

Question on Notice
No. 31
Asked on 16 February 2011

MR JOHNSON asked the Premier and Minister for the Arts (MS BLIGH) -

QUESTION:

Is the Premier aware of the serious problems being caused by the new interpretation of the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and is the government undertaking any action to revoke the new interpretation of the NDRRA that will see local councils across Queensland unable to use their own staff to address flood reconstruction work?

ANSWER: [Premier and Minister for Reconstruction (MS BLIGH)]:

The Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) determination, originally made by the Howard Government in 2007, states that the Commonwealth will not reimburse salaries or wages or other ongoing administrative expenditure for which a state entity would have been liable even though the eligible disaster recovery measure had not been carried out.

However, the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments will provide a \$315 million package to help Queensland's local councils repair utilities and infrastructure and provide the employment support they need to recover from the floods and Cyclone Yasi.

Initially, an upfront payment of \$50 million will be made available to councils, particularly those in regional and remote areas, to meet day labour costs. The provision of further funding for employment will be considered if required.

The package recognises the unique circumstances of many rural and regional councils in Queensland, which face difficulty in accessing contract labour due to their distance from major centres and competition with the mining industry.