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NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY SPOKEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

House of Representatives Committee on Economics

15 March 2024

QoN Number: 1

Subject: Data on flood risk mapping

Asked by: Daniel Mulino

Question:

Brendan Moon AM: What we have done is worked very, very closely with state jurisdictions, to isolate those high-risk catchments that don't have a really mature approach there, and essentially provide the opportunity for those states to apply for funding to actually resource those councils, to upgrade that understanding of flood risk across the nation. In the main, that's been successful, and I even recognise in Eugowra, for example, they have recently been funded to upgrade their flood modelling, and similarly in the Northern Rivers, the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative are doing a whole of basin approach including the Richmond River. But we need to look at some of those other catchments where there's high intensity, low frequency events have challenged the existing understanding of flood risk, Chair.

Chair: I mean, the capacity-building investment seems very sensible. Do we also need to boost disclosure in some areas? For example, when a council is approving new land for release? Do we have the processes there set up properly?

Brendan Moon AM: At a commonwealth level, I don't think we have visibility, Chair. I would have to take that on notice.

Chair: I mean obviously we don't have controls. And yes, as you say, we probably don't have visibility. But I'm just thinking if the commonwealth is going to take on more and more of the responsibility for mitigation and obviously the commonwealth has historically had a lot of responsibility for the safety net, as you rightly put it, I guess there's question marks over whether maybe both individual households but also at other levels of government there should be more visibility and more controls.

Answer:

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) does not routinely receive information on state or local government land use planning decisions.

While land use planning decisions are the responsibility of State, territory and local governments, NEMA recognises the significant role planning can have in risk mitigation and supports work being done at all levels of government to reduce risk and build resilience.

NEMA is supporting the work of National Cabinet, which has tasked Planning Ministers to develop national principles for considering disaster and climate risk as part of land use planning and building reform processes. At the February 2024 Planning Ministers' Meeting, ministers agreed New South Wales would continue to lead the work to develop national principles and will report back to National Cabinet with a timeline for implementation into land use planning by all jurisdictions before the end of the year. The proposed approach would assist in ensuring the impact of natural disasters is considered when making land use decisions.