

Fact Sheet

Eligibility Enquiries – Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018

December 2025

This fact sheet is for local councils, administering agencies, asset owners of essential public assets (including NSW state agencies), and non-government organisations. It outlines what an eligibility enquiry is, how to submit one, and provides common examples.

What is an eligibility enquiry?

An eligibility enquiry is a request for advice from the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) about:

- eligible expenditure under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018 (DRFA)
- eligible recovery and relief activities under the DRFA.

Who can submit an eligibility enquiry?

Local councils, asset owners, and non-government organisations should first seek advice from their administering agency. If further clarification is needed, the administering agency can request advice from RA. Before contacting, consult:

- [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018](#)
- [NSW Essential Public Assets Restoration Disaster Grant Program Guidelines](#)
- any relevant program guidelines to understand eligibility.

To submit an eligibility enquiry to RA, DRFA administering agencies should follow the process shown in Figure 1 below.

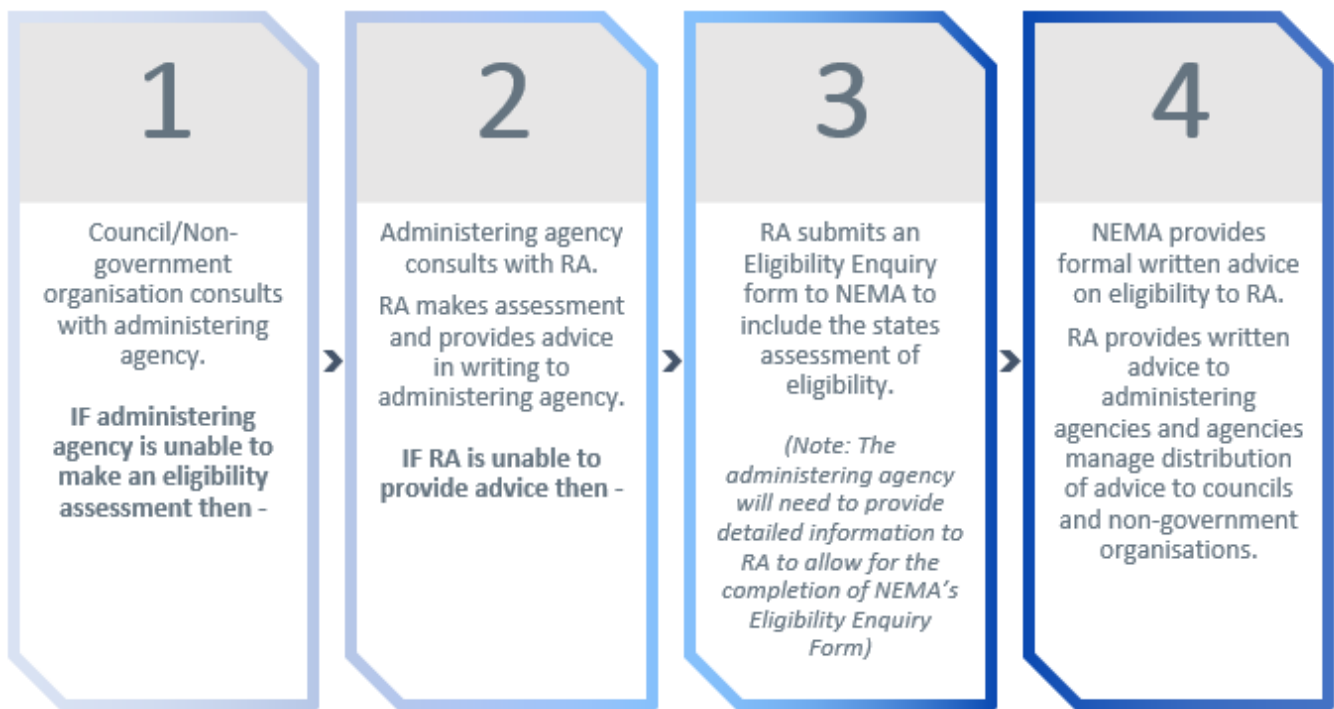


Figure 1: Process of submitting an eligibility enquiry

How long does it take for my enquiry to be resolved by RA?

Response times vary depending on the complexity of the enquiry and whether it requires assessment by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

If NEMA's input is needed, RA will coordinate the process. Time sensitive enquiries will be prioritised by RA.

Should I wait for the outcome of my enquiry before incurring expenditure on activities identified in my enquiry?

Critical work that poses an immediate risk to community safety or causes significant delays should proceed without delay. If this work is later determined to be eligible, the Australian Government may reimburse the costs.

For non-critical activities, it is recommended to wait for formal advice before committing funds. RA will prioritise time-sensitive enquiries. However, reimbursement for costs deemed ineligible under the DRFA remains at the discretion of the State.

