



**TOWNSVILLE
LOCAL DISASTER
MANAGEMENT GROUP**



Financial Management Sub Plan

Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) Sub Plan

V1 July 2024



This plan is to be read in conjunction with the Townsville Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP)

Executive Summary

This Financial Management Sub Plan has been developed by the Townsville Local Disaster Management Group (TLDMG) to ensure robust financial arrangements are in place to support frontline disaster response and recovery operations in the Townsville City Council (TCC) local government area.

Section 1 provides an overview of the plan including the aim and objectives, ownership, functional responsibility and the support agencies required to implement the plan. It also provides links to other key documents that inform this plan.

Section 2 relates to how the plan is activated, who needs to be notified and includes a visual aid flowchart as a quick reference guide. This section also identifies how disaster funding is activated.

Section 3 provides detail on the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) including the State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA) as well as additional funding programs and schemes that are available.

Section 4 provides an overview of the TLDMG's expenditure processes including who has the delegations and authorisations to expend funds, the need to maintain adequate expense records and the process for reimbursement.

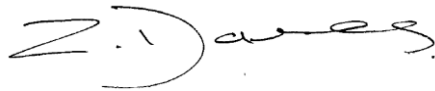
Appendix A-C provide supporting information as quick reference guides including a memo to all TCC staff to document costs relating to disaster events, a finance officer operational checklist, and an infographic on the available funding programs and schemes.

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Endorsement

This plan is recommended for distribution by the Townsville Local Disaster Management Group.



Zac Dawes
Deputy Local Disaster Coordinator
Townsville Local Disaster Management Group

Date: 03/09/2024



Cr Andrew Robinson
Chair
Townsville Local Disaster Management Group

Date: 03/09/2024

Version Control & Record of Amendments

Amendment		Plan Updated		
Version No.	Issue Date	Inserted by	Action	Date
01 Initial Plan	September 2013	Allen Morris	Initial Plan	30 September 2013
02	October 2015	Gavin Hammond	Annual Review	22 October 2015
03	November 2016	Catherine Jordan	Annual Review	1 November 2016
04	January 2018	Wayne Preedy	Annual Review	5 January 2018
05	January 2019	Wayne Preedy	Annual Review	22 January 2019
06	March 2021	Wayne Preedy	Annual Review	11 March 2021
07	March 2022	Wayne Preedy	Annual Review	30 June 2022
08	March 2022	Wayne Preedy	Annual Review	30 June 2023
09	July 2024	Zac Dawes	Annual Review Consultation with Deloitte	3 September 2024

Consultation

Organisation	Role / Agency consulted?	Date distributed	Date comments were received
TLDMG Members	Chairperson	7 Aug 24	
	Deputy Chairperson	7 Aug 24	
	Local Disaster Coordinator	7 Aug 24	7 Aug 24
	Deputy Local Disaster Coordinator	7 Aug 24	
	TCC ERG Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	QPS Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	QFD Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	QAS Core Member	7 Aug 24	

Organisation	Role / Agency consulted?	Date distributed	Date comments were received
	SES Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	Department of Housing Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	TEL Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	Ergon Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	TLDMG Comms Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	Shelters & Evac Centre Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	THHS Core Member	7 Aug 24	
	LRC Core Member	7 Aug 24	
TLDMG Advisors	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	7 Aug 24	
Townsville City Council	TCC DRFA Team	7 Aug 24	14 Aug 24
	Insurance Officer	7 Aug 24	28 Aug 24
Other	Deloitte		

1. Overview of Plan

1.1. Aim & Objectives of Plan

The aim of this Financial Management Sub Plan is to manage the financial arrangements for a local event, in which the TLDMG and its plans and processes have been activated. The objectives are to:

- Outline the financial arrangements to be used during a disaster event including SDRA and DRFA.
- Outline the financial arrangements to submit claims and maximise opportunities for eligible expenditure reimbursement.
-

1.2. Context & Assumptions

Disaster management groups must plan financial services to support frontline response operations and ensure the appropriate management of financial arrangements.

Most true disasters will be very costly to Townsville City Council (TCC) and other responding agencies and should invoke the activation of either State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA) or Commonwealth/State funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

With the activation of either of these structures, TCC and responding agencies will be able to claim eligible costs for reimbursement. Other financial arrangements can also be activated to provide financial support to Queensland communities impacted by a disaster.

