

COAG REVIEW OF NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF AND MITIGATION  
ARRANGEMENTS

**IMPROVING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES FOR REMOTE  
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA**

Natural hazards in remote Indigenous communities present a range of challenges for disaster management practitioners. This paper examines some of those challenges and suggests approaches/strategies for consideration in the development of a national policy to guide disaster management interventions within those communities.

It needs to be recognised at the outset that disaster management infrastructure varies between the various States and Territories of Australia. Different community governance structures and statutory management systems have led to a diversity of arrangements for disaster management across the nation. The differences need to be recognised in the design of systemic and structural disaster management support mechanisms targeting the needs of Indigenous communities and applied at a national level. The mechanisms should have strict and clear guidelines but be flexible in their application.

Systemic and structural disaster management, through “*prevention, preparedness, response and recovery*” (PPRR), also needs to take into account the disparate environment of remote Indigenous communities relative to that of metropolitan and major regional centres. This account needs to recognise and address the gaps and cultural differences between systems and structures predicated on an assumed level of community capacity that does not necessarily exist within remote Indigenous communities, outstations or homelands particularly in relation to:

- critical population mass;
- basic and serviceable community infrastructure;
- accessible and basic community services;
- sustainable market economies;
- levels of literacy and numeracy; and
- community governance arrangements.

It also needs to be recognised that improved disaster management outcomes in remote Indigenous communities will only be achieved if the associated systems and structures are informed by the cultural needs and perspectives of those communities. Systems and structures must be flexible, responsive to and accommodate the values, priorities and practices of Indigenous Australians and their communities. The provision of ongoing education and support to members of these communities is necessary to ensure successful achievement of this outcome.

**Part A      Factors contributing to remote community vulnerability**

Typically, a level of endemic vulnerability exists within small remote communities across Northern Australia, contributed to by factors such as location in a hazardous region, low population level and density and the socio-economic disadvantage that characterise these communities generally.

Common to communities across the top end are problems associated with isolation exacerbated by sheer distance and a harsh and variable climate. During the wet season (typically from November to April), these communities are easily cut off completely due to extensive flooding from heavy monsoonal rains, and storms from tropical cyclones. Except for air (and in some cases, water) transport, many of these areas are cut off for all of the wet season, while for other communities and stations, the total isolation may be intermittent.

The very smallness of these outback communities increases their vulnerability because their small population concentration will only support a limited range and level of services and facilities. Socio-economic factors common to most remote communities further exacerbate their vulnerability. Most communities face limited employment opportunities, and are mainly reliant on welfare payments. In WA, most communities operate under the CDEP (work for the dole scheme), to encourage a work ethic. There is a growing trend in WA, NT and QLD to encourage communities to develop viable economic enterprises, such as cattle, tourism, fishing charters, aquaculture and market gardens. Food and building costs are significantly higher than in urban or larger regional centres. The reality for many households in such communities is generally one of housing shortage, access to limited resources and basic infrastructure and a lower standard of living generally.

These factors combine to place additional demands on local emergency management efforts and place constraints on the capacity of remote communities to build community resilience and to successfully undertake mitigation efforts, education and awareness that the community is in fact responsible for mitigation efforts is also a large factor here.

## **Part B Scope of emergency management issues in remote Indigenous communities**

The unique challenges posed by remote Indigenous communities for emergency management planning have been explored in various studies undertaken in recent years<sup>1</sup>. Some of these are discussed below to illustrate the scope of emergency management issues that can arise in remote Indigenous communities.

While the same issues may be present across different jurisdictions, they can vary in significance, depending on factors such as the communities' location, education levels and social cohesion and the frequency and vulnerability of the communities to natural disaster impacts.

**(i) 'Homeland communities'** In recent years, ATSI's 'National Homelands' policy supporting a decentralisation of Indigenous population away from major centres to out-stations and homeland communities, has contributed to a proliferation of small Indigenous settlements, many of which contain less than 50 people. In the Territory, for example, there are some 589 such Family Homeland (or out-stations) communities; and within the Cape York and Gulf regions of North Queensland, there are approximately 90 known outstations or homelands. These settlements may be located some distance away from larger Indigenous communities, and can place severe demands on already limited council and community resources for services, particularly during emergencies. For

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<sup>1</sup> See Report of the Strategic Planning Conference on the development of enhanced disaster awareness education programs for remote indigenous communities held in Darwin in 1997, and more recently in the EMA's study on isolated indigenous communities commenced in 2001.

example, one Aboriginal organisation in Borroloola (Mabunji Resource Centre) administers 24 out-stations and semi-administers 5 others.

