

# (CHAPTER8)

## Outcome 3

### Assisting regions to manage their own futures

#### Overview

The Department contributes to the achievement of Outcome 3 by providing advice and assistance to Territories in managing their own futures. This includes the self-governing Territories—the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Norfolk Island; the non-self governing Territories—Indian Ocean Territories (Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands) and Jervis Bay Territory; and the uninhabited Territories—Ashmore–Cartier Islands and the Coral Sea Islands. The programs and policy development are designed to promote good governance and community wellbeing in Australia’s Territories.

In addition, through its relief and mitigation programs, the Department assists communities in recovering from the cost and social impact of natural disasters.

During 2008–09, we made significant and substantial progress towards achieving Outcome 3, by providing relief and recovery assistance relating to multiple natural disaster events across different jurisdictions including the Queensland monsoonal floods from January to February 2009; the New South Wales mid-north coast floods in March–April, and May 2009; and Victorian bushfires of February 2009. Other developments include the start of construction of the Freight and Passenger Facility at Rumah Baru on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, reforms to improve the accountability and transparency of decision making by the Norfolk Island Government and its Administration, and celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Christmas Island being an Australian Territory.

Performance reports for each output contributing to Outcome 3 are presented in this chapter.

## Resource summary

**Table 20: Resource summary, Outcome 3—Assisting regions to manage their own futures**

	Budget* 2008–09 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2008–09 \$'000 (b)	Variation \$'000 (a)–(b)
<b>Output Group 3.1: Services to Territories</b>			
Administered items			
Territories grants—Indian Ocean Territories	80,198	75,523	4,675
Norfolk Island—Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area	563	564	–1
Jervis Bay Territory—depreciation	519	462	57
Christmas Island administration—depreciation	155	160	–5
Office of the Administrator, Norfolk Island	609	594	15
Services to Jervis Bay Territory	7,093	5,501	1,592
Indian Ocean Territories—depreciation	16,091	15,130	961
ACT Government—National Capital influences	24,435	24,434	1
ACT Government—National Capital function	1,398	1,369	29
ACT Government—water and sewerage	9,827	9,827	–
Norfolk Island administration—depreciation	582	578	4
Office of the Administrator, Northern Territory	250	189	61
IOT infrastructure	30,526	6,213	24,313
Loss on revaluation of ACT Nolan Collection	–	305	–305
Departmental Outputs	7,650	7,724	–74
Revenues from other sources (s 31)	7	87	–80
<b>Subtotal for Output 3.1</b>	<b>179,903</b>	<b>148,660</b>	<b>31,243</b>

**Table 20: Resource summary, Outcome 3—Assisting regions to manage their own futures *continued***

	Budget* 2008–09 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2008–09 \$'000 (b)	Variation \$'000 (a)–(b)
<b>Output Group 3.2: Natural disaster relief and mitigation</b>			
Administered items			
Natural disaster mitigation	15,160	8,801	6,359
National aerial fire fighting	14,220	14,220	–
Bushfire mitigation	1,565	1,403	162
Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements	58,675	58,546	129
Disaster Appeals Fund	3,000	3,000	0
Departmental Outputs	6,622	10,520	–3,898
Revenues from other sources (s 31)	–	130	–130
<b>Subtotal for Output 3.2</b>	<b>99,242</b>	<b>96,620</b>	<b>2,622</b>
<b>Total for Outcome 3</b>	<b>279,145</b>	<b>245,280</b>	<b>33,865</b>
<b>Departmental</b>	<b>14,279</b>	<b>18,461</b>	<b>–4,182</b>
<b>Administered</b>	<b>264,866</b>	<b>226,819</b>	<b>38,047</b>
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>		<b>65</b>	

Notes:

\* Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2008–09 Budget

\*\* Special Account receipts and payments are shown in Note 25 to the Financial Statements

## Output 3.1

### Services to Territories

#### Summary

The Department administers the non-self-governing Territories of Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the Coral Sea Islands and Jervis Bay. We are also responsible for managing the Australian Government's interests in the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Norfolk Island.

The Department's role in administering the Territories includes developing policy advice and legislation to maintain effective systems of governance; administering intergovernmental agreements; delivering State and local government-type services, including grant funding; and managing a capital works program to maintain, replace and modernise Territory infrastructure for which the Australian Government is responsible.