Who should I contact?

For DRFA eligibility enquiries, administering agencies can email DRFACompliance@reconstruction.nsw.gov.au.

Asset owners seeking additional information or support for the repair of disaster-damaged essential public assets, should contact RA at Reconstructioncoordination@reconstruction.nsw.gov.au.

Common eligibility enquiries

Common eligibility enquiries vary depending on the category of works, administering agency and the specific program. For guidance on the eligibility of state expenditure, refer to [DRFA Definitions and Interpretation Clause 1.1.1](#). Examples of common eligibility enquiries have been included in Table 1.

Table 1: Common eligibility enquiries

Enquiry	What is eligible?
What are the characteristics of eligible expenditure?	<p>Eligible expenses are where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence is available to demonstrate that expenditure is directly linked to an eligible disaster. • Expenditure was incurred in the relevant time-period set out within the DRFA. • Expenditure complies with the eligibility criteria set out within the DRFA.
In which circumstances can you claim eligible expenditure for the use of existing council resources?	<p>Use of existing council resources are not covered by the DRFA. This includes printing, stationery, computers, vehicles or any other expenses which are incurred by the council as part of regular council activities or materials which are already owned by councils.</p> <p>*Use of some existing council resources may be eligible for Opt-In councils under Category B essential public asset restoration works. Refer to Project Management and Other Costs fact sheet and the Employee on-costs for Opt-In Arrangements fact sheet for more information.</p>
Which employee costs are eligible for reimbursement? Are costs to backfill a role used for disaster recovery eligible?	<p>Costs to employ temporary staff or contractors hired for disaster recovery or activity purposes are eligible.</p> <p>This includes base wage plus on costs to a maximum of 31.69% (including superannuation, workers compensation, and long service leave, if applicable).</p> <p>Backfill costs for any ongoing employees seconded into disaster recovery positions are also eligible for reimbursement, including superannuation, workers compensation, and long service leave (on cost).</p> <p>*Day labour cost may be eligible for asset owners and Opt-In councils under Category B essential public asset restoration works. Refer to Project Management and Other Costs fact sheet and the Employee on-costs for Opt-In Arrangements fact sheet for more information.</p>
Are costs related to venue hire eligible? What about costs to use council-owned halls?	<p>Costs incurred to rent a premise that is not owned by council and is directly associated with delivering assistance are eligible for reimbursement, should council not be able to leverage existing council premises.</p> <p><i>Loss of revenue on council owned buildings or premises is not eligible for reimbursement.</i></p>
Are vehicle hire costs and vehicle usage costs eligible?	<p>Vehicle hire including fuel, to attend meetings directly relating to delivering assistance after an event, is eligible for reimbursement, only where access to a council vehicle is not possible.</p> <p>If using an existing council vehicle, claiming the fuel used for trips (via a fuel card or credit card reimbursement with vehicle log to support the claim) is an eligible expense.</p> <p>All other costs for council vehicles (e.g. maintenance, allocated cost to role etc.) are not eligible to claim, as they are existing council assets.</p> <p>*Use of internal plant and equipment may be eligible for asset owners and Opt-In councils under Category B essential public asset restoration works. Refer to Project Management and Other Costs fact sheet for more information.</p>
What requirements do we need to meet for a Category C request?	<p>To seek Category C assistance, the NSW Government must demonstrate that a community, region or sector has been severely affected by an eligible disaster and there is a need for additional assistance to aid with its longer-term recovery. Category C assistance requires agreement from the Prime Minister.</p> <p>Refer DRFA Guideline 3 – Category C Assessment Framework</p>
What requirements do we need to meet for a Category D request?	<p>To seek Category D assistance, the NSW Government must demonstrate that a community, region or sector has been severely affected by an eligible disaster and there is a need for additional assistance to aid with its longer-term recovery.</p> <p>States are expected to make requests for Category C measures in this first instance prior to requesting assistance under Category D. Category D assistance requires agreement from the Prime Minister. Refer Clause 4.5 of the DRFA.</p>

Enquiry	What is eligible?
Can I purchase an asset outright and claim for reimbursement (e.g. phones, computers, equipment for meetings)?	<p>The DRFA covers the cost of hire for items such as computers, phones and other capital items that are directly associated with delivering assistance.</p> <p>The outright purchase of capital items is not eligible. Where items are purchased depreciation costs may be claimed.</p>

Further information

For details on opt-in councils under the Day Labour Co-Funding Arrangements (Essential Public Asset Restoration only) refer to:

- [Appendix A of the NSW Essential Public Assets Restoration Disaster Grant Program Guidelines](#)
- [Project Management and Other Costs Fact sheet](#)
- [Employee on-costs for Opt-In Arrangements Fact sheet](#)