The WA Government's response to the ATSIC Homelands Discussion Paper requires that outstations should only be funded if they satisfy six core criteria. One criterion is the provision for planned access by road, air or sea and the preparation of adequate community emergency management plans.

Historically, these homeland communities were usually established without particular regard to site suitability from an emergency management perspective or adequate provision for funding for infrastructure maintenance. The administrative responsibility for some of these out-stations is not always clearly defined, and hence can give rise to confusion about boundary responsibilities for a particular homeland community. This situation highlights the need for appropriate risk management in the decision-making process about the location of new outstations and homeland communities.

**(ii) Governing Structures and council capacity** Different local governing structures for small remote Indigenous communities exist across jurisdictions. Local Government or Community Councils provide limited municipal type services to many small and remote communities, as well as performing other functions not normally available on remote communities. In Queensland, Community councils provide a wide range of services and are acknowledged as having key responsibility for what happens in their communities. Resource centres, funded by ATSIC provide administration and limited services to some out-stations and small remote communities, however the division of responsibilities between the structures produces inefficiencies. For example, within Cape York, Aboriginal Corporations have been established to manage and provide services to many of the outstations within a sub-region<sup>2</sup>.

Access to adequate infrastructure services remains an issue for Indigenous people living in remote locations or in communities on Aboriginal Land, where responsibility for the provision of local government type services may be unresolved. Indigenous communities have a recognised need to develop the skills and resources of these councils to maximise the value of scarce community resources.

**(iii) Transient and mobile population** Members of Indigenous communities travel between communities for cultural and socio-economic reasons. This is particularly the case in remote communities when special celebrations are held, such as cultural festivals or ceremonies such as funerals, weddings and tombstone openings. This can cause significant variations in community population, raising issues in terms of the adequacy of basic essential services and the effective provision of emergency services – eg. knowing the numbers to be evacuated or requiring shelter in the event of an emergency response. For example, Yirrkala in the Territory, has a resident Indigenous population of around 800; the number of people in the community has been known to grow to between 1000 and 1200 at times (an increase of between 25% to 50%). This movement often creates difficulties in the delivery of disaster awareness programs and when trying to build local capacity for the response and recovery functions, particularly where key community

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<sup>2</sup> One such organisation, the Coen Regional Aboriginal Corporation, based in the Cook Shire, provides a local service as well as some services to outstations within the area. Managing the establishment of the new Land and Sea Management Sub-Regional Centres, funded through the National Heritage Trust, will add to the complexity of ensuring inefficiencies and duplication in community governance are minimised in respect of existing structures and systems in the Coen area.

people are away. It also exposes people travelling from region to region (and across State/Territory boundaries) and who are unaware of the local hazards, to increased risk.

**(iv) Geographic vulnerability** Many communities are located in areas susceptible to natural hazards, particularly cyclone and flooding. However, it is often difficult to relocate or reduce the vulnerability of these communities for reasons related to tradition, culture and cost. Despite ATSIC's recent moratorium on the development of new homeland communities, these communities continue to be established, in some cases, with little planning and consultation with local jurisdictional planning authorities, to identify risks in their environment. Consequently, many may be located in what are considered to be high-risk areas and therefore vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards eg. tropical cyclones, flooding and isolation due to road closures.

Balancing cultural and traditional beliefs with the modern non-Indigenous concept of town planning is difficult, but not impossible. After two major floods in the Wugularr community, a planning decision was made to move the community to higher and safer ground. This area was considered 'sacred', however elders decided that the priority of flood mitigation needs overrode this cultural consideration.

**(v) Community disaster planning** The change in many Indigenous communities to a quasi-urban style of existence has eroded their traditional skills and has thus reduced the community's ability to cope with natural hazards. Risk management, counter disaster planning and mitigation are crucial to such communities, however the capacity to undertake such programs simply does not exist in many communities. Investment over time to build capacity is required before community commitment and control is a workable approach. However, building capacity is a difficult and long-term task that is affected by many things, including the level of social cohesion and strength of the local community culture.