The underlying principle of service delivery, funding support and capital works is to ensure the Territories' communities are provided with services and infrastructure comparable with those provided to equivalent State communities.

#### Major achievements

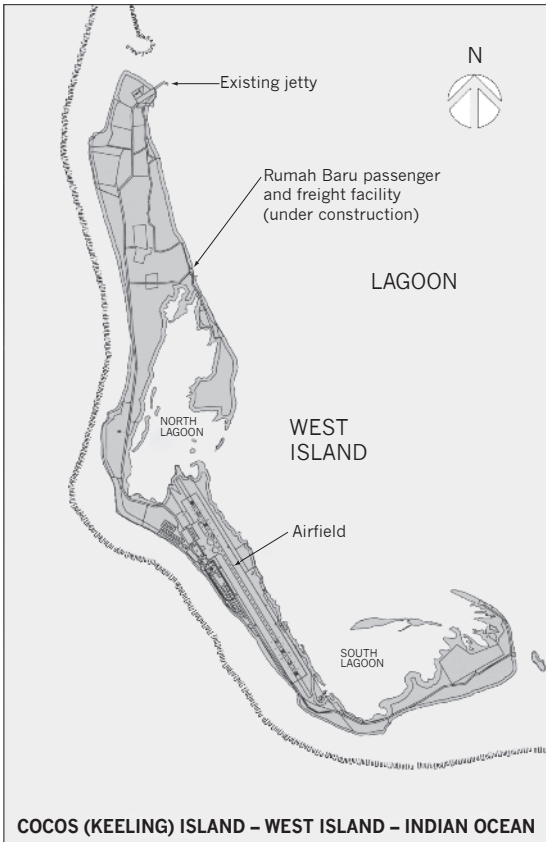
##### Indian Ocean Territories

To mark the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary (in October 2008) of Christmas Island being an Australian Territory, the Department in partnership with the Shire of Christmas Island, commissioned a permanent historical exhibition to be mounted at Tai Jin House on Christmas Island. The exhibition celebrates the colourful, multi-cultural and everyday aspects of the history of Christmas Island. It contains a range of artefacts, photographs and audio-visual items, many of which have been generously donated by local residents. Funding assistance was also given to the Shire of Christmas Island to support community celebrations in October.

In April 2009, the Department oversaw commencement of construction of the Rumah Baru passenger and freight facility on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (see Figure 7). This major capital works project was awarded to Wylie and Skene Pty Ltd in December 2008. Construction of the new facility will:

- ensure safer freight handling and passenger transfers on West Island
- meet current and long-term needs of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands community, and
- provide flexible infrastructure, capable of upgrade, to handle increasing volumes of freight and passenger movements.

Figure 7: Rumah Baru passenger and freight facility, Cocos (Keeling) Islands



### Norfolk Island

The Department provided advice to the Government on reforms to improve the accountability and transparency of the Norfolk Island Government and Administration. The Government has announced significant reforms to governance on Norfolk Island. The Department consulted widely across government in developing proposals and options.

The Department conducted a major review of the management, operation and administration of the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area on Norfolk Island. The review included extensive consultations with the Norfolk Island Government, the Norfolk Island community and the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. Review

recommendations will enable the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area to maintain its important place in Australia's convict heritage.

### **Australian Capital Territory**

The Department negotiated an intergovernmental agreement between the Australian Government and the Australian Capital Territory Government on planning and delivering the Centenary of Canberra celebrations in 2013.

As well, the Department negotiated an intergovernmental agreement between the Australian Government, and the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales Governments on supply of water to Queanbeyan (New South Wales) from the Googong Dam.

### **Jervis Bay**

In June 2009 the Department executed a new agreement with Transelect to manage and maintain the Jervis Bay Territory's electricity infrastructure. Signing this agreement was the culmination of 12 months work that included a comprehensive audit of the electricity infrastructure owned by the Australian Government. This new agreement will ensure Commonwealth assets managed by the Department are maintained to the required standard.

On behalf of the Minister for Home Affairs, the Department is finalising an agreement to establish a bus service to connect residents in the Jervis Bay Territory to Vincentia and therefore the wider Shoalhaven Region and beyond.

