
NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board – Chair’s Report

Q2 2023

June 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this Quarterly Report

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

More information

NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board – Chair’s Report

Published by the NSW Reconstruction Authority

Website: <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-agencies/nsw-reconstruction-authority>

Email: info@reconstruction.nsw.gov.au

Published: 28 August 2023

Copyright and disclaimer

© State of New South Wales through the NSW Reconstruction Authority 2023. Information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing, March 2023, and is subject to change. For more information, please visit <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/copyright>.

Contents

1. Role and Function of the Board	4
2. Membership of the Board	4
3. Exercise of the Authority's functions – 1 April to 30 June 2023	5
3.1 Administrative Arrangements Order	5
3.2 Reconstruction Area (Northern Rivers) Order 2023	5
3.3 Protocols - exercise of powers and functions under the NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022	6
3.4 Delivery of functions	7
4. Other information	13

1. Role and Function of the Board

The NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board (the Board) is established under section 24 of the *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022* (the Act).

The functions of the Board are set out in section 25 of the Act as follows:

- (a) to provide advice to the chief executive officer about the Authority's strategic priorities,
- (b) to make recommendations to the chief executive officer about –
 - (i) priorities for community infrastructure, other property and community services needed for the protection, rebuilding and recovery of affected communities, and
 - (ii) the need for the declaration of declared projects, reconstruction areas and disaster prevention areas,
- (c) to provide advice to the Minister and chief executive officer in relation the Authority's functions, including –
 - (i) whether the Authority is exercising the Authority's functions in an appropriate, effective and efficient way, and
 - (ii) any other matter requested by the Minister or the chief executive officer.

Schedule 1 of the Act has effect in relation to the Board, setting out at part 2, the Constitution of the Board and at part 3, the Procedure for Board meetings.

In addition to the Act, the Board's governance framework includes draft Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to be endorsed by the Board at its first meeting. Following adoption by the Board, these documents will be provided to the Minister and published on the NSW Reconstruction Authority's website.

2. Membership of the Board

There are seven (7) members on the Board. The Chair is nominated by the Minister. The Minister also nominates four (4) other members, and two (2) members are nominated by the Commonwealth.

All appointments must be approved by Cabinet on the recommendation of the Minister and then by the Governor in Executive Council. The nomination of one (1) member by the Minister and two (2) members by the Commonwealth are pending.

The Minister must call the first meeting of the Advisory Board within three (3) months, after the date on which the last member nominated by the Minister is appointed, in accordance with Schedule 1, clause 17 (a) of the Act.

As at 30 June 2023, the membership of the Board is as follows:

Name	Position	Nominated by	Appointment date	Term ends
Mr Stephen Murray	Chair	Minister for Planning	2 March 2023	1 March 2026
Mr Charles Glanville	Member	Minister for Planning	2 March 2023	1 March 2026
Mr David Owens	Member	Minister for Planning	2 March 2023	1 March 2026
Prof Mary O'Kane	Member	Minister for Planning	2 March 2023	1 March 2026

3. Exercise of the Authority's functions – 1 April to 30 June 2023

The Chair concludes that the NSW Reconstruction Authority has exercised its functions in an appropriate, effective and efficient way.

3.1 Administrative Arrangements Order

On 23 June 2023, an Administrative Arrangements Order from the NSW Government was made providing for the transition of the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (NRRRC) and Infrastructure NSW's Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley (HNV) Flood Risk Management Directorate into the NSW Reconstruction Authority. This will come into effect from 1 July 2023.

Under the NSW Reconstruction Authority, the NRRRC will retain its Northern Rivers identity and continue to focus on rebuilding communities in the Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed Local Government Areas. This includes delivering the Resilient Homes Program.

The HNV Directorate will consist of experts with extensive experience in understanding flood risk, mitigation and preparedness in floodplains. The Directorate will work on developing the state's first local disaster adaptation plan, which will focus on flood risk in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley. This will build on its previous work under Infrastructure NSW to prepare and support communities in western Sydney before, during and after emergencies.

Having the critical work and collective efforts of NSW Reconstruction Authority and the NRRRC and HNV teams under a single agency will provide important opportunities to learn from a broad range of experiences and better help communities prepare for future disasters and recover and more effectively rebuild.

3.2 Reconstruction Area (Northern Rivers) Order 2023

On 13 June 2023, the Reconstruction Area (Northern Rivers) Order 2023 was declared under the NSW Reconstruction Act 2022. The reconstruction area includes the Local Government Areas of Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed.