The recent Queensland Justice Fitzgerald *Cape York Justice Study* highlighted many complex issues such as family violence, alcohol and substance abuse, and other poor socio-economic indicators impacting on Indigenous communities, which combine to contribute to the low capacity prevalent in a majority of Cape York communities. Recommendations emanating from the study highlighted the very urgent need for government to take a more co-ordinated whole-of-government approach to addressing these issues.

The situation is further exacerbated by a lack of continuity of "community management" due to a high turnover of council staff. This results in insufficiently trained personnel in disaster and emergency management roles, which in turn, adversely impacts on community awareness and ability to implement any Counter Disaster Planning.

**(vi) Community responsibility and capacity building** Most Indigenous communities face a raft of fundamental social and health problems, that pushes disaster risk management issues into the background of more pressing community priorities. This leads to a greater reliance on Government with the expectation in many Indigenous communities that the responsibility for emergency management, including mitigation lies solely with Government. Mobilising community participation for disaster planning in such circumstances is generally very difficult. As is often the case, communities are far too reliant on having conscientious non-local staff managing for them. With extremely few exceptions, these people inevitably leave and take all the skills and knowledge with them.

Furthermore, as individual ownership levels of assets (eg. houses and whitegoods) are low in Indigenous communities, there is naturally a diminished sense of responsibility in relation to the protection and maintenance of “community” assets. To illustrate, in the Wugularr floods of 1998 and 2000 in the Northern Territory, the community was reluctant to clean their rented houses and contract cleaners had to be hired to do the job. Similar issues also exist within Cape York communities and some of these are highlighted in Noel Pearson’s, “ *Our Right to Take Responsibility*”.

**(vii) Disaster Awareness Education and Cultural Awareness** The value of disaster awareness education in building capacity and community resilience in dealing with disaster impacts cannot be underestimated. Due to language and cultural differences, the disaster awareness information used in mainstream communities is inappropriate or of questionable value. To be effective, disaster awareness material and delivery methods need to be specifically designed to meet the needs of individual Indigenous communities, taking account of the varying levels of education, literacy and cultural sensitivities eg. tensions between different clan groups, and the capacity within each community. Where possible, the design of such programs should augment and leverage the community’s existing capabilities, and care should be taken not to impose a structure that may be too complex or at odds with the community’s way of doing things. Awareness programs must encourage the formulation and application of solutions by Indigenous communities. Delivery of effective disaster awareness programs therefore requires long-term commitment supported by appropriate resources.

Equally important is the need to ensure that emergency management operatives in all facets of response and recovery work are appropriately trained and have an understanding of the cultural sensitivities and community issues when dealing with Indigenous communities.

**(viii) Cost Structures** The cost structure for disaster management systems within remote Indigenous communities is generally higher than that for non-Indigenous communities. Their isolated geographic location, linked to larger communities via limited transport and communication infrastructure that is at high risk from the impact of natural disasters, creates cost burdens that significantly erode the purchasing power of communities and service providers. A national system for natural disaster relief and mitigation, including the allocation of implementation resources, need to be cognisant of this variance in cost structures.

The very high ongoing costs associated with repair and maintenance programs for emergency management is also a factor. Remote communities often have to wait weeks, sometimes months for the return of repaired equipment and machinery. This means that communities are even more vulnerable with no access to life saving equipment and machinery.

## **Part C Priority issues affecting remote Indigenous communities**

Due to the entrenched levels of social disadvantage experienced by remote Indigenous communities, and their susceptibility to annual natural disaster occurrences, these communities are generally more at risk from emergency situations and typically require considerably more assistance than mainstream communities in achieving the same level

of risk management outcomes. A majority of remote Indigenous communities have also given a low priority to emergency management due to the urgency of socio-economic issues. The delivery of effective disaster management to these communities need to be characterised by:

- Greater co-operation and co-ordination (including more efficient use of scarce funds and resources) between all community governance structures and service providers in planning for and responding to community risks and responding to and recovering from emergencies;
- Enhanced use of natural disaster risk assessments within communities and improved identification of practical risk reduction strategies. Implementation of these strategies should be supported by close and effective partnerships between all stakeholders, including Indigenous communities, government agencies, service providers and relevant peak organisations where appropriate;
- A holistic approach to risk management supported by more flexible funding arrangements to give Indigenous communities improved access to all resources (particularly mitigation funding) and to allow assistance to be targeted to areas of greatest need;
- Investment in disaster awareness education and training specifically targeted at promoting risk awareness, partnerships between Governments and communities, more pro-active community leadership and greater self-reliance in disaster management; and
- Involvement of local governance structures in the coordination of risk management strategies, where appropriate – particularly in information sharing and education through their network.

