

**DAVID HARRIS MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**NSW GOVERNMENT MUST PROVIDE CERTAINTY
FOR FLOOD AFFECTED ABORIGINAL
COMMUNITIES**

Approximately 36,509 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the officially declared natural disaster zones in NSW have been directly or indirectly impacted by the floods in NSW, or [4.2%](#) of those affected by floods.

Communities including Cabbage Tree Island have been decimated by the floods leading to mass dislocation of Aboriginal families including many children.

NSW Labor is calling for the Government to commit funds for reconstruction of particularly the Cabbage Tree Island community including the school and medical centre. The Cabbage Tree Island community is over 100 years old.

“In estimates today Minister Franklin agreed that the community could be displaced for up to two years and whilst the government is responding in the short term, there needs to be a longer-term commitment to restoring this community on traditional lands.”

“Whilst there are a range of short-term strategies there remains concerns about the serious housing shortage that already exists on the North Coast and how this disaster will further impact on Aboriginal families.”

“These Aboriginal communities need certainty moving forward as they face a dislocation of families from traditional country – there needs to be an agreed plan for reconstruction and renewal.”

“We can’t have a situation occur similar to the bushfire response where some residents are forgotten years after the event, still waiting for their homes to be replaced.”

“Rehabilitation of the community including contamination issues requires an urgent plan of management and a commitment from the NSW Government to help remediate the issues.”

“The NSW Government also needs to redouble their efforts to convince the Commonwealth that these communities should not be excluded from receiving extra Commonwealth disaster payments.”

ENDS

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