### **Purchaser/provider arrangements**

The Department has a number of purchaser/provider arrangements in place for delivery of services to Australia's Territories.

State-type services are provided to the Indian Ocean Territories either directly by the Department, through 36 service delivery arrangements with the Western Australian Government or through contracted service providers. These arrangements deliver services in the areas of education, justice, small business development, infrastructure and regulatory services. As well, contracts are in place with commercial providers for airport and marine port services, and airline operations.

Similar purchaser/provider arrangements are in place for the Jervis Bay Territory with both the Australian Capital Territory Government and with agencies of the New South Wales Government.

## Evaluations and reviews

### Review of the airlines services procurement process

In May 2009, the Department engaged Deloitte to review procurement of air services for the Indian Ocean Territories. Deloitte was asked to consider whether the Department had complied with internal procurement procedures and the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines when it tendered a contract to provide air services to the Indian Ocean Territories in September 2008.

Deloitte reported that the air services procurement complied with all relevant requirements.

### Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

The former Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Bob Debus MP, referred an inquiry into the National Capital Authority to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories on 15 February 2008. The Committee presented its report *The Way Forward—Inquiry into the National Capital Authority* on 16 July 2008. The report made 22 recommendations about the Authority's governance and developing a single integrated document between the Australian Capital Territory and the Commonwealth for planning the Australian Capital Territory.

The Government responded to the report on 12 December 2008; it accepted completely, in part or in-principle 13 of the Committee's 22 recommendations.

### Services to the Jervis Bay Territory

In July 2008, the Department provided funding through its State-type service arrangements with the Australian Capital Territory Government, for a 12-month placement of a Family Support Worker in the Jervis Bay Territory. The placement is under review to determine whether this service is of benefit to the community and should be continued for a further term.

The Department contracted an independent review of existing electricity infrastructure. Review recommendations will enhance future asset management and assist future planning of a maintenance program on the distribution network within the Territory.

## Outlook

The Department is pursuing major objectives relating to the Indian Ocean Territories in 2009–10. We will oversee an upgrade of port infrastructure to facilitate mooring of large ships at Christmas Island. In consultation with the Department of Climate Change, the Department will develop an adaptation strategy for the Indian Ocean Territories in line with the National Climate Change

Adaptation Framework. We will conduct an open tender for airline services to the Indian Ocean Territories. In relation to the other Territories, the Department will:

- convene an intergovernmental committee on planning in the Australian Capital Territory
- convene the National Capital Consultative Council
- manage legislative change to implement the Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories' report on the National Capital Authority
- advise the Australian Government on contributions to the 2013 Centenary of Canberra
- implement reforms on Norfolk Island to improve governance and strengthen accountability
- advise the Australian Government on the recommendations of the review of the management, operation, and administration of the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area on Norfolk Island
- complete improvements to Jervis Bay Territory School as a result of the Department liaising with the ACT Department of Education on federal funding available under the Building the Education Revolution program, and
- in conjunction with the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, conduct a joint workshop with the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council to examine good governance and develop clear reporting guidelines and frameworks to help Council meet the reporting requirements of Commonwealth funding agreements.

### Performance indicators

**Table 21: Performance indicators, Output 3.1—Services to Territories**

Key performance indicators	2008–09 target	Result
Grants funding provided to an agreed timetable and on the basis of key criteria for funding being met	100% compliance	Achieved In the Indian Ocean Territories, grants are made in accordance with the criteria of the relevant Western Australian program terms and conditions, following ministerial approval. The Department managed funding agreements with help from the Western Australian agency responsible for administering the equivalent Western Australian program.

