

Disaster Resilience



Strategic Objective

Develop and implement comprehensive strategies and programs for climate change mitigation, adaptation and disaster resilience, strengthening the long-term resilience and wellbeing of the region.

The Hunter is predicted to experience more severe weather and natural hazards of increasing frequency and intensity as our climate continues to change. Many of our region's communities are already struggling to recover from the continual and combined impacts of more frequent and severe natural hazards, as demonstrated by the severe weather events that have impacted the NSW East Coast from May 2025 where the Pacific Highway closed due to inundation.

In the face of this change we appreciate the significant ongoing efforts of the NSW and Commonwealth Governments to review and improve disaster management frameworks and responses and to build the resilience capability of local communities.

The involvement of local councils in this work will be critical. This is because councils play a unique and systemic role in addressing climate risks and achieving adaptation objectives. However local councils, especially regional and rural ones, are typically under-resourced to plan and undertake this important work.

Challenge	Advocacy Ask
Lack of Funding	Commit to more proactive and streamlined resilience funding aligned to councils mandated four year planning cycle.
Water Infrastructure Excluded from Recovery Arrangements	Revise National Emergency Management Agencies (NEMA) criteria to ensure water and sewer assets are included in disaster recovery funding eligibility.
Betterment	Enable betterment funding to strategically improve and upgrade resilience of priority public infrastructure to natural disasters.
Staff Resources	Establish and fund permanent local and regional roles for disaster resilience, embedded into the local area.
Regional, Place-based Approach	Co-design regional disaster adaptation priorities and funding arrangements to reflect shared local priorities.
Spontaneous Volunteers	Allow recovery of costs incurred through ongoing Spontaneous Volunteer management and coordination.