

## **\$20 million Betterment Fund – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the \$20 million Betterment Fund?**

The \$20 million Betterment Fund helps with the rebuilding of essential public assets damaged in 2020-21 natural disaster events to a more resilient standard to help them withstand future disasters.

### **Who is funding this Betterment Fund?**

This Betterment Fund is being jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

### **How is this Betterment Fund different from other Betterment programs?**

Previous Betterment programs have been delivered under Category D of the DRFA.

This \$20 million Betterment Program is the first to be delivered in Australia under the new DRFA Efficiencies Framework. This means, essentially, the funding is “complementary funding”, rather than a Category D component of the DRFA. It also applies to areas activated for Category B Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets (REPA) assistance across the 2020-21 disaster season, rather than for a specific ‘exceptional circumstances’ event.

### **What is the DRFA Efficiencies Framework?**

The DRFA replaced the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) in 2018 and created a fundamental shift in the way funding was administered.

Efficiencies are the variance between estimated and actual reconstruction costs for an essential public asset reconstruction program.

Through the DRFA, the Queensland Government is required to provide a detailed estimate of its reconstruction costs to the Commonwealth within 12 months of the end of the financial year in which the event/s occurred.

For events that occurred in the 2020-21 financial year, this means councils and state agencies delivering reconstruction works must provide their detailed estimates to QRA by 31 March 2022, allowing approval of the works prior to end of financial year.

As reconstruction works are delivered, efficiencies identified in the state-wide program can be redirected to cover overspends on eligible works or re-invested in mitigation activities.

This Betterment Fund is the first in Australia to apply these efficiencies to a mitigation program. In this case, it is using efficiencies realised from delivery of the 2018-19 DRFA program.

### **How have previous Betterment programs been funded?**

Previous betterment programs in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 were funded through the NDRRA or DRFA through Category D exceptional circumstances packages.

Under those programs, councils impacted by the significant event in those years, for example Tropical Cyclone Oswald, Marcia, Debbie or the monsoon trough flooding, were eligible to apply for Betterment funding.

Councils could only apply for funding for projects activated for REPA by that particular event.

### **Who is eligible to receive Betterment funding from this program?**

Funding will be available in 47\* local government areas activated for DRFA Category B REPA assistance for events that occurred within the 2020-21 season.

### **Is it available for damage received in any event in 2020-21?**

Funding is available to increase resilience and mitigate the impacts of future disasters on eligible essential public infrastructure damaged in nine of the 11 DRFA-activated events in 2020-21.

This is the first time Betterment funding has been available for a disaster season.

### **Is it available to state agencies as well?**

Yes.

### **Who administers the Betterment Fund?**

The Betterment Fund is administered by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) in accordance with 2020-21 Betterment Fund Guidelines.

Like all other funding under DRFA, relevant state agencies and local government authorities will deliver the programs/works and seek reimbursement.

### **Is there a limit on how much councils can apply for?**

Applicants can lodge more than one project proposal.

There is an upper limit of \$1 million in Betterment funding to a single project.

### **How can councils apply for this betterment funding?**

Applicants can apply for Betterment funding when they lodge their REPA submission. This can be done through MARS, the existing QRA system used for lodging submissions.

### **What are the timeframes to apply?**

Applicants are required to lodge their Betterment applications by 31 March 2022, in line with REPA submission timeframes.

### **When will I find out if I have been successful in my Betterment application?**

Approvals for Betterment works will be received by applicants together with approval of corresponding REPA submission approval.

## Where do councils go for more information on the \$20 million Betterment Fund?

Contact their Regional Liaison Officer.

## \*What are the 47 local government areas that are eligible for this Betterment Fund?

Aurukun Shire Council  
Balonne Shire Council  
Barcaldine Regional Council  
Barcoo Shire Council  
Blackall-Tambo Regional Council  
Bulloo Shire Council  
Burke Shire Council  
Cairns Regional Council  
Carpentaria Shire Council  
Cassowary Coast Regional Council  
Charters Towers Regional Council  
City of Gold Coast  
Cook Shire Council  
Croydon Shire Council  
Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council  
Douglas Shire Council  
Etheridge Shire Council  
Fraser Coast Regional Council  
Goondiwindi Regional Council  
Hinchinbrook Shire Council  
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council  
Ipswich City Council  
Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council  
Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council  
Lockyer Valley Regional Council  
Logan City Council  
Longreach Regional Council  
Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council  
Mareeba Shire Council  
Mornington Shire Council  
Mount Isa City Council  
Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council  
Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council  
Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council  
Paroo Shire Council  
Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council  
Quilpie Shire Council  
Scenic Rim Regional Council  
Southern Downs Regional Council  
Tablelands Regional Council  
Toowoomba Regional Council  
Torres Shire Council  
Torres Strait Island Regional Council  
Townsville City Council  
Whitsunday Regional Council

Winton Shire Council  
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council