The inherent nature of disasters typically means finance operations may need to be conducted within compressed time constraints and other operational pressures, necessitating the use of non-routine procedures. Despite this, the requirement for sound financial management and accountability does not diminish. Proper financial management procedures must be maintained by TCC, and all Townsville Local Disaster Management Group (TLDMG) agencies must ensure they adhere to relevant legislation, policies and procedures.

Disaster-related finances are not normally included in the budgetary processes of TCC and other responding agencies. Disasters may require the reallocation of substantial funds as a consequence. TCC will consider all options for recovering eligible costs relating to disaster events.

Assistance for Queenslanders under the SDRA and DRFA is not intended to supplant nor operate as a disincentive for self-help from insurance or disaster mitigation strategies. All levels of government encourage Queenslanders to build disaster resilience through awareness and preparedness for potential disasters.

Operational expenditure needs to be tracked using work order numbers established specifically for the event. Expenditure needs to be finalised at the conclusion of the event including collating invoices, making payments and claiming funding.

1.3. Ownership

This sub-plan is owned by the Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) on behalf of the TLDMG. All significant amendments must be approved by the TLDMG.

The LDC will ensure the:

- master document is retained with relevant supporting documents
- level of circulation of the sub-plan is determined by the TLDMG and details are recorded of copyholders
- sub-plan is updated and reviewed on at least an annual basis, or after activation, whichever is the sooner
- sub-plan is tested and exercised as determined by the TLDMG.

1.4. Functional Responsibility & Support Agencies

The LDC is to ensure all agencies and members of the TLDMG are aware of these financial arrangements. Each agency or support organisation is responsible for:

- providing its own financial services and support to its response operations in the field.
- maintaining compliance with its own financial policies and procedures; and,
- ensuring accurate recordkeeping of expenditure for submission of their own claims under SDRA/DRFA to relevant funding bodies post-event

1.5. Links with Other Documents

This sub-plan is interdependent on, and should be read in conjunction with, the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP). It links directly to all other sub-plans including the TLDMG Emergency Contact Lists. This sub plan also links to the:

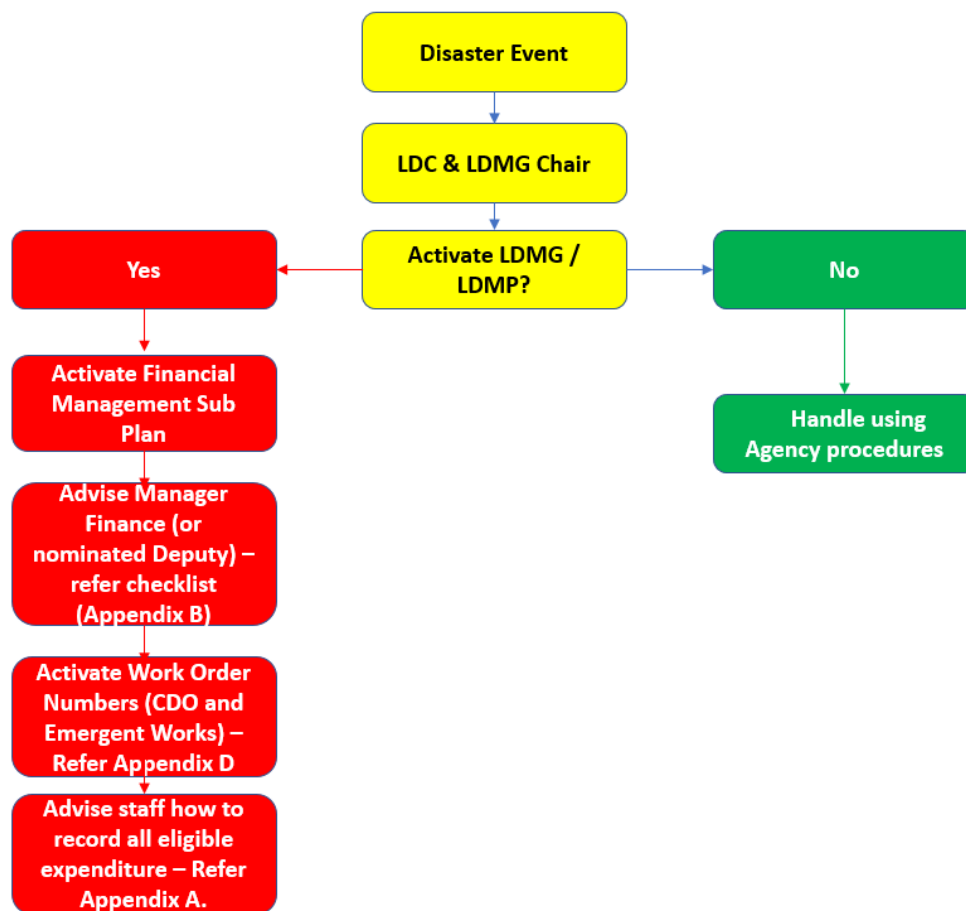
- [Queensland Disaster Relief and Recovery Guidelines 2018](#) (events between 1 November 2018 and 30 June 2021 inclusive)
- Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines 2021 (events from 1 July 2021 onwards)
- [DRFA Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements & SDRA State Disaster Relief Arrangements Information Sheet](#)
- [DRFA Toolbox](#)
- [QRA DRFA Website](#)
- Townsville City Council's Financial and Procurement Policies and Procedures
- Activation & Notification Procedures

