



TASMANIAN RELIEF AND RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS: NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

Guideline 3

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

This guideline applies to emergency assistance outlined in Section 5.1 Category A Activities of the *Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements: Natural Disaster Relief to Local Government Policy* (the Policy).

Natural disasters can cause significant personal hardship and distress through dislocation, loss of personal belongings and damage to homes. Local government assistance may be required to support the immediate emergency needs of affected individuals. Such assistance, aimed at alleviating personal hardship and distress, may be provided in the form of Category A activities under Section 5.1 of the Policy.

Councils can only claim eligible expenditure (outlined in Section 7 Eligible Expenditure of the Policy) associated with Category A activities specified in this guideline. For other forms of emergency assistance for individuals, councils must write to the Department of Premier and Cabinet in the form of Schedule XXX Eligibility Enquiry Form seeking approval to treat the activity as an eligible activity under the Policy.

Category A principles

- Category A activities are intended to address the immediate emergency needs of individuals to alleviate personal hardship and distress which is a direct result of an eligible natural disaster (outlined in Section 2.1 Eligible Natural Disaster of the Policy);
- Category A activities should target individuals who have a genuine need, rather than those who can support / fund their own relief and recovery;
- Category A activities can be automatically made available by councils;
- Councils are responsible for administering Category A activities, including determining the amount / level of assistance required and setting timeframes;
- Councils are encouraged to provide the same type and level of assistance to individuals who are affected by the same or similar eligible natural disasters; and
- Category A activities are generally only available for 12 months following an eligible natural disaster. However, they may be available for a longer period depending on the nature and severity of an eligible natural disaster.

Emergency food, clothing and accommodation

The intent of this activity is to help individuals directly affected by eligible natural disasters meet immediate emergency needs.

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with providing the following basic emergency assistance:

- Water – for example, bottled water and beverages at evacuation centres;
- Food – for example, catering at evacuation centres;
- Clothing – for example, basic emergency clothing;
- Emergency shelter – for example, short-term accommodation at evacuation centres or in hotels;
- Transportation – for example, transportation for individuals to travel to emergency accommodation; and
- Personal items – for example, basic medical supplies and medication.

Eligible expenditure associated with delivering basic emergency assistance may include:

- Additional staffing costs¹;
- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors assisting operations of evacuation centres;
- Engaging service providers – for example, not-for-profit organisations providing clothing at evacuation centres;
- Transportation costs – for example, bus hire to transport displaced individuals;
- Establishing evacuation centres – for example, bedding for displaced individuals and facilities for companion animals; and
- Operational costs – for example, rental charges and power costs for the period a building is operating as an evacuation centre.

Repair or replacement of essential household items of furniture and personal effects

The intent of this activity is to help individuals directly affected by eligible natural disasters repair or replace essential household items.

In order to claim financial assistance, councils must be able to demonstrate:

- Household items being replaced were in a principal place of residence and damaged by an eligible natural disaster; and
- There are no other means of funding household items being replaced.

¹ Additional staffing costs include overtime and allowances for council employees. Ordinary salaries and wages of council employees undertaking Category A activities are not eligible expenses.



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Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with replacing the following essential household items:

- Cooking utensils – cutlery, pots, pans and microwave ovens;
- Bedding – mattresses, sheets, blankets and pillows;
- Furniture – beds, chairs and tables; and
- Whitegoods – refrigerator, freezer, washing machine, stove and kettle.

Eligible expenditure associated with replacing essential household items may include:

- Engaging service providers – for example, private companies providing essential household items;
- Transportation costs – for example, delivery van hire to transport essential household items; and
- Operational costs – for example, shopfront hire and power costs for the period which councils are making essential household items available to affected individuals.

Before purchasing essential household items, Councils should consider if it is possible and appropriate to source donated goods from non-government organisations, such as St Vincent de Paul Society.

Emergency repairs to housing

The intent of this activity is to help individuals directly affected by eligible natural disasters undertake emergency repairs to make principal places of residence safe, habitable and secure.

In order to claim financial assistance, councils must be able to demonstrate:

- Repairs relate to damage incurred to a principal place of residence as a direct result of an eligible natural disaster;
- Repairs will make principal places of residence safe, habitable and secure; and
- There are no other means of funding repair work (including utilising any insurance arrangements).

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with the following emergency repair work:

- Safety inspections – for example, structural integrity and essential services safety checks;
- Temporary repairs – for example, covering damaged roofs and broken windows;
- Permanent structural repairs – for example, roof repairs, repairing structural supports and replacing broken windows; and
- Reconnecting essential household services – for example, repairs to water, electricity and sewerage connections.

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Eligible expenditure associated with emergency repair work may include:

- Additional staffing costs²;
- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors undertaking safety checks;
- Engaging service providers – for example, private companies undertaking permanent structural repairs; and
- Consumable costs - tarpaulins, ropes and chains;
- Transportation costs; and
- Vehicle and equipment repairs and servicing.

Demolition to restore a residential block for rebuilding

The intent of this activity is to help homeowners directly affected by eligible natural disasters undertake demolition works to restore a residential block for rebuilding.

In order to claim financial assistance, councils must be able to demonstrate:

- Demolition works relate to damage incurred as a direct result of an eligible natural disaster;
- Demolition activities will assist homeowners restore residential blocks to rebuild principal places of residence in the same location; and
- There are no other means of funding demolition activities (including utilising any insurance arrangements).

