



## Introducing Rhonda

# DFES Manager of Community Engagement for Kimberley Floods State Recovery

Introducing Rhonda, who has joined the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Kimberley Floods State Recovery as the Community Engagement and Recovery Coordinator.

Rhonda will be leading the DFES Community Engagement team and working closely with the State Recovery Coordinator to support the delivery of recovery programs for flood affected communities.

Many locals will know Rhonda – a Walmajarri woman from the Fitzroy Valley who has strong local connections and a history of working and living in the West Kimberley.

Prior to starting in her new role, Rhonda was the Coordinator of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Aboriginal Engagement and Heritage Unit. While based in Perth, it was a role that took her right across the State supporting the departments engagement with Traditional Owners.

When the floods hit earlier this year, Rhonda was able to join the State Government Flood Response team in February for several weeks as an Indigenous Liaison Officer.

Personally, she and her husband Des experienced first-hand the impacts of the event on their property in Fitzroy Crossing.

“For me it was important that I was given the opportunity to be able to return to country and support my family and community hit hard by the natural disaster”.

“In my new role as part of the DFES State Recovery team, I’m looking forward to spending a lot more time in Fitzroy Crossing and continuing to support communities, organisations and businesses impacted by the flood”.

Based at the Fitzroy Crossing Flood Hub, Rhonda is really pleased to be able to help deliver a range of important recovery programs to support the resilience and strength in the community through the locally led recovery process.

## REPAIRS BEING MADE IN KUPUNGARRI

The Housing people have started repairs in Kupungarri on houses that have the most flood damage.

## MORE SUPPORT TO HELP WITH RECOVERY

The Commonwealth and WA Government will provide more funding to help with the flood recovery. There will be Community Recovery Officers and Cultural Navigators placed in the Flood Hubs of Fitzroy Crossing and Derby for the next few years to support community members.

There are plans in the future to have pop-up hubs and outreach services in Bayulu, Kupungarri, Camballin and other places.

## INTEREST RATE SUBSIDY FOR FLOOD-AFFECTED SMALL BUSINESSES

If you are a small business owner affected by the Kimberley floods, you might be able to get a 4% interest rate on new loans to either repair damaged assets or off-set business carry on costs incurred due to the flooding.

To apply for this, you should:

- be a registered small business with an ABN
- employ less than 20 full-time staff
- operate locally and your main source of income is from the business
- be able to show that the loan required is because of the flooding.

Apply by 30 June 2024. Learn more at [dfes.wa.gov.au/recovery/small-business](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/recovery/small-business)

## BRIDGE WORK

The first of the new bridge piles were delivered last week. There's more on the way. They will be driven 40 metres into the river bed to help stabilise the new bridge. Work is expected to start in early June.

The low level crossing is in operation. Semi-trailers are the largest heavy vehicles allowed to travel on the crossing. Small road train breakdown/assembly areas have been constructed on each approach to the river to enable road trains to take their trailers across the crossing one trailer at a time.

Main Roads have commenced construction of a second two-lane low level crossing that will be capable of taking road train traffic.

# Applications for the Premier's Flood Relief Payment are still open

A reminder to anyone who had any part of their home damaged by flood waters, you may be eligible to receive a \$1000 prepaid card to help pay for the replacement of items like clothing, tools, household goods and other personal items.

## WHO'S ELIGIBLE FOR THE PAYMENT?

- If any part of your primary residence was damaged by flood waters
- Each resident of the damaged home must have been 18yrs or over before 10 Jan 2023

## HOW CAN I APPLY FOR THE PAYMENT?

You can make an application for the Relief Payment by visiting the Flood Hub at the Fitzroy Crossing Visitor Centre – its open Monday to Thursday between 8am and 4pm.



Identification and proof of address are required with every application, and evidence of damage to your home will also help the team assess your eligibility - please bring it with you when you visit the Hub to help with the application process. The Flood Hub people can also visit your community if you can't come into the Hub.

If you can't come to the Flood Hub, you can also apply:

- Online at <https://dfes.smartygrants.com.au/PremiersFloodPayment>
- By chatting with the Hub Team when they visit your community
- By calling the Disaster Response Hotline on 1800 032 965 (Mon to Fri, 9am to 4pm)

# Contact Information

## Department of Communities Disaster Response Hotline

**1800 032 965**

### Mental Health Help - Fitzroy Crossing

**9166 1700**

### Mental Health Help - Derby

**9193 3605**

### After Hours - Mental Health Support

**1800 552 002**

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Support (24/7)

**13YARN (13 92 76)**

### Flood Hubs

#### Fitzroy Crossing Visitor Centre

4 Flynn Drive

8am-4pm

Monday - Thursday

(08) 9191 0904

#### Broome Boulevard Shopping Centre

106 Frederick Street

10am-2pm

Monday - Friday

#### Derby Housing Office

16-22 Loch Street

10am-2pm

Monday - Friday

**Do you have a story to share or updates from your area? We want to hear from you! Contact us by phone (08) 9191 0999 or email [media@sdwk.wa.gov.au](mailto:media@sdwk.wa.gov.au)**