

May 21, 2014

ICA reviews NSW local council data

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) has started reviewing available local government hazard data in New South Wales as part of its ICA Data Globe project.

This project coordinates access to an extensive database of natural hazard information including flood, earthquake, bushfire, storm surge and cyclone exposures at the individual property level.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan says the ICA Data Globe's work benefits consumers directly as incorrect, poor or an absence of hazard data creates uncertainty for insurers and can lead to higher insurance premiums.

"More information on natural hazards contributes directly to understanding risks and managing insurance affordability," Mr Whelan says.

"The ICA Data Globe project continues the insurance industry initiatives identified in our [10-point plan](#) aimed at developing a more effective and sustainable response to disasters in Australia."

Building on the ICA's Data Globe process of collecting and centralising natural hazard data, the ICA will be holding a series of workshops focusing on key local government districts in each state, starting with New South Wales.

At these workshops, insurers will review the quality of hazard data currently available, identify any information gaps and formulate approaches to enhance, improve or collect more hazard data.

Hazard data held by the ICA for many council areas includes flood, storm, bushfire zoning, earthquake and storm surge exposure mapping.

The first workshops, to be held in Sydney during June, will focus on the following areas:

- **Richmond-Tweed region** covering Ballina Shire, Byron Bay, Kyogle Shire, Lismore Shire, Richmond Valley Shire and Tweed Shire
- **Hunter and Central Coast region** covering Cessnock Shire, Dungog Shire, Great Lakes, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and Upper Hunter
- **Illawarra region** covering Kiama City, Shellharbour City, Shoalhaven City, Wingecarribee Shire and Wollongong City

At the end of the workshops, the insurance industry will have identified suburbs and towns where poor quality hazard information or the absence of appropriate hazard data is a driving factor in the cost of insurance.

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Where gaps are identified, the workshops will put in place a program to source the best available data.

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Editor's Note: For more information on the ICA's affordability projects go to www.insurancecouncil.com.au/affordability