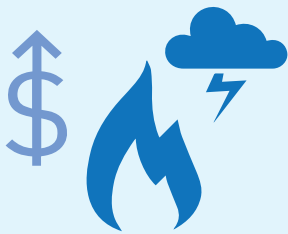


Building our Nation's Resilience to Natural Disasters

Report Fact Sheet
June 2013



This report advocates for a sustainable and comprehensive approach to managing natural disasters. This would save lives and reduce damage to property and vital infrastructure.



The cost of natural disasters in Australia is forecast to rise to \$23 billion* a year by 2050.

*This figure was revised to an annual cost of \$33 billion by 2050 in the 2016 Australian Business Roundtable Report 'The Economic Cost Of The Social Impact Of Natural Disasters'.

This is due to population increases and more severe and frequent storms, floods, cyclones and bushfires.

Each year, Government spends an estimated:

\$560 million on relief and recovery efforts **after** disasters.

\$50 million on resilience measures **before** disasters.



National investment in resilience measures could reduce the cost of natural disasters by more than 50%.

For example, resilience expenditure of around \$250 million a year to 2050 could generate budget savings of more than \$12 billion.



Resilience measures include raising dam walls or building more cyclone-resistant houses.

Recommendations:

- 1 Identify and prioritise effective pre-disaster resilience measures.
- 2 Commit to long-term funding of resilience measures to reduce post-disaster recovery costs.
- 3 Appoint a National Resilience Advisor and establish a Business and Community Advisory Group to centralise spending and decision-making.

Raising the Warragamba Dam wall

The Hawkesbury-Nepean area is a major flood risk for greater Sydney. During large floods, heavy rain has historically lead to floods at western Sydney's Warragamba Dam.

Research shows an event of this scale today would cause:

→ 60,000 to 90,000 people evacuated

20,000 more stranded with evacuation routes cut-off

Direct impact to 1,000 to 3,000 businesses

It is estimated that the Hawkesbury-Nepean area is exposed to average annual flood costs of around \$102 million in total economic value. This will increase to about \$317 million by 2050.

Raising the Warragamba Dam wall would:

Save more than \$3 billion by 2050

Reduce average flood costs by around 73%