2. Activation & Notification Procedures

2.1. Activation of the Plan

This Sub Plan will be activated by the Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) of the LDMG whenever the LDMP is invoked. Where possible, these decisions are made in consultation with the LDMG Chair.

2.2. Notification Flowchart



2.3. Notification Process

When this sub-plan is activated, the TCC Principal Program Manager DRFA (or nominated deputy) will be notified to ensure workorders are established for counter disaster operations and emergent works / restoration of essential public assets. Workorder numbers will need to be circulated to all staff and a copy of the memo at [Appendix A](#) sent to the TCC Leadership Team.

If a decision is made to not activate the sub-plan, then financial management will continue using standard agency procedures.

2.4. Activation of Disaster Funding

The activation of disaster funding provides jointly funded State / Australian Government financial assistance to communities affected by eligible disaster events. Funding is not related to the 'Declaration of a Disaster Situation,' or the area defined for the receipt of financial assistance.

The 'declaration of a disaster situation' is a formal declaration invoked under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*. It is a short-term declaration, which provides additional operational powers to the Queensland Police Service and emergency services prior to, during and in the immediate wake of a disaster event.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Activation Requests can be made by any state agency or local government via QRA's [Management and Reporting System \(MARS\)](#) disaster funding application portal or alternatively can be arranged by contacting the QRA Regional Liaison Officer (RLO).

The State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA) can be activated when the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works (DHLGPPW) identifies that local service providers have reached their capacity to provide a service to people experiencing personal hardship as a direct result of a disaster event, or that there are no local service providers to assist in the event of a disaster.

3. Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

3.1 Funding Programs & Schemes

Following severe disaster events, Local, State and Commonwealth Governments respond through the following coordinated range of disaster management arrangements to address both the physical and financial needs of affected communities:

- **Australian Government, Disaster Recovery Funding arrangements (DRFA)** - The DRFA is a joint funding initiative of the Australian and state governments to provide disaster relief and recovery payments and infrastructure restoration to help communities recover from the effects of natural disasters and terrorist acts. In Queensland, this program is managed on a whole-of-government basis by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).
- **State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA)** - The SDRA is an all-hazards relief program that is 100% State funded and covers natural and non-natural disasters. The purpose of the SDRA is to address personal hardship and community needs for disaster events where the DRFA is unable to be activated.

Refer to [Appendix C](#) for a comparison of funding schemes and sources.

Funding Schemes	Activation
Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	<p>The Queensland Minister for Fire and Emergency Services is responsible for activating the DRFA. This activation relies on the damage, loss and personal hardship information provided by state and local governments.</p> <p>Activation of the DRFA allows for eligible expenditure to be reimbursed by QRA to activated state and local governments loans to be disbursed to eligible individuals, not-for-profit organisations, primary producers and small businesses, in compliance with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) 2018 and• Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines 2021 (QDFG). <p>The DRFA can be activated when the event meets the definition of an eligible disaster: (As defined in section 4.2 of the QDFG, not all natural disasters are eligible).</p> <p>A natural disaster or terrorist act for which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a coordinated multi-agency response was required and• state expenditure exceeds (Commonwealth-set) small disaster criterion (\$240,000). <p>If an event does not meet these criteria, the SDRA may be activated. Eligible damage must exceed the Local Government Trigger Point in order to be able to seek reimbursement for Emergency Works, Immediate Reconstruction Works and REPA funding under DRFA. DRFA activation can be requested by any state or local government entity, applications are to be made through MARS (QRA portal) or by contacting your local QRA Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) detailing the disaster situation and requesting activation of this relief measure.</p>

