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Insurers make rapid progress on summer hailstorm repairs

Almost 50 per cent of 136,424 insurance claims received after December's hailstorm in New South Wales have already been resolved.

Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) figures released today show the insurance bill from the December 20 storm has reached \$1.271 billion.

The storm caused severe damage across suburban Sydney and many regional communities. Almost 95,000 private and commercial motor vehicles were damaged or destroyed. Tens of thousands of households lodged home and contents claims, with most suffering damage to roofs, guttering and walls, as well as internal damage caused by water entering properties.

ICA General Manager Communications and Media Relations Campbell Fuller said: "Insurers have made rapid progress over the past 17 weeks to get families back into their homes and motorists back on the roads, despite the enormous pressure on builders, tradespeople and smash repairers.

"Sydney was hit by several severe early summer storms, which had put the motor vehicle and home building repair supply chains under pressure before the December 20 storm hit.

"Insurers are focused on working with property owners to agree on scopes of works, particularly for repairable roofs, in line with their policies. The industry has been harnessing available repairers, tradespeople and builders who are qualified, reputable and competitive, to undertake and complete outstanding work."

As of today, almost 50 per cent of 30,738 residential building claims have been completed, and more than 41 per cent of 94,822 motor vehicle claims have also been closed.

"The ICA is pleased Berowra MP Julian Leeser and Hornsby MP Matt Kean have escalated 17 claims where policyholders have raised concerns, and these are being addressed by insurers," Mr Fuller said.

Since December 20 the ICA has hosted two forums in Berowra to provide guidance and assistance to local policyholders. Insurers have held hundreds of one-on-one consultations to identify and resolve issues. The ICA has also operated its catastrophe hotline (1800 731 621) to assist householders, car owners and small business owners with questions about the claims process.

The hailstorm was the first of three summer catastrophes declared by the ICA. Insurance losses from the monsoonal deluge that struck Townsville in February have reached \$1.132 billion from 27,355 claims, while the Bunyip bushfires in late February resulted in \$19.6 million in insurance losses from 365 claims.