Key performance indicators	2008–09 target	Result
Investments in capital works are managed effectively to ensure providers meet contractual targets	100% compliance	Achieved The Department received approval for the second rolling five-year capital works program for the Indian Ocean Territories in July 2008. The program aims to strengthen capital works planning and implementation, and provide the foundation for future capital investment by early exposure to the funding requirements over the coming five years. Capital works projects are delivered either directly by the Department, through service delivery arrangements with the Western Australian Government, or through contracted service providers, such as the Indian Ocean Territories Ports Management Services or the Airports Management Services contractors.
Intergovernmental agreements and service delivery agreements are managed effectively and the requirements of the agreements are met	100% compliance	Achieved 36 service delivery arrangements were managed between the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government to provide State-level services to the Indian Ocean Territories. Payments under three programs from the Commonwealth to ACT for national capital influences were made within the agreed timeframes.
Legal and policy advice is provided within agreed timeframes and to the satisfaction of ministers and client agencies	Ministers and key agencies express a high degree of satisfaction as to the quality, effectiveness and timeliness of advice, as measured by periodic feedback	Achieved

# PART 2

## PERFORMANCE REPORTS OUTPUT 3.1

Administered item	Results			
Territories grants—Indian Ocean Territories	<p>Achieved</p> <p>The Indian Ocean Territories consist of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Due to their remoteness and small populations, their economies rely heavily on ongoing support from the Australian Government. The Department administered \$67.0 million of funding through services to the Indian Ocean Territories Administered Program.</p> <p>In 2008–09, on behalf of the Australian Government, the Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commissioned a major climate change risk assessment</li> <li>• helped provide support services to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s clients on Christmas Island, with funding from DIAC</li> <li>• established the second rolling five-year capital works program for the Indian Ocean Territories</li> <li>• lodged legislative instruments for the first home owner concessional rate of duty—from 1 July 2008, first home buyers in the Indian Ocean Territories have been able to access concessional rates of duty when purchasing homes</li> <li>• continued the asbestos removal program</li> <li>• coordinated delivery of equivalent regional and local community infrastructure program payments</li> <li>• facilitated alternative management techniques for yellow crazy ants and supported rehabilitation of the rainforest on Christmas Island, and</li> <li>• commissioned a Crown land management plan to help with strategic land planning and development in the Indian Ocean Territories.</li> </ul> <p>The Department continued to deliver a number of State-type services directly in the Indian Ocean Territories on behalf of the Australian Government. In 2008–09 it provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health services including purchasing a mammography machine to improve health screenings for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands community</li> <li>• heritage services, including finalising the Department’s Heritage Strategy, and</li> <li>• support to on-island capability development through delivering funding for construction of dual user pathways on Christmas Island.</li> </ul> <p>The Department progressed economic development initiatives, including administering the Economic Development Funding program for the Indian Ocean Territories. This fund increases employment opportunities, improves skills, expands and/or upgrades infrastructure and increases community capacity to become economically more sustainable.</p> <p>The Department also managed the State-type grants program that provides the Indian Ocean Territories communities with access to a wide range of Western Australian Government grant funding programs.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="458 1467 1154 1506"> <tr> <td>Budget price: \$80.198 million</td> <td>Actual price: \$75.523 million</td> </tr> </table>		Budget price: \$80.198 million	Actual price: \$75.523 million
Budget price: \$80.198 million	Actual price: \$75.523 million			
Indian Ocean Territories—freight and passenger capital works	<p>Achieved</p> <p>The head contract for constructing the new passenger and freight facility on Cocos (Keeling) Islands was awarded to Wylie and Skene Pty Ltd in December 2008. All approvals and permits have been obtained and construction started in May 2009. The project is on track for completion by the end of April 2010.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="458 1648 1154 1679"> <tr> <td>Budget price: \$30.526 million</td> <td>Actual price: \$6.213 million</td> </tr> </table>		Budget price: \$30.526 million	Actual price: \$6.213 million
Budget price: \$30.526 million	Actual price: \$6.213 million			

