

CYCLONE SEROJA — COMMUNITY WELFARE AND OUTREACH PROGRAM

1203. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the \$9 million severe tropical cyclone Seroja community welfare and outreach program.

- (1) How many additional mental health staff, by FTE, have been provided to support communities impacted by cyclone Seroja through this funding allocation?
- (2) Please identify which local government areas are currently receiving additional mental health staff through this program.
- (3) How much of the \$9 million has been disbursed to date?
- (4) Please provide a breakdown of how the \$9 million program is being spent, including specific programs or projects that are being funded.

Hon KYLE MCGINN replied:

On behalf of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Community Services, I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Community Services.

- (1) To support mental health needs, six additional FTE have been provided to support communities impacted by cyclone Seroja.
- (2) The following local government areas are currently receiving additional mental health staff through this program: Shire of Northampton, including Kalbarri; Shire of Chapman Valley; Shire of Morawa; Shire of Perenjori; Shire of Three Springs; Shire of Mingenew; Shire of Carnamah; City of Greater Geraldton, including Mullewa; Shire of Koorda; and Shire of Shark Bay.
- (3) As at 8 December 2021, Communities has approved 100 applications and provided \$481 508 for category 3 financial assistance to replace or repair essential household items and category 4 financial assistance to repair homes to be habitable, safe and secure. It has funded 14 recovery FTE positions at a cost of approximately \$1.27 million.
- (4) The community welfare and outreach program is a two-year program funded under the joint commonwealth and state disaster recovery funding arrangements. The program is designed to support the social wellbeing of people who have been severely impacted by tropical cyclone Seroja. The program funds positions, service provision and other activities that enable welfare, outreach, and recovery and resilience-building support to impacted communities. To focus efforts over the next 12 to 24 months, Communities has developed recovery priorities structured around the following areas: financial hardship; emergency accommodation and support; personal support, such as social, emotional and psychological support services; and community resilience, training and development.

The program is coordinated by the Department of Communities; however, aspects of the program are being delivered by other agencies and service providers, such as the Australian Red Cross, Centacare, Desert Blue Connect and the Salvation Army. The staffing and services provided within this program are being delivered across four operational recovery hubs: Geraldton, Northampton, Morawa and Kalbarri. These locations service all 16 affected local governments.