (ERI) team be available to support the community Knowledge Hubs through all aspects of the decision making process

We are happy to meet further and expand on these and any other issues we have researched.



Beth Trevan AM BEM

Coordinator

Email:

May 3 2022

# NATIONAL CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION STRATEGY

## Four Connected Domains

### Natural

The landscapes, seascapes, ecosystems, agricultural lands, and diverse plant and animal life within Australia and its ocean territory.

### Economic

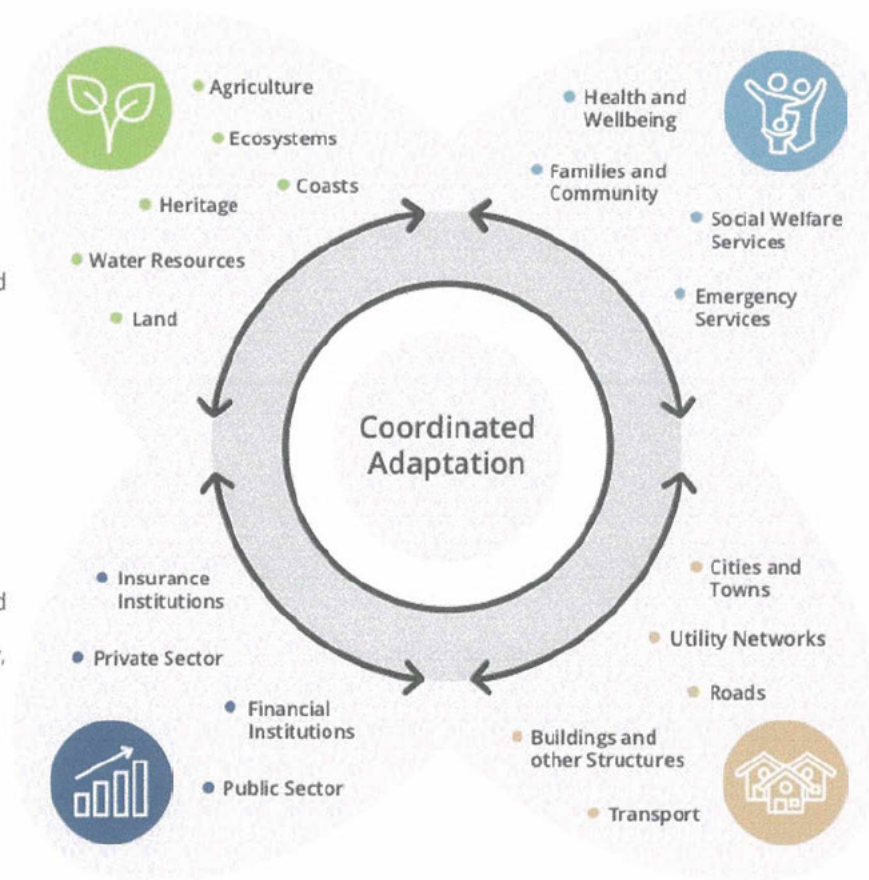
The production and consumption of goods. Productivity, financial systems, and the economy.

### Social

People, their communities, their culture, institutions, support systems and their interactions.

### Built

Human-made surroundings, structures and any supporting infrastructure created using material, spatial and human resources to facilitate life, health, work and play.







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## **FUTURE FLOOD MITIGATION AND PLANNING OPTIONS FOR THE THREE CATCHMENTS LEADING TO LISMORE (WILSONS, COOPERS AND LEYCESTER CREEKS) FUTURE FLOOD MITIGATION AND PLANNING OPTIONS FOR LISMORE**

Until the completion of the CSIRO catchment and systemwide model and testing the solutions through historical floods, no detailed large infrastructure planning can be done regarding Flood Mitigation solutions. However it is envisaged that EIS and other relevant documentation that will be required in the future can be commenced and progressed as the situation allows.

For both Lismore and the wider catchment through Lismore, Ballina, Byron, Richmond Valley and Kyogle Councils and Rous County Council there are other smaller but necessary unfunded mitigation projects that could commence planning etc. and worked on whilst waiting for the final CSIRO catchment wide outcome. With the region responsibility for Flood Mitigation, the GM and technical staff of Rous Water could expand on this.

