

National Resilience Australia – Submission.

Dated 14^h August 2023.

Department of Home Affairs

Canberra.

SUBJECT: Call for submissions for the National Resilience of Australia.

To Select Committee.

Having a wide experience in Disaster Management at the Commonwealth and State Level, I understand the issue of resourcing, structure, deployment and functioning of resources able to address imminent or ongoing issues following a declared National incident or disaster.

Capability short fall.

Looking at recent major disasters in Australia, from bush fires to floods, especially as an example Lismore, it is obvious that existing SES, Bush Fire Brigades and other local services, many being local volunteers from Clubs and groups, are not able to address and support communities in distress where major destruction has occurred. Most such response groups have limited numbers for ongoing engagement.

Resourcing is the Issue.

Following the recent Defence Review and comments by Ministers it is now apparent that our Defence Forces can no longer support and assist local disasters as such results in our Defence capabilities being distracted from what is their primary role, to defend, protect Australia in time of impending conflict. In the past Defence has deployed to many and various disasters in Australia starting with Cyclone Tracey where all Navy ships were sent to Darwin

providing resources following the destruction of the city/suburbs with the submarine becoming the electrical power source for many weeks.

Resources needed.

To attract the resources and skill sets required to establish a National Resilience Unit, Australia wide with appropriate numbers readily available, I suggest it is now necessary to form a funded, trained and resourced Unit of people able to respond and be deployed.

SUMMARY

Government needs to look into the future and identify long-term functions for such an establishment. Two suggested compatible roles are:

- a) The establishment of a fully funded and resourced National Resilience Unit Australia wide in each city able to be readily deployed is recommended.
- b) The other role would be that such an Establishment would have a dual function of becoming a “Civil Defence” Force able to meet the needs of the Australian peoples, towns and Cities should ever an invasion or hostile activity occur. (Presently Australia has no “Civil Defence” capacity or Act. The need for such capabilities has been highlighted and demonstrated during times of war and cannot be established overnight.)

Forwarded for consideration to enhance the safety, protection and sovereignty of Australians.

Michael Roach.

Risk and Disaster Consultant. 

Copy sent to the local Member. Llew O'Brien MP, Federal Member for Wide Bay.