The declaration of the Northern Rivers as a reconstruction area means the NSW Reconstruction Authority can help address issues delaying the rebuilding of the region and enables the NSW Reconstruction Authority to require prompt decisions that influence reconstruction and recovery.

It also enables the NSW Reconstruction Authority to assist the NRRRC, along with local councils, in delivering the timely reconstruction of housing, essential assets and infrastructure in the Northern Rivers.

3.3 Protocols - exercise of powers and functions under the NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022

The NSW Reconstruction Authority continues to ensure statutory powers provided by the Act are exercised in a manner that is cooperative, transparent, understood by stakeholders and minimises associated risks.

To help achieve this, the [NSW Reconstruction Authority Act - Draft Protocols \(PDF, 823KB\)](#) were developed to guide how the Act's powers and associated functions are exercised.

At the time of reporting, protocols were being prepared for consultation.

The purpose of the Protocols is to guide how the NSW Reconstruction Authority will exercise its powers and associated functions under the Act and NSW Reconstruction Authority Regulation 2023 (the Regulations).

The NSW Reconstruction Authority will ensure its powers are exercised to achieve the primary object of the Act, and in a manner that is cooperative, transparent and minimises associated risks.

To achieve this, the Protocols cover:

- cooperation with and assistance by relevant entities
- transparency and engagement with stakeholders
- heads of consideration when giving directions, notices etc
- the role of emergency management agencies in responding to emergencies, and
- implementation of existing plans.

The Act prescribes functions in disaster prevention (mitigation of impacts from, and adaptation to disasters), preparedness, recovery, and reconstruction. It requires the production of plans for mitigation and adaptation and requires consideration of the impacts of climate change.

The Protocols have been prepared to guide how the NSW Reconstruction Authority will exercise its powers and associated functions to achieve the primary object of the Act, which is to promote community resilience to the impact of disasters in NSW through:

- disaster prevention, preparedness, and adaptation, and
- recovery and reconstruction following disasters.

The powers and functions of the NSW Reconstruction Authority include to:

- carry out development in accordance with a proposed development declaration by the Premier (s.12)
- direct another government agency, State owned corporation or planning authority to take certain actions (s.13)
- prepare and review the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and any Disaster Adaptation Plans (ss.30-37)
- recommend the declaration of a project, reconstruction area or disaster prevention area (ss.38-40)
- deal with land vested in the NSW Reconstruction Authority (ss.46-49)
- issue a notice to decide or progression notice for a declared project or area (ss.50-51),
- issue a step-in notice, but only with the Minister's approval and after issuing a notice to decide or a progression notice (sections 52-58), and
- carry out or be responsible for the delivery of development that is a declared project (ss.62-65).

3.4 Delivery of functions

Recovery activities

The following information provides an overview of the impacts and recovery efforts, specific to the NSW Reconstruction Authority (as at 30 June 2023) related to the following disaster declarations:

AGRN 1012 Severe Weather and Flooding from 22 February 2022 onwards

Local Government Areas – Armidale, Ballina, Bayside, Bega, Bellingen, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Byron, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury, Bankstown, Central Coast, Cessnock, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Cumberland, Dungog, Eurobodalla, Fairfield, Georges River, Glen Innes Severn, Goulburn Mulwaree, Hawkesbury, Hornsby, Inner West, Kempsey, Kiama, Ku-ring-gai, Kyogle, Lake Macquarie, Lismore, Lithgow, Liverpool, Maitland, Mid Coast, Mid-Western, Muswellbrook, Nambucca, Newcastle, Northern Beaches, Parramatta, Penrith, Port Macquarie/Hastings, Port Stephens, Queanbeyan, Palerang, Richmond Valley, Ryde, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Singleton, Snowy Monaro, Strathfield, Sutherland, Tenterfield, The Hills, Tweed, Upper Hunter, Waverley, Wingecarribee, Willoughby, Wollondilly, Wollongong.

