



Tropical Cyclone Jasper Recovery Funding

Supporting community recovery and resilience following a once-in-a-generation disaster event.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper (TC Jasper), the wettest cyclone on record, drenched the Cairns region in December 2023, causing extensive flooding to a number of Cairns suburbs.

Homes were lost, infrastructure severely damaged and people's lives turned upside down following one of the most devastating natural disasters the region has ever experienced.

The scale and destruction was immense, especially for those severely impacted in the beaches suburbs of Machans Beach, Holloways Beach and Yorkeys Knob, as well as Caravonica, Lake Placid, Kamerunga and Aeroglen.

Council is extremely grateful for the support from the Queensland and Australian Governments in responding to the immediate aftermath of the disaster, and in the deployment of a range of funding and support programs aimed at helping the community, businesses and councils recover from this unprecedented event.

Eight months on from TC Jasper, specific gaps in funding arrangements have been identified that need to be addressed in order to support effective community recovery and resilience in the medium to long term.

At a glance

State (in conjunction with the Federal Government where appropriate) to address current gaps in Tropical Cyclone Jasper recovery funding arrangements through the deployment of funding streams to support:

- Community and recreation infrastructure
- Betterment and build back better
- Mitigation and resiliency.

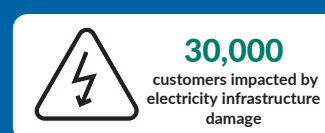
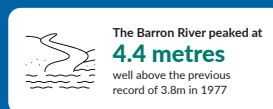
Electorate:

All electorates in Far North Queensland but predominantly Barron River.

The issue

Each natural disaster is different, a fact which is recognised in established Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements where special disaster assistance grants (Category C), Community Recovery Packages (Category C) and exceptional circumstances assistance (Category D) measures may be considered to support the recovery of the impacted communities. These are not automatically activated.

While a range of Category C and Category D measures have been activated in response to TC Jasper, gaps have been identified in restoration of community and recreation infrastructure, betterment and build back better initiatives and mitigation and resilience activities.



What we need

State (in conjunction with the Federal Government where appropriate) to address current gaps in Tropical Cyclone Jasper recovery funding arrangements through the deployment of funding streams to support:

- Community and recreation infrastructure
- Betterment and build back better
- Mitigation and resiliency



Community and recreation infrastructure

- Beach erosion
- Foreshores
- Exercise equipment
- Lifeguard huts
- Walking tracks
- Lake Placid Recreation Area

Funding to support clean up, repair and improvement to the resilience of community and recreational assets damaged will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Recommence service delivery and contribute to the restoration of social and community networks, and the economic recovery of impacted communities.
- Communities' participation in sport and recreation activities signals a return to pre-disaster living
- Restored infrastructure seeks to address local disaster risks and ensure infrastructure is built in accord with current knowledge and practices for mitigating disaster impact.

CLOSES GAP \$14M



Betterment and build back better

- Improve key assets to better withstand the impacts of natural disasters
- Raise, repair, retrofit or have homes voluntarily bought back
- Reduce future costs associated with disasters

Funding to support restoring damaged assets (not only essential assets) to a more resilient standard is critical to support outcomes such as:

- Infrastructure and communities are more resilient to future disasters
- Future costs associated with disasters and insurance costs are reduced
- Initiatives are aligned with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience objectives of strengthened disaster risk management and investment in disaster risk reduction.



Mitigation and resiliency

- Capacity building investment
- Flood studies, risk assessments and management strategies, consistent with the Queensland Flood Risk Management Framework, to enable informed local decision-making

Funding to assist in undertaking key activities to support evidence-based response, mitigation and resiliency strategies to manage river, creek and overland flood risk will contribute to:

- Raise community awareness of flood risk and the information and services available to them to manage their risks
- Guide and support local decision making in relation to mitigating existing and future flood risks
- Prioritised future investment in flood risk management to enhance capability and capacity

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR A MORE RESILIENT FUTURE

Community benefits

Deployment of TC Jasper recovery funding to support the areas outlined in this paper would have a range of community benefits. These include:

- Ensuring the community is better prepared for, and more resilient to, the impacts of future disaster events through the deployment of a range of betterment, mitigation and resiliency initiatives.
- Supporting community health and wellbeing through the reinstatement of community and recreational assets, many of which are located in residential areas directly impacted by, and still recovering from, the TC Jasper disaster event.
- Cost of living relief – ensures the cost of addressing the recovery priorities outlined in this paper are not borne by the community (either directly or through increased council rates and/or charges) at time when they can least afford it.

Timeline

- December 2023**
TC Jasper crosses the coast on 13 December 2023 with significant related rainfall and flooding occurring over the weekend of 16 and 17 December 2023.
- January 2023 - April 2024**
Short-term recovery initiatives - includes emergency relief, clean up and repairs, preliminary impact assessments etc.
- June / July 2024**
Tropical Cyclone Jasper Local Disaster Recovery Plan adopted/noted by the Cairns Local Disaster Management Group and Cairns Regional Council
- May 2024 - Jun 2026**
Medium to long-term recovery initiatives - includes rehabilitation and reconstruction rebuilding, reshaping and sustainability.