
Report highlights

What this report is about

This report draws together the financial impact of natural disasters on agencies integral to the response and impact of natural disasters during 2021–22.

What we found

Over the 2021–22 financial year \$1.4 billion from a budget of \$1.9 billion was spent by the NSW Government in response to natural disasters.

Total expenses were less than the budget due to underspend in the following areas:

- clean-up assistance, including council grants
- anticipated temporary accommodation support
- payments relating to the Northern Rivers Business Support scheme for small businesses.

Natural disaster events damaged council assets such as roads, bridges, waste collection centres and other facilities used to provide essential services. Additional staff, contractors and experts were engaged to restore and repair damaged assets and minimise disruption to service delivery.

At 30 June 2022, the estimated damage to council infrastructure assets totalled \$349 million.

Over the first half of the 2022–23 financial year, councils experienced further damage to infrastructure assets due to natural disasters. NSW Government spending on natural disasters continued with a further \$1.1 billion spent over this period.

Thirty-six councils did not identify climate change or natural disaster as a strategic risk despite 22 of these having at least one natural disaster during 2021–22.

Fast facts

\$1.4b

spent by NSW Government responding to natural disasters during 2021–22

29

natural disasters declared during the last two financial years

83

out of 128 local government areas impacted by natural disasters during 2021–22

\$349m

estimated damage to council infrastructure assets

\$128m

spent by councils on clean-up, emergency response and other costs