



**David Littleproud MP
Federal Member for Maranoa**

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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Commonwealth boosts disaster recovery support

Federal Member for Maranoa David Littleproud has today welcomed the announcement that, in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Debbie, the Australian Government is continuing its commitment to support Queensland communities recover from natural disasters.

The Minister for Justice Michael Keenan today announced that following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Debbie, the Australian Government has agreed to reimburse eligible councils for use of their own plant and equipment when rebuilding damaged public assets such as roads, including graders, bulldozers and excavators.

This will ensure communities can rebuild as quickly as possible and costs associated with use of council staff for reconstruction works will also continue to be reimbursed by the Government.

“Following extensive consultation with my local councils and our communities, I’ve been working hard with Minister Keenan to secure this exemption and ensure these costs will be eligible for reimbursement under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA),” Mr Littleproud said.

“The NDRRA is an important mechanism – especially for rural and remote areas – assisting communities to rebuild after natural disasters.”

The government approved similar arrangements following the devastating impacts of Cyclone Yasi and Queensland’s 2010-11 floods.

The additional financial support will be available to all states and territories, subject to them accepting the Government’s offer, for all eligible disasters that have occurred between 2013-14 and 2017-18 financial years.

As Australian taxpayers would expect, this additional financial support will be subject to audit and oversight conditions that will ensure taxpayer funds are not redirected and misused to sponsor ordinary operations of local governments.

States will be required to implement assurance arrangements to ensure that the use of local government-owned plant and equipment for eligible reconstruction works delivers greater value for money than the use of contracted plant and equipment, and using council labour will be better value than utilising external contractors.

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