ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP) activation for Rockhampton

Deadline: As soon as possible.

Key Issues: Whether to extend the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP) to Rockhampton Local Government Area (LGA), impacted by ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald and associated rainfall and flooding in Queensland.

AGD Analysis: To activate the AGDRP, under Section 36 of the Social Security Act 1991, you must be satisfied that an event has had such a significant impact on individuals that a Commonwealth government response is required and is therefore a ‘major disaster’. You must also have regard to the number of individuals affected and the extent to which the nature or extent of the disaster is unusual. To activate the payment you must make a determination that the disaster is a ‘major disaster’ and a determination specifying the meaning of ‘adversely affected’ in relation to that disaster.

The Disaster Assessment Tools (DAT) impact indicators include an indicative figure above which the number of individuals affected per population demonstrates a significant impact and therefore that a Government response may be required. When assessed against the DAT, the flooding in Rockhampton has seen a low level of impact for all five primary indicators based on current information available. By way of context, Queensland rapid damage assessments have inspected 804 properties in Rockhampton. 274 are reported to be damaged and 62 uninhabitable. While this equates to approximately a 34% rate of damage on assessed properties, damage assessments are ongoing and the known damage equates to a low impact for the LGA. The current information does not allow us to consider the impact data at a more localised level. The LGA of Rockhampton received AGDRP assistance in the 2010-11 flood events, however, did not receive assistance in the 2011-12 flooding.

We would not recommend activating the AGDRP for this LGA as there is currently limited impact information available to demonstrate a severe impact on individuals.

Financial Implications: The estimated cost of providing the AGDRP and New Zealand ex gratia payments for
this disaster is between $6,560,400 and $73,476,000. Refer to Financial Summary in Background for costing assumptions.

**Sensitivities and Communications Plan:** Media release is being drafted.
**Recommendation:** I recommend that you:

(i) Do not activate the AGDRP for the LGA of Rockhampton.

Approved / Not Approved / Discuss

**Alternatively:** If you wish to activate the AGDRP for the LGA of Rockhampton:

(ii) Sign the instruments at **Attachments A and B**.

Sign / Discuss

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**Chris Collett**  
Assistant Secretary  
National Disaster Recovery Programs Branch  
6141 3640

**Tony Sheehan**, Deputy Secretary, National Security and Criminal Justice Group, 02 6141 4130

Date Cleared:

**Action Officer:** Ariane Malpas, Ph: 02 6141 3245 Date sent for approval by AO: 5/02/2013  
**Branch Head:** Chris Collett, National Disaster Recovery Programs Branch, 02 6141 4120

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**AGD Clearance**

RELEASED UNDER THE FOI ACT 1982 BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL’S DEPARTMENT
Background

Eligibility Criteria

2. The eligibility criteria outlines that a person is “adversely affected” if:
   a) a person is seriously injured as a direct result of the disaster, or
   b) a person is an immediate family member of a person who is killed as a direct result of the disaster, or
   c) a person’s principal place of residence has been destroyed as a direct result of the disaster, or
   d) a person’s principal place of residence has sustained major damage as a direct result of the disaster, or
   e) the person is unable to gain access to his or her principal place of residence for at least 24 hours as a direct result of the disaster, or
   f) the person is stranded in his or her principal place of residence for at least 24 hours as a direct result of the disaster, or
   g) the person’s principal place of residence experienced utility failure for a continuous period of 48 hours as a result of the disaster, or
   h) a person is a principal carer of a dependent child to whom paragraphs (a) – (f) apply.

3. The Department is trialling the Disaster Assessment Tool (DAT) over the 2012-13 summer. The DAT is designed to strengthen and improve the Department’s advice to you on AGDRP activations. It brings together contextual information on the characteristics of a community, information of the nature of a disaster event, and data on the impact of the event on individuals. The former Attorney-General approved the trialling of the DAT in October 2012, see Attachment C for further information.

Financial Summary

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<th>LGA</th>
<th>Population of affected region/LGAs</th>
<th>5% of population claim</th>
<th>56% of population claim</th>
<th>Cost 5% of population in affected region/LGAs</th>
<th>Cost 56% of population in affected region/LGAs</th>
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<td>Rockhampton</td>
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ATTACHMENTS:
Attachment A – Social Security (Queensland Floods) Amendment Determination 2013 (No. 3)
Attachment B – Social Security (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment) Amendment Determination 2013 (No. 4)
Attachment C – Submission to the former Attorney-General, on the Disaster Assessment Tool (DAT)