



# News release

Insurance Council  
of Australia

Friday, 5 November 2021

## Insurance disaster responders move into South Australia

Insurance disaster responders are entering South Australia from today to assist with the assessment, management and resolution of claims following last week's hailstorms, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) said today.

The storm cell, which hit areas in South Australia from the Yorke Peninsula through Adelaide, across the Victorian border to east of Melbourne and as far south as Tasmania, has been declared an Insurance Catastrophe by the ICA.

The declaration of an Insurance Catastrophe serves to escalate and prioritise the insurance industry's response for affected policyholders.

To date 59,237 claims have been lodged across the three impacted states with approximately two thirds of claims in South Australia related to damage to motor vehicles while in Victoria 90 per cent of claims relate to homes.

The ICA has this week worked with the State Government to facilitate the entry of insurance disaster responders into South Australia while border restrictions with New South Wales and Victoria remain.

The 21 specialists being deployed include assessors, loss adjusters and claims specialists. In line with the insurance sector's Covid-19 Disaster and Recovery Deployment Plan these workers will be subject to a range of restrictions and requirements when in South Australia, as well as being fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

The deployment of insurance disaster responders from interstate is necessary because there are not enough local claims specialists or trades to meet the needs of those impacted by the storm.

With border restrictions still in place while natural disasters are more likely, the ICA has written to national and state leaders calling for a nationally consistent approach to the deployment across state and territory borders of insurance disaster responders.

Insurers are advising that disruption to building supply chains related to the pandemic continue to cause ongoing delays to the supply of building materials nationally.

Quote attributable to Andrew Hall, CEO, Insurance Council of Australia:

Families, businesses, and communities rely on insurance disaster responders from interstate in the aftermath of natural disasters – without them, recovery is delayed with significant personal, social, and economic impacts.

Modelling undertaken for the Insurance Council found that if an event the size of 2017's Cyclone Debbie occurred now and insurers were delayed by border restrictions by seven days, a total economic shortfall of \$687 million would result over the eight weeks following the event.

The ICA appreciates the efforts of the SA Government, Health and Police to enable the deployment of insurance disaster responders to support the recovery of storm-impacted South Australians.

However, the fact that it has taken more than a week to obtain this approval shows the urgent need for a nationally consistent approach that allows insurers to meet the needs of customers faster.