Disaster Risk Reduction Package

National Projects Identification and Assessment Guidelines

The Australian Government and state and territory governments have committed to jointly invest $261 million over five years from 2019-20 to 2023-24 for a Disaster Risk Reduction Package aligned to the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.

The Australian Government’s commitment comprises:

* $104.4 million for state and local initiatives through the National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction, and
* $26.1 million for the delivery of national disaster risk reduction initiatives.

The Prime Minister has agreed key principles for the national component of the Disaster Risk Reduction Package, which require the National Emergency Management Agency to consult widely within the Commonwealth, and with states and territories through the Australia‑New Zealand Emergency Management Committee, on all national projects being considered for funding.

The focus, purpose and broad membership of the Australian Government Disaster and Climate Resilience Reference Group means it is an effective and appropriate forum for Commonwealth consultation on national risk reduction initiatives.

This document outlines the process for the identification and assessment of national projects funded through the Disaster Risk Reduction Package. It should be read in conjunction with the key principles for the national component of the package.

### Key principles for national disaster risk reduction initiatives

The national component of the Disaster Risk Reduction Package will fund nationally significant initiatives that reduce systemic disaster risk at the national level in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework. These will be initiatives that proactively reduce the risk and limit the impact of disasters associated with natural hazards on Australian communities and economies.

The national component will deliver on the priorities, five‑year outcomes and 2030 goals of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework across Australia’s built, social, natural and economic environments, to:

* take action to reduce existing disaster risk
* minimise the creation of future disaster risk, and
* equip decision makers with the capabilities and information they need to reduce disaster risk and manage residual risk.

National projects:

* are those considered to have significant national and cross-jurisdictional effect, impact or influence, and
* must demonstrate how they contribute to achieving the priorities, five-year outcomes and 2030 disaster risk reduction goals of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.

Natural hazards are natural processes or phenomena that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. Natural hazards include bushfires, floods, cyclones, storms, heatwaves, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Projects funded under the national component could include, but are not limited to:

* activities that support individuals, communities and/or small businesses to understand and take action to address disaster risk and impacts
* inclusive community partnership projects with diverse stakeholders (including Indigenous Australians, people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities)
* research, innovation and knowledge initiatives to improve awareness, understanding and engagement on disaster risk and impacts (including hazard, exposure, vulnerability, capacity and environment)
* development of national technologies, systems and capabilities (including improved disaster risk information and data collection, hazard mapping and modelling, risk assessment tools, decision support systems, and emergency warning communications)
* development and review of national standards, codes and guidelines to minimise the creation of future disaster risk
* establishment of sector-specific professional development and guidance materials to build the capability of practitioners and decision makers to make disaster risk informed decisions (including land-use planning, building, construction and infrastructure), and
* creation of governance structures and planning frameworks to advance disaster risk reduction.

Multi-year funding could be considered for longer projects, with funding available under the Disaster Risk Reduction Package until 2023‑24.

### Project identification and evaluation

Members of the Australian Government Disaster and Climate Resilience Reference Group and Australia‑New Zealand Emergency Management Committee will be invited to identify and provide feedback on proposed projects to deliver on the priorities, outcomes and goals of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.

The proposed projects will be assessed, and funding recommended, by representatives from the National Emergency Management Agency, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, and Mitigation and Risk Subcommittee (MaRS) of the Australia‑New Zealand Emergency Management Committee.

* An evaluation team, comprising an executive level officer from each of these entities (noting the MaRS representative may be drawn from the MaRS Chair's organisation), will assess and prioritise the identified projects based on the assessment criteria below.
* The team will develop an evaluation report outlining the evaluation process and national projects recommended for funding.
* The evaluation team reports to a steering committee, comprising a senior executive level officer from each of these entities.
* The evaluation steering committee will consider the evaluation report and make a decision, based on the recommendations of the evaluation team, as to which initiatives will be recommended for funding.

The evaluation team may seek additional information and will consult as needed to assess the coherence of proposed projects with other initiatives, programs or activities and to avoid duplication in Australian Government funding.

The National Emergency Management Agency will seek advice from the Australian Government Solicitor about any constitutional risks associated with Commonwealth funding of recommended projects. The National Emergency Management Agency will then provide advice on the recommended projects to the Minister for Emergency Management, or the Minister’s delegate, for approval.

This whole-of-government, cross-jurisdictional approach will enable the Commonwealth to collaborate with states and territories on priority national initiatives and drive government policy on disaster risk reduction and resilience.

Over time, the process for updating the National Action Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and information gathered from monitoring, evaluation and learning arrangements is anticipated to assist in the identification and assessment of national projects. Other measures, such as an expert advisory forum to support national implementation of the framework across non‑government sectors, may also assist in the future.

### Assessment criteria

Projects will be selected based on the following considerations:

* National and cross-jurisdictional effect, impact or influence
* Contribution to achieving the priorities, outcomes and goals of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework across Australia’s built, social, natural and economic environments, to:
  + take action to reduce existing disaster risk
  + minimise the creation of future disaster risk, and
  + equip decision makers with the capabilities and information they need to reduce disaster risk and manage residual risk
* Demonstrated need or capability gap
  + coherence of proposed projects with other initiatives, programs or activities and no duplication in Australian Government funding
* Demonstrated ability and capacity of lead agency to deliver the project
* Feedback received from consultation with the Commonwealth, states and territories
* Risk assessment, and
* Value for money (including for example, costs, benefits, practical application and expected utilisation, ongoing maintenance and sustainability, collaboration and contributions from other parties).

### Timing

An annual assessment cycle is proposed with the aim of identifying, assessing and approving projects in the second half of each financial year (February‑May) for commencement at the start of the next financial year (July).

If necessary, projects may be sought and considered at other times to address government priorities and requirements that arise, or should further funding become available.