Administered item	Results
Norfolk Island environment trust	Achieved Funds collected from the sale of Crown land are made available to the Trust Board, appointed by the Norfolk Island Government, to fund grants for improved environmental and land management projects. Using established criteria, the Australian Government's Natural Resources Management Team scrutinises grant funding applications before approval.
	Budget price: \$(0.001) million      Actual price: \$(0.001) million
Norfolk Island—Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (KAVHA)	Achieved Membership of the KAVHA Management Board includes senior officers from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, as well as the Norfolk Island Administrator. This representation provides a safeguard for the Australian Government's interests and oversees management of the KAVHA precinct.
	Budget price: \$0.564 million      Actual price: \$0.565 million
Norfolk Island—Kingston Pier	Achieved This program was completed during 2007; the final payment being made at the expiry of the contract warranty period.
	Budget price: Nil      Actual price: Nil
Jervis Bay Territory—depreciation	Achieved All Territory infrastructure including essential services was maintained.
	Budget price: \$0.519 million      Actual price: \$0.462 million
Christmas Island Administration—depreciation	Achieved The Administrator's residence and related assets were maintained.
	Budget price: \$0.155 million      Actual price: \$0.160 million
Office of the Administrator, Norfolk Island	Achieved Australian Government funding met the Administrator's salary entitlements, and relevant travel and other costs.
	Budget price: \$0.609 million      Actual price: \$0.594 million
Services to Jervis Bay Territory	Achieved On behalf of the Australian Government, the Department delivers State and municipal type services to the residents of the Territory. These services include basic and essential services, such as power and water, to homes in the Territory. They also include services in the Territory that are available to other residents in the surrounding Shoalhaven region, including primary education and health services. These services are delivered through both service delivery agreements with the ACT Government for basic welfare and community services and contracts with private organisations.
	Budget price: \$7.093 million      Actual price: \$5.501 million
Indian Ocean Territories—depreciation	Achieved All Island infrastructure, including essential services, was maintained.
	Budget price: \$16.091 million      Actual price: \$15.130 million

# PART 2

## PERFORMANCE REPORTS OUTPUT 3.1

Administered item	Results
ACT Government—National Capital influences	Achieved The Commonwealth compensates the ACT Government for the effects on its expenditure and revenue resulting from the unique design of Canberra and the location of the large number of national institutions in the Territory.
	Budget price: \$24.435 million      Actual price: \$24.434 million
ACT Government—National Capital function	Achieved This payment supports delivery of specialised services by the ACT Government on behalf of the Australian Government in the ACT, including managing the Nolan Collection and inspecting and registering diplomatic vehicles.
	Budget price: \$1.398 million      Actual price: \$1.369 million
ACT Government—water and sewerage	Achieved The Commonwealth compensates the ACT Government for the high maintenance and operational costs associated with the excess length of water and sewerage mains necessitated by the dispersed nature of urban development in the ACT in its open space setting.
	Budget price: \$9.827 million      Actual price: \$9.827 million
Norfolk Island administration	Achieved The Administrator's residence and related assets were maintained.
	Budget price: \$0.582 million      Actual price: \$0.578 million
Office of the Administrator, Northern Territory	Achieved Australian Government funding met the Administrator's salary entitlements and relevant travel costs.
	Budget price: \$0.250 million      Actual price: \$0.189 million
Administered assets and liabilities	Partially achieved Head contract has been awarded and construction of the passenger and freight handling facility on Cocos (Keeling) Islands is underway.
	Budget price: \$30.526 million      Actual price: \$6.213 million

## Output 3.2

### Natural disaster relief and mitigation

#### Summary

The Department administers Australian Government financial assistance for the States and Territories for various natural disaster mitigation and relief programs and initiatives. This includes management of the following administered programs:

- Bushfire Mitigation
- Natural Disaster Mitigation
- National Aerial Firefighting, and
- Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

#### Major achievements

The **Bushfire Mitigation program** and the **Natural Disaster Mitigation program** are delivered through funding partnerships with all levels of government. Both programs operate on a cost-sharing basis with the States, Territories and local government, with each level of government eligible to apply for funding.

The national Bushfire Mitigation program aims to identify and address bushfire mitigation risk priorities across Australia. It funds construction and maintenance of fire trails and associated accessibility measures that contribute to safer communities better able to prepare for, respond to, and withstand the effects of bushfires. Through the Bushfire Mitigation program the Australian Government approved funding of \$4,452,307 for 344 projects in all States and Territories in 2008–09.

The Australian Government approved funding of \$18,587,463 for 161 projects across Australia in 2008–09 under the Natural Disaster Mitigation program, which aims to identify and address natural disaster risk priorities.

In Western Australia, Stage 1 of the \$25 million Carnarvon flood mitigation works consisting of the upgrade of two floodways on the North-West Coastal Highway south of Brown Range was completed in 2008 at a cost of \$7 million. The project will protect the high-value plantations outside Carnarvon from serious flood damage.

