

Natural Disaster Financial Assistance

Bulletin – 7 March 2024

NDFA Bulletin 6

The Bulletin is sent out on a regular basis and includes updates and reminders around the Victorian Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and the CMS (Claims Management System). It is emailed to all Council CMS registered users, Council contacts and Council's general email

Environmental context

Across Australia we are experiencing more frequent and intense weather events. We currently have 27 open DRFA events which have impacted a number of councils across Victoria. The claim for eligible activities and works extends a considerable amount of time, with each event/claim/council is important as each other.

Updates to DRFA documentation

Guideline 3: Category A and B Counter Disaster Operations (CDO)

Following feedback from the DRFA User Reference Group, Guideline 3 for Category A: Early relief and recovery activities, and Category B CDO have been updated. Five new tip sheets have been created which provide examples and advice on claim requirements for each of the following claim types and have been uploaded on the [DRFA Toolbox](#):

- Tip Sheet 1: Category A - Relief and Recovery Centres and Temporary Accommodation
- Tip Sheet 2: Category A - Removal of debris on residential properties
- Tip Sheet 3: Category A - Counter Disaster Operations
- Tip Sheet 4: Category A – Personal & Financial Counselling
- Tip Sheet 5: Category B – Counter Disaster Operations

In addition to the Tip Sheets, a 'How To' document has been created for Category A expenditure and Category B CDO. This provides best practice examples on claim forms, the general ledger and invoices and is on the [DRFA Toolbox](#) under Category A.

Updates will also follow for Guideline 1.

Please review the DRFA Toolbox on a regular basis to ensure the most updated documents are being used.

Guideline 2: Cost Estimation for Essential Public Assets (REPA)

In late February 2024, pages 21-22 of Guideline 2 for REPA Works Estimate Packages associated with the new percentages for cost escalation in 2023-24 to 2025-26 were updated.

Revised D-DEC forms across all claim types plus an additional D-DEC form for actual claims against an approved Reconstruction Works Estimate Package

Councils should also be aware that minor changes to the D-Dec forms for the certifying of expenditure across all claim types.

Please note that with regards to the REPA Works Packages (using the RW form), the spreadsheet now includes two D-decs:

1. D-Dec RW (which is connected to the V Form D-Dec RW) - this is to be used to sign off the Certified Estimate and signed by the Council Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
2. D-Dec CW (which is connected to the V Form C2-CW) - this is to be used when claiming the actual expenditure incurred and signed by the Council CEO.

Please continue to use the first tab (V Form D-Dec RW) relating to the REPA Works Estimate Package prepared for approval by the DTP Assessor and the NDFA Team.

Claims Management System

Evidence of event documentation

Once the 'notification of an event' form has been lodged in the CMS, it is not possible for Council's to then attach additional information required: such as local newspapers articles, BOM reports etc. It is therefore requested that this information be forwarded to your DRFA Assessor, or to the NDFA Team, who will be able to attach the relevant documents to the notification of event form on behalf of Council.

Draft claims

A request was made in the previous Bulletin, for any claims in 'Draft' status for your Council, which are no longer required, if these claims could be 'withdrawn' on the CMS please. This action can only be undertaken by Council's. Thank you to those who have responded, as it assists with resourcing and budgeting.

There are now 55 claims at \$11 million still in draft status on the CMS portal. If you could please review any 'Draft' claims with your Council and change the status to 'withdraw' for any claims no longer required.

User Guides and Videos

User guides and videos are available in the CMS which cover how to complete an event notification, lodging a claim, requesting an advance etc. There are 23 videos available, each approximately 2 minutes in duration. This should be the first point of reference to any questions around the CMS. The user guide and/or videos, are accessible by logging into the CMS and click on the User Guide tile from the Home screen.

New Users to the CMS

Council's wishing to add a New User to the CMS portal – please email NDFA@justice.vic.gov.au and the form will be emailed. Please note the form needs to be signed by the Council CEO before access can be arranged.