AGRN 1025 Severe Weather and Flooding from 27 June 2022 onwards

Local Government Areas – Bayside, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cabonne, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury Bankstown, Central Coast, Cessnock, Cowra, Cumberland, Dubbo, Dungog, Fairfield, Georges River, Hawkesbury, Hornsby, Kempsey, Kiama, Lake Macquarie, Lithgow, Liverpool, Maitland, Mid Coast, Muswellbrook, Nambucca, Narromine, Newcastle, Northern Beaches, Oberon, Penrith, Port Macquarie Hastings, Parkes, Parramatta, Port Stephens, Randwick, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Singleton, Strathfield, Sutherland, The Hills, Upper Lachlan, Walgett, Warren, Wingecarribee, Wollondilly, Wollongong.

AGRN 1030 Southern and Central West NSW Flooding from 4 August 2022 onwards

Local Government Areas – Albury, Bland, Cabonne, Carrathool, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Dubbo, Forbes, Gilgandra, Goulburn Mulwaree, Griffith, Gunnedah, Hilltop, Junee, Leeton, Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Narromine, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Snowy Monaro, Snowy Valleys, Temora, Wagga Wagga, Warren, Warrumbungle, Weddin, Yass Valley.

AGRN 1034 NSW Flooding from 14 September 2022

Local Government Areas – Albury, Balranald, Bathurst, Bega Valley, Berrigan, Bland, Blayney, Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cabonne, Carrathool, Central Coast, Central Darling, Cobar, Coolamon, Coonamble, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Cowra, Dubbo, Edward River, Eurobodalla, Federation, Forbes, Gilgandra, Glen Innes Severn, Goulburn Mulwaree, Greater Hume, Griffith, Gunnedah, Gwydir, Hawkesbury, Hay, Hilltops, Inverell, Junee, Lachlan, Leeton, Kyogle, Lismore, Lithgow, Liverpool Plains, Lockhart, Moree Plains, Mid-Western, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Muswellbrook, Nambucca Valley, Narrabri, Narrandera, Narromine, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Richmond Valley, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Snowy Monaro, Snowy Valleys, Tamworth, Temora, Unincorporated Area, Upper Hunter, Upper Lachlan, Uralla, Wagga Wagga, Walcha, Walgett, Warren, Warrumbungle, Weddin, Wentworth, Wingecarribee, Yass Valley.

Activities of the NSW Reconstruction Authority focused on the provision of safe housing and coordinating support for individuals and communities as they recover:

- The declaration of the Northern Rivers as a formal reconstruction area enables the NSW Reconstruction Authority to make prompt decisions to influence reconstruction and will accelerate the approval of new housing, raising homes and approving residential development and subdivisions on low-risk land in the Northern Rivers. The same order dissolved the Lismore Planning Panel.
- A Regional Recovery Coordinator was appointed in April 2023 to work alongside the NRRC and the Authority's North Coast team to provide a point of contact to community leaders as recovery and reconstruction work continues.

- Business owners impacted by floods in 2022 who were still waiting for quotes, materials or tradespeople to complete repairs were given more time to submit claims for their grants. For those impacted by AGRN 1012 and AGRN 1025 applications for the relevant grants needed to be received by 30 June 2023. Deadlines for receiving claims in relation to applications which were accepted have been extended to 15 December 2023. The deadline for businesses impacted by AGRN 1034 to apply and submit their claims was extended until 15 December 2023.
- Coordinated recovery support continues across local government areas for the major events in 2022-23. In Western and Southern NSW, coordinated recovery efforts continue in flood-impacted communities, and temporary housing options (pods and at-home caravans) continue to be rolled out in western NSW.
- Local Recovery Support Services in the affected regions offered flood impacted communities face-to-face support and assistance for their recovery. Local councils are leading recovery service delivery in impacted areas as required. The temporary housing sites are being completed and opening for residents.
- Nine Community Recovery Officers will soon be in place for the Local Government Areas of: Berrigan, Central Darling, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Edward River, Gunnedah, Moree, Murray River, Narrabri and Wentworth. At the time of reporting, one Community Recovery Officer was established in Cabonne. The roles are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments and will be embedded in local councils, to collaborate with local community groups and other disaster management response and recovery stakeholders.
- Regional Recovery Coordinators for the impacted regions have been appointed and are overseeing recovery efforts across the North Coast, North West, Central West, Riverina, Murray and Murrumbidgee.
- A mobile Recovery Hub was held at the West Ballina Rugby Club on Monday 19 June, offering recovery support and advice from the NSW Reconstruction Authority, the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation, Service NSW, NSW Health, Ballina Shire Council, and other community supports.
- The number of established Recovery Centres reported as at 30 June 2023 was as follows: AGRN 1012 - 95, AGRN 1025 - 34 and AGRN 1034 - 52.

