

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our views on capabilities that the Commonwealth Government needs to have to support state and territory led crisis response as an alternative to the ADF. Ensuring that the Commonwealth is aware of a wide range of disaster resilience and response capabilities in the Australian market is crucial for the safety and livelihoods of all Australians.

InQuik is an Australian owned and founded business which began in 2017 to provide resilient, versatile, and rapidly constructed bridges through their innovative InQuik Bridge System.

The InQuik Bridge System is a modular construction system which is adaptable to site specific dimensional requirements, made from prefabricated steel reinforcement and formwork panels, which are lightweight and easily transported to site, lowered into position, and then filled with concrete. Most of the steel used in the bridges is Australian steel with rebar from Infrabuild and steel plate from BlueScope, with the only imported steel being used is steel types that are not made in Australia, like stainless steel. Australian capability from local supply chain protects InQuik from International delays and disruptions and ensures fund stay within the Australian supply chain. As the concrete is monolithic throughout the structure, the bridge design has superior strength and resilience, lower maintenance needs and an average design life of more than 100 years.

The modular system allows bridges to be built quickly [typically 8 weeks in factory fabrication and 2 weeks installation on-site] and provide versatile solutions with options to build from 6.1 to 100+ meters, with longer lengths requiring multi-span bridges. For these reasons, the InQuik Bridge system has become the industry leader in the Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) sector across Eastern Australia, rapidly replacing bridges after natural disasters such as fires and floods.

You will see attached in this submission, InQuik's catalogue which highlights the range and versatility of their bridging system.

This consultation submission addresses the following questions from the Alternative Commonwealth Capabilities for Crisis Response Discussion Paper:

1. What longer-term capacities and capabilities does the Commonwealth need to develop to meet the challenges of the evolving strategic environment?
2. What are the critical functions the Commonwealth Government should continue to perform in disaster relief and recovery, in support of local, state and territory governments?
3. What legislative, regulatory or policy changes could be undertaken to make it financially viable for other sectors to contribute to a Commonwealth crisis response capability?



1. What longer-term capacities and capabilities does the Commonwealth need to develop to meet the challenges of the evolving strategic environment?

To address the increasing frequency and intensity of natural crises in the strategic environment, it is important that the Commonwealth support capabilities that increase infrastructure resilience and enable quick recovery. It is important, that the Commonwealth not only develops their own capabilities through procurement but encourages the development of capability of disaster response and preparedness solutions across private industry – which can be achieved through procurement and investment. The InQuik Bridging System is an Australian invented and commercialised capability that is disaster resilient and can be rolled out for a fast-tracked infrastructure recovery. The Murphy’s bridge case study, which you will find attached in the submission, showcases our impact on the Eurobodalla Shire’s recovery efforts after the 2019-2020 bushfires. It is vitally important that the Commonwealth supports existing capabilities for disaster resilience and recovery in the market, by adding that into its disaster response capability directly or financing assistance.

2. What are the critical functions the Commonwealth Government should continue to perform in disaster relief and recovery, in support of local, state and territory governments?

The Commonwealth should continue to provide a National Emergency Management Stockpile as well as invest in community initiatives that help disaster response and preparedness. A stockpile with resources to support or rebuild critical infrastructure is crucial to recovery and viability of regional and remote areas. The InQuik Bridging System can be used to rapidly deploy bridges to restore transport routes, with replacement bridge modules able to be stockpiled easily and cheaply by the Commonwealth. Equally critically is the continuation of Commonwealth support for community initiatives to allow communities to be resilient and more independent from Commonwealth or State Government support in times of crisis. One solution that InQuik provides is the option to drive bridge modules to their desired location with as little infrastructure as a semi-trailer. The bridging system is designed to require low levels of labour and construction infrastructure, making it an even more attractive solution to local communities. You can see attached the Toorale Bridge case study, which demonstrates the effectiveness of InQuik’s resilient infrastructure in remote communities for recovery and resilience preparedness.



3. What legislative, regulatory or policy changes could be undertaken to make it financially viable for other sectors to contribute to a Commonwealth crisis response capability?

Two policy changes would make it more financially viable and accessible for our business to contribute to the Commonwealth crisis response capability. The first is for the Commonwealth to provide regulatory and financial assistance to the local council procurement process as it relates to disaster response. InQuik is well known with local government but the gap between a customer wanting a bridge and InQuik supplying the bridge is usually procurement paperwork and funding. If the Commonwealth could streamline the paperwork process, including allowing local councils to share certifications, as well as be more acutely aware funding shortfalls then companies like InQuik could provide a greater number of disaster ready bridges.

The second change is for the Commonwealth to create policies conducive to a proactive disaster ready response – both in the moment of disaster and throughout the year. During disasters, our experience is that funding is allocated only when there is a clear crisis that cannot be ignored, with said funding taking a while to be available. Processes could be developed to streamline funding in times of disaster need. Further, a proactive policy environment in regards to disaster preparedness could help upgrade many substandard bridges that are currently prone to bushfire and flood events. Both of these policies would have a significant impact on our level of investment in the Commonwealth crisis response capability given there would be greater financial incentive and accessibility for organisations such as InQuik.