Preparations subsequently commenced for constructing Stage 2 works that include installing flood levees and embankments, redefining floodway zones, undertaking land acquisition or helping to relocate. This work is due for completion in 2009. The Australian Government has contributed \$4.25 million to the project.

Work also continued on the \$6 million Kowanyama Multi-Purpose Sport and Recreation Centre on Western Cape York Peninsula. As well as some funding under other programs, the Australian Government is providing \$690,000 under the Natural Disaster Mitigation program to incorporate infrastructure and facilities into the proposed centre to enable its use for emergency shelter and accommodation during and after severe weather events. This includes self-contained power and water, and meal preparation, washing and storage amenities.

The centre will provide a valuable sporting, community, social and cultural hub for a community of approximately 2,500 people in this remote and isolated location.

In 2008–09, the Australian Government provided \$14.22 million under the **National Aerial Firefighting Arrangements** to help the States and Territories establish a national fleet of specialised firefighting aircraft. The arrangements afford a cooperative national approach to sharing costly, specialised resources that can be strategically positioned across Australia.


In 2008–09, the national fleet comprised a range of rotary and fixed wing aircraft, including five high-capacity aircrews based in Sydney, Melbourne and, for the first time, Adelaide. This year witnessed the first use of a new Eye-in-the-Sky helicopter in Sydney. This new surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, fitted with state of the art digital technology, enables firefighters to see through smoke and identify fire movements and hot spots not normally visible to the naked eye. Transmitting data to incident controllers in real time, the technology proved an invaluable tool in fighting fires.

Overall, the 2008–09 bushfire season proved to be one of the nation's most severe, with Victoria experiencing the most devastating bushfire in Australian history. This placed a heavy call on aerial firefighting resources. The Australian Government responded by providing an extra \$4 million (in addition to the \$10.22 million committed at the start of the year) to the National Aerial Firefighting Arrangements. This extra funding helped extend Australia's aerial firefighting capability and provide much needed support to firefighters on the ground.

The Department administers the Australian Government's **Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements** (NDRRA). The NDRRA provides partial reimbursement to the States and Territories for costs of eligible relief and recovery activities following natural disasters. This guarantee of financial assistance ensures States and Territories are able to provide immediate assistance to disaster affected individuals and communities. Activities such as provision of emergency food and clothing, restoration of essential public infrastructure and counter disaster operations are covered by the NDRRA.

In the second half of 2008–09 Australia experienced a number of significant natural disasters including:

- Queensland monsoonal floods from January to February 2009
- Victorian bushfires in February 2009, and
- New South Wales mid north coast floods in March, April and May 2009.



The Department worked closely with the State governments and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as well as a number of other Australian Government agencies to ensure that relief and recovery assistance was made available to those affected by these events.

Following these events, the Prime Minister activated additional NDRRA assistance in the form of clean up and recovery grants to primary producers and small businesses. This assistance was made available in recognition of the significant impact the events had on these sectors. In response to the Victorian bushfires a \$10 million community recovery fund and \$10 million tourism assistance support package were also made available. The Government considered that this additional assistance was needed to help communities recover from an event of such scale and severity.

An unprecedented level of NDRRA assistance has been provided following the Victorian bushfires. In June 2009 a payment of \$220 million was made to the Victorian Government to provide assistance to bushfire affected individuals and communities. Through the NDRRA, the Australian Government committed to sharing equally the costs of rebuilding communities affected by the bushfires. Under this arrangement, the Australian Government will contribute 50 cents in the dollar to all eligible Victorian expenditure, regardless of total expenditure.

In 2008–09 almost \$300 million was paid under the NDRRA to State and Territory Governments for their costs on natural disaster relief and recovery activities.

### Purchaser/provider arrangements

Under the National Aerial Firefighting Arrangements, Australian Government funds are provided to the National Aerial Firefighting Centre Ltd. The centre is responsible for national coordination and sharing of aerial firefighting resources between jurisdictions. Program funds were fully expended in 2008–09.