Funding Schemes	Activation
	<p>Included in DRFA arrangements are Counter Disaster Operations (CDO), which are activities undertaken by Local and State Government agencies to provide direct assistance to and in the protection of individuals and the general public immediately before, during and immediately after <u>a disaster event</u>.</p> <p>DRFA allows for the reimbursement of extraordinary costs associated with eligible CDO activities to alleviate personal hardship and distress.</p> <p>Note: Local governments <u>do not</u> have a trigger point for CDO.</p>
State Disaster Relief Arrangements (SDRA)	<p>The SDRA is able to be activated when the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works (DHLGPPW) identifies that local service providers have reached their capacity to provide a service to people identified as experiencing personal hardship as a direct result of a disaster event, or that there are no local service providers to assist in the event of a disaster.</p> <p>The Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (supported by QRA) is responsible for activating the SDRA. QRA will coordinate the delivery of the SDRA assistance measures.</p>

More detailed information regarding the financial assistance available, eligibility criteria and activation process are contained within the [Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines \(QDFG\) 2021](#) and [DRFA & SDRA Fact Sheet](#) on the [QRA website](#).

3.2 Additional Funding Programs / Schemes

Additional funding, outside DRFA and SDRA could be made available by the Australian Government to assist communities to recover, such as:

- Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP)
- Australian Government Disaster Recovery Allowance (AGDRA)
- Australian Government Disaster Ready Fund (DRF)

Further information on these funding arrangements can be found under the 'Disaster Arrangements' page of the Australian Government's [Disaster Assist](#) website.

Additional funding, outside DRFA and SDRA could be made available by the Queensland Government to assist communities to recover, such as:

- Community Recovery Grants (Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts)

4. Townsville LDMG Expenditure Processes

4.1 Authority / Delegation to Expend Funds

The authority to expend funds during disasters will be as per normal business delegation requirements. The LDC is able to authorise financial expenditure within the limits of their normal financial delegation.

The TCC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) approves other officers who require additional or enhanced financial authorisation as a result of the disaster.

4.2 Authorised Expenditure

All costs incurred by TLDMG, LDCC and TCC as a result of a disaster event will be captured and recorded to meet the requirements of the [Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines \(QDFG\) 2021](#).

4.3 Expenditure Records

Prior to each wet season and for each separate declared disaster event, disaster projects/works orders will be created and activated by the relevant Council Officer to capture costs for deployment of resources and response and recovery activities in support of the TLDMG operations (incl. activation of the Townsville Local Disaster Coordination Centre).

There are separate disaster projects/work orders for Insurable losses that are also activated for a declared event. More information about the process for capturing costs for Insurable losses can be obtained from Council's Insurance Officer.

To ensure that the TLDMG, LDCC and TCC are ready to submit applications for funding under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), council staff will cover off the key items on the QRA pre-season checklist prior the disaster season. [Refer to QRA Pre-Season Checklist](#).

When an event occurs, Council and each participating department or agency should immediately begin accounting for personnel, equipment and other costs relating to the disaster response.

Separate recording of disaster-related expenditure shall be in accordance with the council's or relevant agency's financial procedures and supported by rosters, timesheets, invoices, receipts, and other supporting documents to provide clear and reasonable accountability to ensure justification for reimbursement is maintained. Attribution of cost to an activity is essential to be able to claim reimbursement for eligible activities however not all activities are reimbursable under DRFA.

While innovative and expeditious means of procurement are called for during times of disaster events, it is still mandatory that good accounting principles and practices be employed in order to safeguard the use of public funds from the potential of fraud, waste or abuse in accordance with Councils purchasing and procurement policies.

4.4 Recouping of Expenditure

Extreme care and diligence must be taken throughout the disaster response and recovery to maintain logs, records and file copies of expenditure (including personnel timesheets and diary notes) in order to provide clear and reasonable accountability and justification for reimbursement requests.

Each department team are responsible for capturing expenditure and attaching before/after photos of the associated works against the disaster work order.

