
NSW Reconstruction Authority Advisory Board – Chair’s Report

Q1 2023

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We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.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

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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 Authority's website.

2. Minister/s Responsible

The Hon. Paul Scully – Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the Hon Jihad Dib MP – Minister for Emergency Services.

2.1 Ministerial Expectations of Board members (as outlined in Letters of Appointment to Members)

Code of Conduct

It is a member's responsibility to comply with the Board's Code of Conduct (the Code) as well as all relevant whole of government policies and departmental policies and procedures. The Code is a statement of principles, and it is a member's responsibility to understand and follow compliance standards, and to adhere to the ethical principles outlined in the Code.

Declarations of interests

It is accepted and acknowledged that members may have business interests other than those of the Board. As a condition of appointment, members have a duty to declare any private interest that may impinge on the Board's decisions as outlined in the Code and Terms of Reference.

A general disclosure must be made by members at the beginning of their term. Members must make specific disclosures with full and accurate details of the interest or issue as soon as possible after the relevant facts come to their knowledge.

Confidentiality

Members may have access to sensitive, personal and or commercially confidential information during appointment and tenure on the Board that should not be disclosed to third parties unless required by law. Members should treat all information provided as confidential unless otherwise advised.

Time commitment

Members agree to devote such time as is prudent and necessary for the proper performance of their role, duties, and responsibilities as members of the Board.

3. Board Operating Plan

An Operating Plan is being developed in consultation with the Board Chair and CEO articulating Board responsibilities under the Act and how these will be achieved in practice. The Operating Plan articulates how:

- Ministerial expectations of Board members will be met
- advice will be provided to the CEO on the Authority's strategic priorities (s.25(a))
- recommendations will be made about priorities for community infrastructure and the need for other property and community services (s.25(b)(i))
- recommendations will be made about the need for the declaration of declared projects, reconstruction areas and disaster prevention areas (s.25(b)(ii))
- advice will be provided to the Minister and CEO in relation to the Authority's functions including whether the Authority is exercising the Authority's functions in an appropriate, effective and efficient way (s.25(c)(i))
- advice to the Minister and CEO in relation to the Authority's functions including any other matter requested by the Minister or CEO (s.25(c)(ii))
- quarterly reporting on the exercise of the Authority's functions will be provided to the Minister

The Board Operating Plan will be provided to the Minister once finalised.

4. 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.

The current 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

An introductory meeting between Board Members and the NSW Reconstruction Authority Executive Leadership Team was held on 17 March 2023. The meeting provided an opportunity for introductions and an overview of the work undertaken by the Authority as well as a discussion around contributions to be made by the Board.

4.1 Member profiles (as at 31 March 2023)

Mr Stephen Murray – Chair

Mr Murray has extensive experience delivering complex strategic planning, policy, operational and regulatory outcomes across local, regional and State government jurisdictions both nationally and internationally. Having formerly worked in the NSW Department of Planning for more than 15 years, Mr Murray has a rich experience in regional planning, specifically the state’s northern regions. Mr Murray is currently the Independent Chair of Technical Advisory Panel Sydney Aerotropolis, and the State Representative of Sydney Central Planning Panel.

Mr Charles Glanville

Mr Glanville is an architect and has more than 45 years’ experience working in building, planning and construction, providing service to public and private sectors both in Australia and overseas. Mr Glanville is a leading expert in education design with more than 350 completed school projects and 200 other projects in a range of sectors including, institutional, commercial, retail, health, aged care, residential, infrastructure and affordable housing. Mr Glanville has held positions on several boards and community-based organisations, particularly in western Sydney.

Mr David Owens APM

As the former Deputy Police Commissioner, Mr Owens was responsible for the leadership and management of nearly 13,000 police and 1,200 public servants, with responsibility for a budget of \$3 billion. Mr Owens has great knowledge and experience in crisis and emergency management, including four-year experience as the State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCON). As the longest serving officer in SEOCON, Mr Owens operated at various events, including the Sydney 2000 Olympics, the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires in Victoria, and the 2011 Christchurch New Zealand Earthquake. Mr Owens represented the NSW Police Force on the State Emergency Management Committee and State Rescue Board respectively, and also co-led the 2020 NSW Bushfire Inquiry with Professor Mary O’Kane.

Prof Mary O’Kane AC

Professor O’Kane, a scientist and engineer, has a wide and deep experience in areas of development, public policy, research, etc. She is a member or chair of many Government and private sector boards and committees, such as the current Chair of the NSW Independent Planning

Commission. Professor O’Kane co-led the 2020 NSW Bushfire Inquiry and, in 2022, co-led the NSW Independent Flood Inquiry.

5. Exercise of the Authority’s functions – 1 January to 31 March 2023

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

5.1 Establishment of the NSW Reconstruction Authority

The *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022* passed both houses of NSW Parliament on 17 November 2022. The Act establishes the NSW Reconstruction Authority and sets out its functions and powers.

On 16 December 2022, an Administrative Arrangements Order was made which abolished the former Resilience NSW and transitioned relevant functions and most of its staff to the Authority, with immediate effect. Other functions transitioned to the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Police.

Mr Mick Cassel, Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, was appointed acting Chief Executive Officer for the Authority pending an external, comparative recruitment process for the inaugural CEO.

On 14 February 2023, Simon Draper was appointed as CEO of the NSW Reconstruction Authority. Having worked in the NSW Government for 9 years, Simon was Deputy Secretary Economic Policy at the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Secretary of the Department of Industry and was CEO of Infrastructure NSW from 2019 to 2023.

