



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Joint Select Committee on the NSW Reconstruction Authority

29 November 2024

MEDIA RELEASE

Committee publishes review of the *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022*

The NSW Reconstruction Authority has a significant role to play in disaster recovery and preparedness, but its legal framework is still new and should be revisited in the future.

The Joint Select Committee on the NSW Reconstruction Authority was required to review the *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022* two years after it became law. The Committee tabled its review of the Act in NSW Parliament this week.

NSW has been faced with successive disasters in recent years, including catastrophic bushfires in 2019/20 and the floods in 2022. Following those floods, the NSW Government passed the *NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022* to establish the NSW Reconstruction Authority: a dedicated statewide agency for disaster prevention, preparedness, adaptation, recovery and reconstruction.

Throughout the inquiry, the Committee heard from many disaster-experienced stakeholders about the importance for communities to be prepared for disasters and supported in their healing after an event. Mr Clayton Barr MP, Committee Chair said, 'Individuals and communities face significant long-term upheaval after a natural disaster strikes. We want to make sure that the Act is fit for purpose to ensure the Authority supports our communities in preparing for and recovering from disasters.'

The Committee found that the policy objectives of the Act are valid. Many stakeholders broadly supported the establishment of the NSW Reconstruction Authority to lead the state's disaster preparedness and recovery. However, the Committee also heard that some aspects of the Act were unclear and did not refer to some important matters. There were concerns about the far-reaching powers under the Act, and that the Authority's preparedness role would take a backseat to recovery and reconstruction.

The Authority was only established recently, and it remains untested by a catastrophic disaster like the 2019/20 summer bushfires or the 2022 floods. The Authority's preparedness work will also require some years to be implemented. Ultimately, the Committee has recommended that another review occur once five years have passed since the Act's assent, and has made other recommendations to strengthen accountability and transparency in the Authority's work, and ensure stakeholders feel supported and informed about their role.

The Committee also has a legal obligation to review the Authority's operations relating to a disaster, and will continue this work in 2025. 'I want to thank the hundreds of individuals who generously gave up their time to make submission and speak with us during this inquiry,' said Mr Barr. 'Your contributions were invaluable and will help inform the future work of the Authority.'

The Committee's report is now publicly available and can be read [here](#).

Media contact: Clayton Barr MP, Committee Chair | (02) 4991 1466