### Outlook

Both the Bushfire Mitigation program and the Natural Disaster Mitigation program will cease to offer funding from the end of 2008–09. Both programs will be rolled into the new Disaster Resilience program from 2009–10. The Disaster Resilience program will support projects intended to develop community resilience and communities' ability to withstand the affects of emergencies and disasters.

The impact of climate change is likely to see an increase in the severity and frequency of bushfires and the Australian Government remains committed to helping the States and Territories through the National Aerial Firefighting Arrangements. The Government reaffirmed its support in the 2009–10 Federal Budget.

Response to the Victorian bushfires recovery will continue to be a major priority for the Department in the early part of 2009–10.

The Department will also host an NDRRA stakeholder group meeting as part of the COAG review of natural disaster arrangements.

## Performance indicators

Table 22: Performance indicators, Output 3.2—Natural disaster relief and mitigation

Key performance indicators	2008–09 target	Result
Maintain an aerial firefighting capacity and improve the quality and effectiveness of Australia's fire trails	The program is administered according to the program guidelines and meets Australian National Audit Office requirements	Achieved Program was administered in accordance with established guidelines and ANAO requirements.
	Input is sought from key stakeholders in the design phase and feedback is sought prior to the next program cycle	Not required Program will not be offered in its current form from 2009–10, but will be subsumed into the wider Disaster Resilience program.
Deliver the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements administered program in accordance with the provisions of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements Determination	All funds are paid in accordance with the provisions of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements Determination	Achieved All payments made were in accordance with the terms and conditions of the NDRRA Determination.

Administered items	Results
Natural disaster mitigation	Achieved Funding was provided in accordance with formal program arrangements. Budget price: \$15.160 million      Actual price: \$8.801 million
	National aerial firefighting
National aerial firefighting	Achieved National aerial firefighting capability was maintained at the required level and supplemented as the severity of the bushfire season increased. Budget price: \$14.220 million      Actual price: \$14.220 million
	Bushfire mitigation
Bushfire mitigation	Achieved Funding was provided in accordance with formal program arrangements. Budget price: \$1.565 million      Actual price: \$1.403 million
	Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements	Achieved In 2008–09, over \$296 million was paid to State and Territory governments under the NDRRA for costs associated with relief and recovery activities. This required supplementation of funds from the Department of Treasury. Budget price: \$58.675 million      Actual price: \$58.546 million

# OUR PEOPLE



Kim Schearer and Joshi Pitman, Crisis Coordination Branch,  
Emergency Management Australia Division

# OUR PEOPLE

## Taking an all-hazards approach to swine flu

The Department's Coordination Centre, within Emergency Management Australia, is an around-the-clock, all-hazards operational centre. It receives information from various sources, and monitors the domestic and international media for developments relating to national security and emergency management. In April 2009 the Centre noticed media reports of outbreaks of the H1N1 influenza virus – swine flu – in Mexico and the United States.

### maintaining the flow of information

The Centre's five Watch Office teams monitored this emerging threat as it quickly spread to Australia. The challenge was to coordinate a comprehensive whole-of-government response to support the Department of Health and Ageing as the lead agency. The Centre compiled all stakeholder agencies' reports on their actions relating to the swine flu pandemic. The team developed a work plan and facilitated high-level meetings while contending with other incidents and normal day-to-day running of the Centre.

While on shift, Team Leader, Joshi Pitman, and Operations Supervisor, Kim Schearer, maintained the flow of information into situation reports and disseminated that information,

on time, to all stakeholders. Situation reports included statistics on the impact the virus was having on the workforce of Australian Government agencies, the spread of the virus, global related mortality, and Australians potentially affected both domestically and internationally.

'Leading and managing the team through incidents is always a challenge, but I enjoy the variety of events we monitor; you never know what each shift will bring. Because of our all-hazards approach, H1N1 was just one of many unique situations the Centre has been faced with,' Joshi said.

'Being part of the management team is very interesting' Kim added, 'especially getting to see at first hand the decisions the Australian Government makes in the face of a major health crisis.'

'The fact that we're a 24/7 operation means we're extremely well placed to identify any new developments as they happen, and then provide advice to those who need to know,' Joshi explained.

The Centre continues to monitor the H1N1 influenza pandemic to ensure distribution of the most comprehensive and accurate information to key stakeholders, including the Department of Health and Ageing, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.