Improved risk reduction for remote Indigenous communities cannot be attained without the will and involvement of the community and strategies specifically designed with the needs of remote communities in mind. WA government is about to embark on a pilot project through the CDEP to establish Emergency Service Officers in the community of Bidyadanga in the Kimberley.

Successful community development may also necessarily need to focus effort on building social and economic self-reliance within Indigenous communities. What is required is a long-term commitment from all levels of government characterised by a multi-jurisdictional and cross-functional approach to service delivery that builds on a partnership concept with Indigenous communities. There should also be a focus on sustainable community development, to promote full and effective participation of Indigenous people in decisions affecting their communities and strong Indigenous influence over service delivery arrangements affecting their communities.

In the process, care must be taken not to add another layer of bureaucracy or administrative complexity for Indigenous communities to deal with. Where possible, disaster awareness and community preparedness building need to be streamlined, simplified and integrated into existing community capacity building programs and reinforced as one of a number of elements that need to be developed in the community's journey towards greater self-reliance and self-determination.

The more important areas for action that should guide efforts in the context of a National Disaster and Mitigation Framework include:

**(i) Improved access to mitigation funding**

The capacity of Indigenous communities to access Commonwealth mitigation funding programs remains limited. Commonwealth mitigation funding programs (*Natural Disaster Risk Management Studies Program*; and *Regional Flood Mitigation Programs*) have the unintended effect of disadvantaging Indigenous communities given that a condition for funding nominally requires a third contribution from the applicant, usually local or community government. Remote Indigenous communities are reliant on government grants, have no rate revenue and hence have little or no funds to contribute towards mitigation. While the proposed funding formula of 2:2:1 will improve the access of councils with some funds to contribute towards mitigation, this will not go far enough to assist community councils with no rate base. Within many remote communities, issues of poor financial management and uninformed decision-making by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Councils also disadvantage communities.

**Recommendation:** To ensure more equitable access by Indigenous communities to scarce mitigation funds, it is recommended that consideration be given to a more flexible funding formula based on the following proposals:

- (a) Resource ATSIC to adopt a more active role in supporting Indigenous communities to meet mitigation objectives through the provision of expertise and appropriate funding\*;
- (b) Formalise Minister Tuckey's agreement to allow the Local Government/Community Council funding component to be sourced from ATSIC\*, other Commonwealth programs or the private sector; and
- (c) Develop additional options for funding remote community mitigation programs (such as community education programs, flood detection systems and volunteer support).

\*While it is acknowledged that ATSIC may have limited financial capacity at this time to support risk management studies and mitigation activities, these recommendations recognise the need for ATSIC to develop a future capacity in this regard. Long-term community development and safety, including the protection of community assets and infrastructure, need to be underpinned by a commitment to strategic community resilience strategies such as risk management. Shifting the focus to event preparation will in the long-term result in reduced event impact and hence reduced recovery costs for all stakeholders including ATSIC. Since communities have restricted capacity to fund such activities themselves, and the States/Territories already make significant contributions to supporting emergency and disaster management, there is a real need for ATSIC to acquire the capacity to assist communities to participate in such crucial processes.

**(ii) Restoration of community assets to more hazard resilient condition**

Remote Indigenous communities are heavily reliant on State/Territory Government grants and have little or no funds for repairs to critical community infrastructure damaged by natural hazards, let alone asset improvements. Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils, established under the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*, have no rate base. This is also the case in the Territory with most Indigenous communities established under the Local Government Act and Associations Incorporations Act.

With the vast local road network, appropriate road standards cannot be maintained on the level of available funding; furthermore, jurisdictional responsibility for the primary

access roads may not always be clear. Often local roads can be so eroded by flood damage, repairs of infrastructure to pre-existing standard is not a viable option. Many older dwellings on remote Indigenous communities do not meet the requisite building standards, as they were built prior to the time when adherence to strict building standards was a requirement.