[Refer to QRA Tip sheet 3 Practical Guide to Photo Evidence.](#)

Funding applications and expenditure claims are required to be made to QRA through submissions, including all supporting evidence. Submissions are made through the Management and Reporting System (MARS Portal) and are to be lodged within three months from the end of financial year in which the works commenced/ event occurred (by 30 September), unless otherwise agreed with QRA.

[Refer to QRA Tip Sheet 2 DRFA Submission Overview.](#)

4.5 Preparation and Submission of Claims

Reimbursement is not an automatic process and requires formal evidence of disaster-related expenditure linked to an eligible activity. Funding submissions for all categories of DRFA funding are subject to audit by the QRA and the principles of value for money are an essential part of that audit process. The final payment for any submission will not be released until the QRA audit is completed.

All claims must be prepared in accordance with the current guidelines, which can be found on the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) website (<https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/>). QRA provides advice and assistance to Local Governments and State Agencies in the application and interpretation of these guidelines through the Regional Liaison Officer (RLO).

Claims for reimbursement for eligible costs under the DRFA/SDRA counter disaster operations, emergency works and reconstruction of essential public assets are on the Managing and Reporting System (MARS) Portal.

The claims process and the determination of eligible and ineligible costs are coordinated by the TCC DRFA Team which is part funded by the QRA.

TCC may engage external support to assist with the preparation of DRFA claims when appropriate

Appendix A: Memo to Staff - Documentation of Costs Relating to Disaster Events

MEMO TO: Leadership Team

DATE: (ENTER DATE)

SUBJECT: DOCUMENTATION OF COSTS RELATING TO DISASTER EVENTS - (INSERT NAME OF EVENT)

We have / have not received advice that this event has been activated under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. It is important to document costs and use work orders associated with this disaster as we may be able to seek reimbursement relating to [eligible activities](#) under these categories:

Category A

- Counter disaster operations – covers reimbursement of extraordinary costs for eligible activities to alleviate personal hardship and distress.

Category B

- Counter disaster operations – covers reimbursement of extraordinary costs for eligible activities that protect the community and ensure public health and safety in public areas.
- Reconstruction of essential public assets (including emergency works and immediate reconstruction works) – covers reconstruction of eligible and uninsured essential public assets damaged as a direct result of an eligible disaster to pre-disaster function.

Emergency Works

Emergency works are works deemed necessary during a disaster to protect eligible public assets or to restore essential services and maintain public safety. This could include earthmoving, rock placing, sandbagging, installation of tarpaulins, erection of warning signs/barriers, pothole patching, removal of silt and debris, cleaning and removal of an asset or stores to prevent damage, and repairs to an eligible asset. Activities must be completed within ninety days from date of the disaster (access dependent) and data must be collected using Confirm.

Reconstruction Works

Restoration of essential public assets is applied as per the [Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines \(QDFG\) 2021](#). Restoration works must be completed as soon as possible, noting the allowable time limit to undertake works is two years from end of financial year of when the disaster occurred.

Charges in this category are to be approved by the GM Commercial & Finance Services. If public safety is compromised or substantial additional repair costs will be caused by a delay in repairs, approval can be obtained retrospectively. Work orders will be issued at the time of approval.

ALL STAFF will be required to complete timesheets if involved in any disaster related activity regardless of whether it is an eligible or ineligible activity. Ensure you charge to the correct work order as this will assist with the expeditious reimbursement of funds and remember that reimbursement is not an automatic process, it requires evidence of disaster-related expenditure linked to an eligible activity. It is crucial that you maintain accurate records of work performed e.g. timesheets, photos and/or diary notes

Thank you for your cooperation.