Natural disaster declarations

The table below lists natural disaster declarations made for recent bushfire and severe weather events:

AGRN	Details
AGRN 1047	Port Macquarie Hastings Severe Storm 3 February 2023, for Port Macquarie and Hastings LGAs
AGRN 1049	Dubbo and Wollongong Severe Storm – 9 February 2023, for Dubbo and Wollongong LGAs
AGRN 1052	NSW Bushfires -6 March 2023, for Bathurst, Bogan, Brewarrina, Coonamble, Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western, Walgett, and Warren LGAs
AGRN 1053	Gwydir and Narrabri NSW Bushfires – 18 January 2023; for Gwydir Shire and Narrabri Shire LGAs
AGRN 1054	Gwydir, Moree Plains and Narrabri NSW Bushfires – 1 March 2023; for Gwydir Shire, Moree Plains and Narrabri Shire LGAs
AGRN 1055	Western and North West NSW Bushfires – 17 February 2023; for Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra, Liverpool Plains and Upper Hunter LGAs
AGRN 1056	Upper Lachlan Bushfires – 16 March 2023; Upper Lachlan LGAs
AGRN 1057	Cootamundra-Gundagai and Hilltops Storm and Flooding – 12 March 2023; for Cootamundra-Gundagai and Hilltops LGAs

NSW Government Announcements

The table below details relevant NSW Government announcements made during 1 April 2023 – 30 June 2023:

Date	Details
6 May 2023	NSW Government vows to maintain flood relief
7 June 2023	\$70 million of NSW projects announced under new Disaster Ready Fund (Joint media release with Federal Minister for Emergency Management, Murray Watt, NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon Paul Scully MP, and Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Jihad Dib MP)
27 June 2023	Northern Rivers declared formal reconstruction area giving green light to rebuild
28 June 2023	Small businesses boosted as deadline to claim flood recovery costs extended

Grants administration

The table below relates to grant programs directly administered by the NSW Reconstruction Authority across a range of funding sources. In addition, there are recovery focused grants and other programs funded bilaterally between the Commonwealth and NSW via the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), which are administered by other state agencies.

Name of fund	Purpose	Total fund value (\$) - Information from IGB (\$m)	Funding source ¹
Disaster Ready Fund	<p>The DRF is the Commonwealth Government's flagship disaster resilience and risk reduction initiative, committing \$1 billion over five years, from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2028. It provides investment in disaster mitigation infrastructure and systemic disaster risk reduction projects, to address any, or multiple, natural hazards including extreme weather events and geological hazards. Only Australian state and territory governments are eligible under the Disaster Ready Fund to apply for funding via an overarching Application comprising all Project proposals. Applications for New South Wales are managed by the NSW Reconstruction Authority and funding arrangements for funded projects are administered by the NSW Reconstruction Authority.</p> <p>A total of 19 projects have been funded for NSW under Round 1. The funding includes building vital infrastructure like flood levees, seawalls and hazard warning systems that will help protect lives, homes, livelihoods and critical public infrastructure. The funding includes strategies to partner with Aboriginal communities to improve disaster readiness.</p>	\$31.76m	<p>Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW</p> <p>DRF projects require a 50% co-contribution from grantees (NSW Government Agency, Council or NGO)</p>
Disaster Risk Reduction Fund	<p>The DRRF funds target work across NSW to take action to reduce existing disaster risk, minimise creation of future disaster risk, and equip decision-makers with the capabilities and information they need to reduce disaster risk and manage residual risk. The program structure includes three grant streams: Statewide Risk Reduction, Local & Regional Risk Reduction, Research stream.</p>	\$51.8m	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW (50:50)
Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Fund	<p>Funding to support community recovery in areas of New South Wales impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires. Funding has been committed to 205 projects to deliver</p>	\$36.1m	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW (50:50)

¹ Funding Source amounts represent the value of funds under administration by the NSWRA, not total project costs.