Currently, NDRA provide funding assistance for the repair or replacement of damaged eligible infrastructure to their pre-disaster standard only. If funding for asset improvement were available at the time that damaged assets are being restored, this would encourage a wiser asset-fix and allow repair of community assets to be effected to a more hazard-resilient level. This would also support the mitigation requirement, which is a condition of NDRA funding.

**Recommendation:** To encourage remote Indigenous communities to adopt a safer and more hazard resilient approach to community development, it is recommended that the asset restoration provisions of the NDRA be broadened to:

- (a) Provide funding assistance for restoration of community assets (ie housing, plant and equipment) and infrastructure (ie. roads and other critical community infrastructure <sup>3</sup>to a level commensurate with mitigation objectives;
- (b) Allow a percentage of restoration costs over and above repairs to mitigation objective levels to be reimbursed under NDRA; and consideration should be given to recurrent funding for management and maintenance of mitigation works.
- (c) Better coordination and use of funding from Commonwealth and State/Territory programs to achieve this.

### ***(iii) Flexible and equitable access to disaster relief payments***

Better recovery outcomes can generally be expected if communities are actively involved in their recovery process. This is reflected in the experience of communities that have chosen to stay (rather than be evacuated) and are more motivated to include themselves in the recovery process. Increasingly, community members are opting to remain rather than be evacuated in the event of flooding. While State/Territory administered relief and recovery measures are generally sufficiently flexible to accommodate the specific risk management needs of remote Indigenous communities, this is not the case with Commonwealth disaster payments.

Care must be taken to ensure that Commonwealth disaster relief payments are not administered in a way that can unintentionally penalise communities for choosing to be actively involved in disaster recovery, as has occurred in some cases. For example, the houses in the Beswick community in the NT were badly affected by flood inundation in 2001, however the community decided to stay. Residents were not entitled to relief payments because they had not been out of their houses long enough. A short distance away, a community was evacuated, not because their houses were flooded, but the access road was cut for some days. As they were away from their community a few days longer than the first, they were entitled to relief payment.

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<sup>3</sup> Critical infrastructure in remote communities relates to communication, road access to towns and communities, aerodromes and barge landings, shelter for the community, food, medical supplies and fuel stores; and water supply and sewerage systems.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that:

- (a) The criteria for assessing payment of disaster relief should be reviewed to ensure equitable access by Indigenous communities in ways that will assist the disaster recovery of those communities.
- (b) Greater flexibility in the method of payment should be explored to allow payments to be made to communities as well as individuals, and greater consultation with Commonwealth and State/Territory and Local Governments in assessing eligibility criteria.

**(iv) Planning of minor remote settlements and out-stations**

Indigenous groups intending to establish a community should be encouraged and assisted to consider the potential risks associated with the chosen location. The difference between a safe and a vulnerable community may only involve a few hundred metres.

As ATSIC is usually the first point of contact for Indigenous groups wishing to establish remote settlements, it has a key role to play in helping Indigenous groups assess and manage the risks inherent in a chosen site. Consultation with the relevant jurisdictional planning authorities to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken should also be considered as part of this process. The cost of appropriate risk assessments and mitigation needs to be factored into ATSIC funding for such communities.

The Western Australian Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the Department for Indigenous Affairs have prepared a Planning Policy for Aboriginal communities and has formally Gazetted the policy as *Statement of Planning Policy no. 13 – Planning for Aboriginal Communities*.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that ATSIC funding for the development of community infrastructure for minor homelands communities should include a component for risk assessment. Where appropriate, risk reduction should include consultation with local governments and planning authorities.

**(v) Community Recovery to include disaster preparedness and planning**

Community preparedness and planning are issues that are generally underdeveloped in remote Indigenous communities due to a number of factors, the most important being a lack of community involvement in disaster planning. Low priority given to emergency management is also a key factor. Communities have very limited knowledge and understanding of how emergencies and disasters are managed, and often view this as a responsibility of government.

The critical issue impacting on the duration of a community's disaster recovery will depend on the community's disaster preparedness and the extent to which community members are involved in their own disaster relief and recovery. Because of their vulnerability, Indigenous communities may take longer to recover from a disaster. To ensure that community recovery needs are well supported community recovery plans which detail and coordinate required recovery actions and the roles and functions of all stakeholder are needed. This requires greater cooperation and coordination between all

community governance structures and service providers in responding to and recovering from emergencies.

