



Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Women
Senator for New South Wales



Robyn Preston MP
Member for Hawkesbury

MEDIA RELEASE

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OVER \$1.5M FOR PROJECTS TO SUPPORT BUSHFIRE RECOVERY IN HAWKESBURY

The bushfire impacted Hawkesbury region will receive a critical boost to their recovery from several projects to be delivered through Stage Two of the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, co-funded by the Australian and NSW Governments.

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP, said over \$1.5M will be provided to Hawkesbury City Council to enable projects that will deliver important infrastructure improvements, industry and business development and social and community outcomes.

The projects funded are:

- \$200,700 for the Hawkesbury Business Support and Resilience Program.
- \$455,700 to construct a concrete footpath and cycleway on Bells Line of Road in Bilpin between the town centre, school and community hall.
- \$368,547 for Hawkesbury Community Continuity Project which works with key stakeholders to plan for emergency responses for future disasters.
- \$498,240 to create community advise and support service hubs.

“It’s been a tough time for Hawkesbury and these projects will support a community that is healing and wants to bounce back” Ms Preston said.

“The projects announced today are just one part of the complete recovery journey of the Hawkesbury region and will help us to continue repairing the social and economic fabric of our communities.”

The Mayor of Hawkesbury, Councillor Patrick Conolly, said that the Hawkesbury is a resilient, connected community and that Council is committed to continuing to support individuals, families and businesses every step of the way.

“We have started our journey to recovery together and, thanks to this Federal and State Government funding, Council is implementing some great projects in our community. I encourage you to visit yourhawkesbury-yoursay.com.au or Follow us on Facebook @hawkesburycitycouncil for regular updates on these projects,” Councillor Patrick Conolly said.

Liberal Senator for Western Sydney, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, said all four projects had been put forward by the community, with funding for local solutions to local needs.

“At the outset of the devastating bushfires, we promised our government would work alongside communities on their recovery journey, with this latest funding a further example of delivering on that commitment,” Senator Payne said.

“This BLER funding further secures our economic recovery while simultaneously funding important community-led projects which boost resilience and emergency preparedness.”

Deputy Premier and Minister for Disaster Recovery, John Barilaro MP, said the diverse nature of the Stage Two Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund projects was driven by the specific recovery needs of each community and guided by locally led applications.

“One year has passed since we cleared 3,600 properties damaged or destroyed by the Black Summer bushfires and we are continuing to deliver the support that Hawkesbury needs to keep moving forward in recovery,” Mr Barilaro said.

“People are rebuilding their lives and we are backing projects that will bring communities together, support tourism, provide improved or new social amenity and increase preparedness to future bushfires. All of these things play a part in recovery.”

Mr Barilaro said more than 650 applications were received from 47 LGAs impacted by the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires in NSW, requesting a total of \$1.6 billion – more than six times the original funding available.

“I understand that preparing and submitting applications takes a lot of time and energy and with such an oversubscription of applications and high demand for funding, it means there will be many disappointed applicants. I am pleased that unsuccessful applicants will have the chance to consider submitting their project to the Australian Government’s \$280 million Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants that is expected to open in early July 2021,” Mr Barilaro said.

“Applicants who did not receive funding will be offered an opportunity for feedback on their

application and also advice about other funding options that they might wish to consider.”

The Department of Regional NSW led the merit-based assessment of all 652 applications against the [published guidelines](#) and assessment criteria. The robust, fair and transparent process was overseen by independent probity advisors from both the Australian and NSW governments.

Applications were assessed and recommended by the Department of Regional NSW and subsequently reviewed and endorsed by the National Recovery and Resilience Agency, with final funding decisions approved by the NSW Government.

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Package is one part of the \$4.5 billion overarching bushfire support program co-funded by the Australian and NSW Governments for bushfire recovery, response and preparedness in NSW.

For further information, visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/blerfund>

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