



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**THE HON BILL SHORTEN MP
MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

30 June 2022

**COMMONWEALTH FINANCIAL HELP AVAILABLE FOR MORE FLOOD IMPACTED
COMMUNITIES IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

More people in New South Wales impacted by this year's flooding disaster will have access to financial help from today.

The Australian Government has activated the Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP) for people in Lake Macquarie, Strathfield and Waverley.

This one-off, non-means tested payment of \$1000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child is available to people who live in those Local Government Areas (LGAs) and who have suffered a significant loss as a result of the floods, including a severely damaged or destroyed home or serious injury.

The Disaster Recovery Allowance (DRA) has also been extended to these three LGAs. DRA assists employees and sole traders who experience a loss of income as a direct result of a major disaster and is payable for a maximum of 13 weeks and is taxable.

Federal Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Murray Watt said the Australian Government continues to make financial help available where it is needed.

"The scale and impact of this disaster was one of the worst in Australia's history, and we stand ready to work with all levels of government and community members to make sure financial and other assistance is provided when and where it's needed," Senator Watt said.

"We have made financial help available now because the economic impact of disasters like these are felt long after the flood water recedes.

"There are still tough days, weeks and months ahead for thousands of people, and the recovery process will take some time."

Equivalent financial assistance will also be available to eligible New Zealand citizens ('non-protected' Special Category Visa, subclass 444 holders) affected by the floods.

Minister for Government Services Bill Shorten said Services Australia has paid over \$2 billion in AGDRP and DRA to people impacted by the New South Wales and Queensland February floods.

“Services Australia has supported impacted communities through the worst of the flooding, and continues to do so throughout the recovery process,” Minister Shorten said.

“If people in Lake Macquarie, Strathfield and Waverley tried to claim federal assistance earlier in the year, please try again. You can check your eligibility for the AGDRP and DRA on the Services Australia website before lodging a claim.

“The easiest and quickest way to claim is online through myGov. If people require support to claim, they can call the Australian Government Emergency Information Line on 180 22 66.

“To provide further support, we are also pausing Centrelink debt raising and new debt recovery in the affected locations.”

Online claiming via myGov is available 24/7. The Australian Government Emergency Information Line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm local time. For more information on support available, visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/disaster.

ENDS

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