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with the following demolition activities:

- Demolishing residential properties and removing building material debris (such as tiles, bricks and broken glass);
- Removing hazardous waste (such as asbestos); and
- Preparing the residential block for rebuilding.

Eligible expenditure associated with demolition activities may include:

- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors undertaking demolition works;
- Engaging service providers – for example, private companies undertaking demolition works;
- Transportation and disposal costs; and
- Establishing, operating and decommissioning temporary dumpsites to accommodate building material debris from residential properties.

² Additional staffing costs includes overtime and allowances for council employees. Ordinary salaries and wages of council employees undertaking Category A activities are not eligible expenses.

Removal of debris from residential properties to make them safe and habitable

The intent of this activity is to help individuals directly affected by eligible natural disasters remove disaster related debris from their principal place of residence to make it safe and habitable and therefore prevent displacement. This measure does not cover non-essential debris removal activities occurring beyond the immediate vicinity of residential buildings.

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with the following debris removal activities:

- Cleaning-up and removing debris inside and immediately outside residential buildings – for example, clean-up and removal of mud, damaged household items and building material debris (such as tiles, bricks and broken glass);
- Removing green waste, fallen trees and trees which have become dangerous as a direct result of eligible natural disasters;
- Removing and disposing spoiled perishable foods;
- Removing hazardous material (such as asbestos) exposed as a direct result of eligible natural disasters including removing hazardous material located beyond the immediate vicinity of a residential building if it is causing health and safety risks for residents;
- Removing septic waste; and
- Post-disaster clearing of blocked drains, guttering and downpipes.

Eligible expenditure associated with debris removal activities may include:

- Additional staffing costs³;
- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors undertaking debris removal from residential properties;
- Engaging service providers – for example, private companies undertaking debris removal from residential properties;
- Transportation and disposal costs;
- Establishment, operation and decommissioning temporary dumpsites to accommodate debris removal from residential properties;
- Hiring specialised cleaning machinery – for example, pressure hoses to remove mud;
- Consumable costs – for example, chainsaw chains; and
- Forgone revenue – for example, allowing households to dispose of disaster related debris free of cost at council owned dumpsites.

³ Additional staffing costs includes overtime and allowances for council employees. Ordinary salaries and wages of council employees undertaking Category A activities are not eligible expenses.

Extraordinary counter-disaster operations for the benefit of an affected individual

The intent of this assistance measure is to help individuals who are under threat from, or directly affected by, eligible natural disasters.

In order to claim financial assistance, councils must be able to demonstrate that costs exceed the amount that councils could reasonably have expected to incur for counter-disaster activities. For example, councils were required to employ additional personnel to undertake counter-disaster activities or counter-disaster costs were significantly higher than historical averages.

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with the following counter-disaster activities:

- Search and rescue operations;
- Evacuating threatened / affected people and companion animals;
- Sandbagging and / or constructing portable temporary levees / flood barriers to prevent inundation of residential properties;
- Firefighting activities to protect residential properties;
- Tree bracing to protect residential properties;
- Residential rapid damage assessments;
- Residential water safety testing;
- Cleaning and refilling residential potable water systems and septic tanks;
- Establishing temporary access routes to undertake counter-disaster activities and to allow individuals to return home;
- Restoring assets directly damaged by counter-disaster operation activities – for example, repairing fencing damaged during firefighting activities;
- Resupply of water used for firefighting activities; and
- Cleaning-up debris that resulted from counter-disaster activities.

Eligible expenditure associated with counter-disaster activities may include:

- Additional staffing costs⁴;
- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors sandbagging to prevent inundation of residential properties;
- Engaging service providers – for example, private companies undertaking tree bracing to protect residential properties;
- Consumable costs – for example, ropes and fire retardant;

⁴ Additional staffing costs includes overtime and allowances for council employees. Ordinary salaries and wages of council employees undertaking Category A activities are not eligible expenses.



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- Transportation costs – for example, transporting labour, equipment and materials to construct temporary levees;
- Hiring additional plant and equipment, other than aerial firefighting aircraft; and
- Vehicle and equipment repairs and servicing.

Personal and financial counselling

The intent of this assistance measure is to help individuals and families suffering personal hardship and distress as a direct result of eligible natural disasters.

Councils can claim eligible expenditure associated with the following personal and financial counselling activities:

- Assessing the financial, personal, emotional and psychological needs of disaster affected individuals and families;
- Offering specialised individual or group counselling services;
- Providing information on the range of assistance measures available to disaster affected individuals and families;
- Liaising with disaster assistance delivery agencies;
- Undertaking outreach services to provide assistance in remote and regional disaster affected communities;
- Assisting with disaster related insurance claims; and
- Providing referrals to specialist financial, legal and psychological services.

Eligible expenditure associated with delivering personal and financial counselling may include:

- Additional staffing costs⁵;
- Engaging additional temporary personnel – for example, short-term contractors providing counselling;
- Engaging service providers – for example, specialist counselling organisations;
- Transportation costs – for example, car hire, fuel and accommodation for counsellors undertaking outreach services; and
- Publication / printing costs associated with providing disaster specific counselling information.

Councils should consult with Tasmanian Government agencies if they are proposing to provide personal and financial counselling services to ensure consistent service and information across disaster-impacted communities.

⁵ Additional staffing costs includes overtime and allowances for council employees. Ordinary salaries and wages of council employees undertaking Category A activities are not eligible expenses .