	community well-being, social recovery and future resilience outcomes. Funding is provided through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Stream 2.1 was a non-competitive funding round with local council recipients identified through a considered bushfire impact assessment. Stream 2.2 is a competitive grants program.		
Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP - NPA)	Legacy projects funded under the previous National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience (NDRP NPA) 2015 to 2018 grant program joint funded by Commonwealth/State funding for bushfire mitigation, flood mitigation, community resilience innovation, emergency volunteer support and internal Resilience NSW projects.	\$48.2m	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW
Emergency Response Fund Programs	<p>A portfolio of Commonwealth bilateral funded projects under the Emergency Response Fund. The Emergency Response Fund Act 2019 (the Act) commenced on 12 December 2019, to fund natural disaster emergency response and disaster recovery and preparedness. From 1 July 2023 it will be superseded by the Disaster Ready Fund. The Australian Government requires a central agency to act as the NSW jurisdiction lead and coordination point for disaster risk reduction bilateral funding arrangements under the Emergency Response Fund. As jurisdiction lead, the NSW Reconstruction Authority's role is to provide consistency of quality and service levels to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) across all bilateral funding arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NSW Reconstruction Authority provides assurance of implementation plans and progress reports, including variation requests made by delivery agencies. - The NSW Reconstruction Authority is also accountable for ensuring a consistent approach to risk escalation and alignment of NSW Government positions for example technical, political and other pragmatic approaches. - For competitive funding rounds, the NSW Reconstruction Authority also designs and delivers project selection processes and due diligence for proposals to be consolidated under a NSW funding application, for example for the Commonwealth's Disaster Ready Fund. <p>The NSW Reconstruction Authority has established Memorandum of Understanding</p>	\$262.31m	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW

	<p>arrangements for the following funding rounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program Round 1 \$13.37m (Department of Planning & Environment) - National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program Round 2 \$19.214m (Department of Planning & Environment) - Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program \$4.725m (NSW Public Works) - Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program \$150m (Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation) - Flood Recovery and Resilience Program \$75m (Department of Planning & Environment and NSW Public Works) 		
NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research and Technology Acceleration Program	The program has been established to provide a coordinated approach to investments in research and technologies across NSW Government agencies in response to the findings and recommendations of inquiries (NSW Bushfire Inquiry and Royal Commission) into natural disaster events. Two streams are attached to this program: the Research and Knowledge Fund (RK Fund) and the Natural Hazards Technology Acceleration Fund (Tech Fund). Only NSW Government agencies are funded recipients of this program.	\$40.3m	100% NSW Funded. Under this program, Research Knowledge Fund stream includes two projects co-funded by the Commonwealth through the NPA via the DRRF Program.
NGO Operational Agreements	Funding Agreements provide operational and capital asset funding to five NGOs who deliver emergency and rescue services and support combat and functional areas during disaster and emergency events in NSW.	\$128m	100% NSW Funded
Flood Rescue Capability Enhancement Program - Phase 1 Implementation (FRCEP)	One-off agreements for funds provided to three NGOs as part of the \$200m funding package in response to the 2022 NSW Flood Inquiry recommendation. The NGOs deliver emergency and rescue services and support combat and functional areas during disaster and emergency events, and funding is to address significant capability gaps identified by the Flood Inquiry.	\$10.5m	100% NSW Funded
COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program (CCCWP)	\$5 million COVID-19 Community Connections and Wellbeing Program, part of the \$130 million NSW Government mental health recovery package to mitigate the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19. The program's aim is to support local community wellbeing events and promote the building of resilience and capability within communities to sustain long-term wellbeing.	\$5m	100% NSW Funded

COVID Regional Community Support Program (CRCSP)	The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal was appointed to administer the CRCS program to support locally based groups in remote, rural and regional NSW supporting their communities to navigate the ongoing impacts of COVID.	\$1.42m	100% NSW Funded
	TOTAL	\$615.39m	

The table below relates to Disaster Relief Grants (DRGs), one-off relief payments to households and individuals that are tied to specific disaster events. This is a demand driven program with no total fund value - that is, it is open to all eligible individuals and households impacted by specific disaster events.

AGRN	Purpose	Amount spent as at 29 June 2023 (inclusive of structural and household)
AGRN 1012	Grants to replace essential contents or undertake essential structural repairs / rebuild activities for low income, uninsured persons with limited financial resources	\$24.72m
AGRN 1025		\$496k
AGRN 1030/1034		\$1.21m
	TOTAL	\$26.426m

4. Other information

The NSW Reconstruction Authority appointed a dedicated role (Manager, Governance and Board Secretariat) to support the Chair and the work of the Advisory Board in the quarter ending 30 June 2023.

NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board – Quarterly Report

NSW Reconstruction Authority
GPO Box 6434
Sydney NSW 2001

W: <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-agencies/nsw-reconstruction-authority>

