



## Australian Business Roundtable welcomes the establishment of a National Resilience Taskforce

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience & Safer Communities (the Roundtable) has congratulated the Commonwealth Government on establishing a National Resilience Taskforce to reduce the impact of natural disasters on communities across the country.

The Taskforce will lead nation-wide reforms to reduce the impact and financial burden of disasters on our communities and economy. Its first priority will be to develop a five-year national disaster mitigation framework to reduce the impact of disasters.

Since it was formed in 2012, the Roundtable has issued five reports outlining the need for greater mitigation funding and coordination between all levels of government, to help protect communities from the impacts of natural disasters.

The Roundtable's 2017 report, *Building Resilience to Natural Disasters in our States and Territories*, prepared by Deloitte Access Economics, found the total costs of natural disasters in Australia are forecast to more than double in real terms to \$39 billion per year by 2050.

IAG Managing Director and CEO Peter Harmer said a key recommendation of the report was for all levels of government to work with the Roundtable on co-designing a framework to prioritise and assess the most effective resilience projects and locations.

"The Roundtable's research highlighted the importance of all levels of government working with the private and not-for-profit sectors to coordinate mitigation initiatives, funding and strategies to reduce the impacts of natural disasters on communities across the nation," Mr Harmer said.

"Just recently March demonstrated the vulnerability of Australia to natural disasters, with a cyclone in Darwin, storms and flooding around Hinchinbrook in North Queensland and bushfires in Tathra in NSW and south-western Victoria near Warrnambool.

"We congratulate the Commonwealth Government for establishing the Taskforce, which is a very significant step in ensuring we have the best framework in place to help reduce the devastating impacts of natural disasters on communities."

Australian Red Cross CEO Judy Slatyer said the social impacts of natural disasters will be a key area for the Taskforce to address.



“Natural disasters have a deep social impact on individuals and communities that can last for years,” Ms Slatyer said.

“Relatively small investments now in things such as community education, emergency kits, and encouraging connected and strong communities is the best way to helping people and communities recover faster which reduces the personal and economic costs of disasters.

“If resilience projects become embedded in all relevant areas of government planning and policy, we’d see an increase in jobs and community confidence that would drive a strong economy.”

Roundtable members are united in their commitment to work with the Taskforce to help build more resilient communities and a safer Australia.

### **About the Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience & Safer Communities**

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience & Safer Communities was formed in 2012 to influence public policy via evidence-based reporting on the unsustainable cost of disasters on life, property and the economy.

The Roundtable members are the Chief Executive Officers of Australian Red Cross, IAG, Investa, Munich Re, Optus and Westpac Group.

Members of the Roundtable champion the need for a sustainable, coordinated national approach to make communities more resilient and people safer. They believe that national investment in disaster resilience and preventative activities is the most effective way to protect communities and reduce the impact of disasters.

### **For more information please go to our website:**

<http://australianbusinessroundtable.com.au/>

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