### **FLOOD MODELLING**

Following months of negotiation between our group and the National Recovery & Resilience Agency (NRRRA) on March 10 2022, Federal Minister Bridget McKenzie announced \$10.4 million funding to the CSIRO. In broad terms we understand this funding is to develop a Lidar Model of the NSW Far North Coast and a State of the Art Model of the entire Richmond/Wilsons catchment.

Also included is the development of proposed solutions upstream and downstream of the Lismore urban area and testing these solutions in the model against all historical floods to demonstrate perceived benefits as well as unintended consequences.

It is understood that by November 2022 the CSIRO will present preliminary results gathered from relevant sources and that the entire project will take three years.

Currently there is no model of the entire catchment covering urban and rural areas. Each LGA has a small patchwork of models covering their key flood areas in urban and rural settings.

**CURRENT MODEL LIMITATIONS ARE:**

- Antiquated technology: 1D, 1 & 2D models from 20-30 years old that do not talk to each other or join for consistent and reliable data
- Outdated: Urban and Rural development has surpassed the outdated models
- Inadequate coverage of rural areas
- No high resolution Digital Elevation Model covering the entire area
- Poor synchronisation of flood risk management plans
- Discrepancies at model interfaces; Models are unstable with multiple anomalies
- Multiple proprietary software programs that do not interact
- Inadequate use of flood information for flood response
- Project assessments are not valid for the model types being used
- Not enough data to make reliable decisions
- Modelling & Data is dispersed and or lost amongst previous organisations who undertook studies (Worley Parsons, WBM BMT, Engeny, Sinclair Knight/Jacobs)
- Climate Change/Variability scenarios not addressed

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That full support across all NSW government departments be given to the CSIRO in their endeavours to seek solutions to Far North Coast flooding
2. That the smaller Far North Coast local government and Rous County Council infrastructure projects be appropriately planned and funded

We are happy to provide details or any additional information should it be required.

Richard Trevan  
Spokesman

May 3 2022



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## WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE 2017????

- Two new Commissioners - making total of 7 in 10 years
- Change of all titles of salaried staff
- Large turnover of Senior Staff - No corporate or historical knowledge
- Restructure of the organisation with an extra layer of bureaucracy - now 5 layers between community and commissioner
- In 2017 a new highly skilled and talented Region Controller from Victoria was appointed by Commissioner Smethurst and worked hard to bring in required changes
- Once Commissioner Smethurst resigned he was seen as a threat to senior Head Office staff so he was shunned and eventually head hunted by Qld who saw him in operation and recognised his talent
- BoM representative at HQ
- Despite multiple reports outlining local unit and community issues (Dungog, Tathra, Dulguigan, Lindt Cafe, Owens Report) the following remain:  
**early warning; local information; community information; 132500; territorial issues; communication difficulties within and between agencies**
- ONE SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH to media and on an app - a COP information system that is up to date and can be easily accessed by the community.
- Still no HQ recognition that blanket statewide policies and procedures do not work for our region where there is a short timeframe of 12 hours before Lismore faces a major flood - Locally led, Locally understood, Locally implemented
- Interestingly, the February 28 event was basically handled by local units
- Across the region the local units did an amazing job
- The community offered rescue support and saved many many hundreds of lives

## WHAT ARE THE KEY THINGS THAT CAN BE DONE TO AVOID/LIMIT THESE IMPACTS IN THE FUTURE. FROM A GOVERNMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE PERSPECTIVE?

It was evident whilst watching the public sessions of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements that NSW SES was well behind other states. Since the Recommendations were handed down it is our understanding that there are several reports into the NSW SES that have been carried out and are yet to be handed down. This appears to be silo and “piecemeal” investigation.



There must be disaster agencies somewhere in the world that manage disasters very well. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

The community is not interested nor has any knowledge regarding who manages what during an emergency and recovery. They just want all aspects to work.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That a “root and branch” complete Review of the Structure and Management of the NSW SES be carried out
2. That the Review be carried out by an internationally recognised disaster specialist
3. That the Review includes how it compares and relates to the community, other agencies, other States, nationally and internationally.
4. That the review focusses on the needs of the community and seamlessly links all agencies of disaster management from the local level through the State level and onto the National level. (This includes Police, RFS, Resilience NSW and the National Recovery & Resilience Agency, Emergency Management Australia, ADF etc. etc.)

We are happy to provide details on any additional information should it be required



May 3 2022

Beth Trevan AM BEM - Coordinator

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