Regards

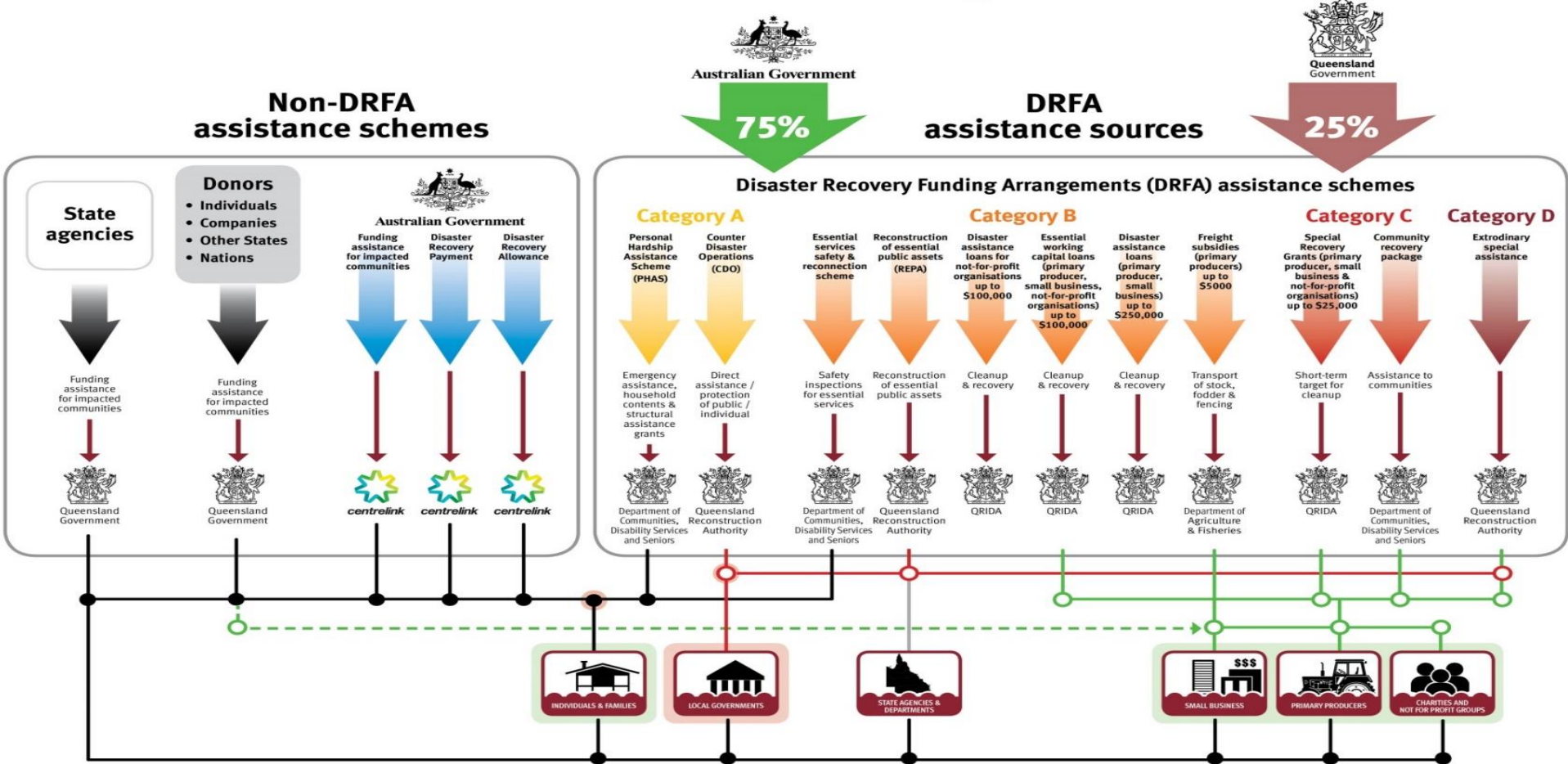
Principal Program Manager DRFA

Appendix B: Finance Officer Operational Checklist

DUTY CARD		FINANCE OFFICER
Reports to:	Local Disaster Coordinator	Tick
RESPONSIBILITIES		
Maintain watching brief / state of readiness and receive initial information from LDC.		
Establish a project code for each event (on activation) in TechOne. Individual departments will be required to generate sub work orders.		
Commence operations log in Guardian and maintain records of all finance activities.		
Regularly review Guardian for tasks and to maintain situational awareness.		
Implement Financial Management Sub Plan.		
Establish work order numbers for counter disaster operations and emergent works to expedite the payment of claims.		
Familiarise yourself with the procedures for counter disaster operations, emergency works and reconstruction of essential public assets.		
Determine the limit of expenditure without approval from senior management and ensure a process to expeditiously authorise other officers.		
Activate a recording system for expenditure to expedite the payment of DRFA claims.		
Provide support to the Team Manager Civil Delivery in delivering DRFA reconstruction works to ensure guidelines are met.		
Prepare and submit financial claims via the MARS system.		
Contribute to situation reports (SITREPS) as required.		
Participate in debriefs.		

Appendix C: Funding Programs / Schemes

Queensland Disaster Funding Assistance





**TOWNSVILLE
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