The recovery phase usually present the most opportune time to build safer and more resilient Indigenous communities, such as improved community disaster awareness and emergency management training of community members; and this process should be encouraged and supported by appropriate funding.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the range of NDRA eligible recovery measures be broadened to include disaster management awareness training programs and appropriate risk assessments that might be undertaken as part of the normal recovery action for Indigenous communities.

#### **(vi) ATSIC and community capacity building**

ATSIC plays an integral role in determining the management, location and size of remote Indigenous communities. At present, the management of remote communities is neither consistent nor based on measurable performance criteria. This is a compounding factor in relation to emergency management and the identification and implementation of mitigation strategies. ATSIC as the main funding provider for Indigenous communities has a significant role to play in the development of support mechanisms that provide for a reduction in community vulnerability and increase in community resilience.

ATSIC's commitment to assist by incorporating community preparation and risk management activities into its capacity building programs and disseminating information and greater awareness through its regional councils is a positive step and strongly supported. However, a long-term commitment to building strategic community resilience is only sustainable with adequate funding support by all levels of government, including ATSIC.

The development of "Community Management" training would go some way to addressing this problem. This training should not only address emergency management issues, but also provide for the mainstreaming of emergency management/mitigation within community activities. This training should initially be targeted towards community administrators and managers. The development of training in all areas of community activity would provide for continuity of community management in light of the continued movement of community administrators/managers.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that ATSIC, in partnership with relevant State/Territory based organisations, develop, fund and implement training resources, including community leadership programs that provide for the mainstreaming of emergency management/mitigation into remote Indigenous community activities.

## **Part D Summary of Recommendations**

That members of the High Level Group:

- **Note** that remote Indigenous communities in Northern Australia are exposed to natural hazard occurrences virtually as an annual seasonal event and are potentially at greater risk to emergency situations.
- **Recognise** that Indigenous people experience entrenched levels of disadvantage that are wide-ranging relative to non-Indigenous people; particularly in remote areas and

require considerably more assistance than mainstream communities in achieving the same level of disaster risk management outcomes.

- **Note** that emergency management needs of remote Indigenous communities differ considerably to those facing urban Indigenous communities or non-indigenous communities and that this is reflected in generally higher cost structures for disaster management systems within remote communities.
- **Note** that the Commonwealth mitigation programs do not adequately address the needs of Indigenous communities, because of barriers to access, which include the way the programs are designed, how they are funded and their costs to users.
- **Recognise** the critical importance of:
  - (i) A long-term commitment to capacity building within Indigenous communities to foster cooperative decision making, community leadership in disaster risk management and sustainability; and
  - (ii) developing partnerships and collaborative arrangements between all 3 levels of Government and their agencies to maximise opportunities for pooling of funds as well as to improve coordination through cross-functional and jurisdictional approaches.
- **Note** that for those communities (notably smaller remote Indigenous communities) where capacity building is lacking, a higher initial investment of resources will need to be made to provide a framework to support sustainable outcomes. Investment in community capacity building needs to be recognised by whole-of-government (including ATSIC) and supported by the commitment of appropriate funds and expertise.
- **Note** that successful development of community capacity in Indigenous communities may also necessarily need to focus actions on building economic and social self-reliance within communities; and should also explore leveraging existing Commonwealth and State programs (eg. CDEP)<sup>4</sup> to foster and build skills in Indigenous communities.
- **Note** the key areas for action aimed at reducing Indigenous community disadvantage must include:
  - developing equitable access to funding for mitigation activities and improvements to critical community infrastructure and Commonwealth recovery assistance;
  - Establishing public awareness programs to promote partnerships between Governments and communities; and enhanced community leadership in disaster management and recovery processes; and
  - Long-term commitment by whole-of-government to a coordinated partnership approach for capacity building and sustainable development in communities.
- **Endorse** the recommendations under section **(I)** to **(VI)** in Part C of this paper.

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<sup>4</sup> Northern Queensland communities have indicated that they desire real jobs, with transferable skills and knowledge; and prefer not to rely on CDEP in the long-term.