

Dear Commissioners,

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council - the national council (with New Zealand) for Fire and Emergency Services, wishes to make two points as a secondary submission to the Productivity Commissions' inquiry into Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements.

**1. 'AFAC' not 'AFESC'**

The first is a simple correction. The draft report refers to the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council and while it accurately reflects an abbreviation of the letters – the organisation is referred to as AFAC not AFESAC (as it was originally the 'Australasian Fire Authorities Council' and 'Emergency Services' was added subsequently). The brand name 'AFAC' is what is recognised by the industry and is the correct abbreviation.

**2. Investing in Incident Management certification will reduce damage and losses**

AFAC wishes to re-emphasise the importance of incident management as a function of mitigating the impact of national disasters. This was raised in AFAC's original submission but warrants greater emphasis in the report.

Regardless of the shift in funding and resourcing from recovery to mitigation, which AFAC supports strongly, there will always remain a level of residual risk. Effective incident management can significantly reduce and limit the impact of residual risk, which remains after the broader and extensive risk reduction programs have been actioned.

When natural disasters strike, they will be managed through formal incident management teams (IMT's) extensively drawn from emergency response agencies – members of the AFAC national council. Personnel who make up these specialist IMT's are increasingly sourced from jurisdictions across the country.

AFAC is establishing a professional certification scheme to ensure that all 'certified IMT personnel' meet industry standards and are independently assessed as meeting industry professional standards. This is being funded by the industry and in turn will improve incident management capability; reducing the impact of natural disasters. Reduced losses and damage, will improve community safety. A small investment by the Commonwealth in promoting national certification of incident managers, thereby raising IMT capability and outcomes, may well save millions of dollars in reduced damage and destruction through improved incident management.

AFAC argues strongly that a recommendation investing in national incident management certification should be reflect in the report.

If AFAC can be of any further assistance to the Commission, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind Regards

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AFAC Limited