Executive and organisational structure

Creation of new Groups in the Authority

The Authority is establishing itself around its core functions – mitigation and adaptation, and reconstruction, preparedness and recovery, and corporate services. Two primary functional groups have been identified and work will commence across these as follows:

- Preparedness and Recovery Group
 - This group will support households, local governments, community organisations, businesses and industry to understand the risks they face as a community and the steps they should take to reduce disaster impact, and then enact community focused programs to provide recovery support after a disaster.
- Mitigation, Adaptation and Reconstruction Group
 - This group will develop strategies and actions beyond those capable of being undertaken by households, community organisations, business or industry to reduce the impacts of disasters. These strategies and actions may involve forecasting and warning systems, land use planning, land management practices and Aboriginal stewardship of land, nature-based risk reduction measures, new or upgraded housing and investment in public infrastructure. The skills required in planning for adaptation are often common to those required of reconstruction processes. Reconstruction will be undertaken in a manner consistent with adaptation plans.

These functions are supported by Corporate Services and Finance and Operations which are essential for the effective functioning of the agency.

5.2 Governance of the NSW Reconstruction Authority

The *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022* (the Act) along with the NSW Reconstruction Authority Regulation 2023 establishes and provides powers to the Authority and sets out its functions and

responsibilities. A regulatory impact statement for this regulation is being exhibited (14 April 2023 – 15 May 2023).

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 Authority is subject to the control and direction of the Minister in the exercise of the Authority's functions.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EP&A Act) sets out processes for strategic planning as well as assessing and approving development approvals. The EP&A Act is referenced extensively in the Act. Parts 5, 6 and 7 of the Act particularly relate to powers of development, and Part 4 refers to the role of the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and local Disaster Adaptation Plans in strategic planning and decisions taken under the EP&A Act.

The *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW) (SERM Act), requires Ministers to ensure that adequate measures are taken by government agencies to prevent, prepare for, respond to and assist recovery from emergencies to co-ordinate the activities of government agencies in taking those measures, and to approve the State Emergency Management Plan and any amendments to this plan.

The SERM Act provides for the preparation of the State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN), establishes the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) and the positions of State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCN) and State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON). The NSW Police fulfills the role of SEOCN and the Authority fulfills the role of SERCON.

The NSW Recovery Plan is a key sub-plan to the EMPLAN. The Authority is responsible for administering, implementing and maintaining the NSW Recovery Plan which is currently under significant review.

5.3 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 March 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 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 Authority focussed on the provision of safe housing and coordinating support for individuals and communities as they recover:

- Coordinated clean-up and recovery efforts in flood-impacted communities in western and southern NSW.
- Temporary housing sites continued to be completed and opened for residents and temporary housing options (pods and at-home caravans) were rolled out across western NSW.
- Regional Recovery Coordinators were appointed to oversee recovery efforts in impacted regions (North Coast and North West, Central West, Riverina, Murray and Murrumbidgee).
- Coordinated recovery support continued across local government areas including Recovery Assistance Points coordinated by the Authority offering face-to-face support for disaster impacted households, businesses and farmers.

The table below references the number of recovery centres established across disaster declaration areas and the number of people who accessed the centres.

AGRN	No. of Recovery Centres Established (cumulative)	People through the door (cumulative)
AGRN 1012	95	53, 076
AGRN 1025	34	5,247
AGRN 1034	52	4, 694

(As at 30 March 2023)

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, for Upper Lachlan LGA

NSW Government Announcements

The table below details relevant NSW Government announcements made during 1 January 2023 – 30 March 2023:

Date	Details
13 January 2023	More than \$20 million of emergency funding fast tracked to support flood impacted communities
18 January 2023	NSW applications for the Commonwealth's Disaster Ready Fund open
14 February 2023	Hazards Near Me app launched, combining flood and fire alerts in one app
14 February 2023	Simon Draper appointed as the inaugural CEO of NSW Reconstruction Authority
17 February 2023	\$29 million Disaster Risk Reduction Fund announced, supporting more than 60 projects aimed at mitigating the impacts of future severe weather events and natural disasters
21 February 2023	First voluntary buyback offers made in the Northern Rivers
2 March 2023	\$44 million to repair flood-affected First Nations community assets, through the Aboriginal-owned Assets Program
2 March 2023	\$36 million to repair and rebuild flood damaged sports facilities, through the Essential Community Sport Assets Program
5 March 2023	More financial support for flood-impacted communities

Grants administration

The table below relates to grant programs directly administered by the 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
Disaster Risk Reduction Fund	The DRRF funds targeted 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	\$51.8	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW (50:50)
Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Fund	Funding to support community recovery in areas of NSW impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires. 205 projects will be funded to deliver 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 was a competitive grants program.	\$36.1	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW (50:50)
COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program (CCCWP)	\$5 million COVID-19 Community Connections and Wellbeing Program, which is part of the \$130 million NSW Government mental health recovery package to mitigate the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on the people of NSW. 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.	\$5.0	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.	\$1.42	100% NSW Funded
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	\$48.2	Bilateral - Commonwealth and NSW

	mitigation, flood mitigation, community resilience innovation, emergency volunteer support and internal Authority projects.		
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.	\$128	100% NSW Funded
	TOTAL	\$270.5	

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 27 March 2023
AGRN 1012	Grants to replace essential contents or undertake essential structural repairs / rebuild activities for low income, uninsured persons with limited financial resources	\$16.218m (\$4.57m structural) (\$11.64m household)
AGRN 1025		\$275k
AGRN 1030/1034		\$319k
	Total	\$16.812m

6. Other information

The Director, Governance provided secretariat support to the Chair in the quarter ending 31 March 2023.

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