

River Murray Flood Community Newsletter

Issue 23: Friday, 25 August 2023



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Message from Alex and Deb

Welcome to the latest edition of the River Murray Flood Community Recovery Newsletter.

Another fortnight of progress in recovery and we are moving along with the number of demolitions increasing each week.

Coming into a period of more favorable weather we anticipate progress will continue and not need to be 'paused' due to climatic conditions.

As positive progress continues we are reviewing the frequency of the newsletter moving forward.

The river levels and flow rate still have some communities concerned and the [SES have put out a media release](#) to give some insight into the current status. This will hopefully bring some additional understanding and clarity.

The success of round two of the River Revival vouchers gives encouragement of more visitors coming into the region and supporting local businesses with some welcomed patronage. The attendance at the Accidental Counsellor workshops held recently was excellent. This has led to another two sessions being planned for Murray Bridge and Mannum. We hope you get the chance to get into one of those sessions.

It is nice to see some colour popping up in river communities with replanting and gardening in a lot of places. Some wonderful images are being posted in social media groups which, not only show the beauty of our part of the state but also serve to demonstrate the resilience and determination of communities as we move forward into spring.

Deb and I will be out and about in your communities over the next fortnight and would love to hear from or catch up with you.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact us should you need further information or to be linked to someone who can assist with issues you may be confronting.

For any flood-related queries call the State Relief and Recovery Infoline on 1800 302 787, visit sa.gov.au/floods, visit a [Recovery Centre](#), or contact either Deb Richardson or myself. I hope you enjoy this week's newsletter.



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Important Information - SES Media Release 25th August 2023



The South Australia State Emergency Service (SES) have issued a Media Release regarding their current operations and monitoring of the current River Murray flow rate and water levels.

A copy of the [Media Release can be found here](#) or alternatively you can head to their [Facebook page](#).

Info - Understanding the current rising river levels this winter



We appreciate there have been many questions raised regarding the river water levels this winter. Please find a link to the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) website. They have posted quite a bit of information relating to what is being experienced at the moment which can help you understand the current levels. The material includes the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) as well.

Updates will be available as things change and DEW are monitoring what is occurring very closely.

For more information, please visit [DEW Flows and daily water levels page](#)

There is also a link below to an interesting news interview that took place in recent days regarding River Murray levels and weather patterns.

<https://indaily.com.au/news/2023/07/11/winter-rains-see-river-murray-rise-again/>

Vouchers - Round two progress update



The South Australian Tourism Commission's River Revival Voucher program has reached another milestone this week, with the second booking period closing for the second round. While numbers of the estimated impact of the scheme are still being crunched, operators across the Riverland and Murray River, Lakes and Coorong regions are reporting an increase in visitation and expenditure thanks to the vouchers. This is set to continue throughout spring with the travel period continuing until 30 November.

As part of the SATC's work to inspire locals to travel to the Murray River, with or without a voucher, a digital campaign has been launched to showcase the regions' diverse experiences and unique operators. [Down by the River Chats](#) is a short video series profiling eight operators, who share how the importance of community, support by visitors from across the state, and the rejuvenation of wildlife following the natural phenomenon is helping recover and grow South Australia's Murray River regions.



Event - More Accidental Counsellor sessions



Accidental counsellors often find themselves in a counselling role by accident, as a result of conversations or requests from customers, colleagues, friends or others. Facilitated by experienced Lifeline mental health trainers, these FREE workshop provides practical and effective skills to step into the shoes of a counsellor and be able to respond to and support others when they're experiencing a challenging time.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course participants will be able to:

- identify signs of people in emotional crisis
- improve communication and active listening skills to provide support
- gain awareness of mental illness and suicide intervention
- discover helpful support options and referrals
- explore self-care strategies when in a supporting role.

You can go directly to the Register page via the buttons below.

Murray Bridge - 6th September

Mannum - 7th September

Info - Women of the LMRIA



The Lower Murray Reclaimed Irrigation Area (LMRIA) extends from Cowirra to Wellington and its 137 primary producers contribute livestock production value in excess of \$132 million per annum.

Thanks to local resident and primary producer Alexandra Westlake the inaugural Women of the LMRIA event was held on Monday 7 August 2023. Alex created and hosted the event as *“the first important step to unifying our unique community during time of great challenge and grief due to the flood.”*

This event is the beginning of a community-driven support network that will evolve over time to meet the needs of the women who participate. Although it's early days for the group the first gathering was a successful start and was summed up by Alex as follows,

“I was really encouraged by the women who attended the event who displayed their commitment to our LMRIA community just by being there. It is obvious we may be experiencing different challenges on our individual farms & swamp areas but collectively we all carry the heavy burden of what a natural disaster brings. It's a long journey but hearing from guest speakers who have been through the Yorke Peninsula bushfires say that one of the greatest forms of healing is found simply in the gathering of community was exactly the intent behind the event”.

The event was supported by the PIRSA [Family and Business support program](#) and made possible through funding from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Government of South Australia and Australian Government under the National Disaster Recovery funding arrangements.

If you have an idea to bring your community together and need a little support,

contact Deb Richardson on 0459 283 878 or deb.richardson@sa.gov.au for a chat.

Good News Story - Roses for Recovery



Brian Way is 90 years young, a community icon and avid gardener. If you're walking down the streets of Swan Reach your bound to see him in his garden, always with a friendly smile and willing to have a chat.

Brian lost everything in his garden and the community garden he assisted with in this flood, all that was left was the mud. Brian worked for Rossi making boots for 51years before coming to the river in 1998 to manage the Swan Reach Caravan Park. When the house across the road came up for sale he was so in love with the town, he bought it.

Brian's moto for staying young in body and mind is "use it or you will lose it", and is something that definitely works for this sprightly 90 year old.

When the Wellbeing Officer received a donation of \$12,500 worth of roses from Wagner Roses and Sophie Thompson #sophiespatch, she knew Brian would be over the moon to receive some, replacing some of his flood affected garden. Brian got a visit from the Wellbeing Officer and Community Liaison Officer to deliver his roses.

Brian has been busy preparing the ground and removing rubble and debris ready for them to have their new home. Brian was very grateful to Wagner Roses and Sophie Thompson for the generous donation.

Update - Johns Lyng Disaster Management Australia



DMA Update

The SA Flood Waste Clean-up program continues to achieve excellent clean-up outcomes for registrants and the community. Our demolition program has successfully completed over 21 full demolitions of homes, shacks, and other structures. Additionally, our flood waste collection has shown positive developments, including the significant amount of waste removed from the river and the ongoing collection of kerbside waste.

We are also sharing program information and highlights on our Facebook page, which you can find at the following link: [here](#)

Community Clean Up BBQ's

This weekend, we are hosting the second round of community BBQs at Morgan and Bowhill. We express our gratitude to the communities for their support in organising these events, which we believe provide important opportunities for registrants and individuals seeking more information about the program. You will have the chance to directly interact with DMA staff, and we encourage everyone to join us for a complimentary meal.

We look forward to meeting you!

Here are the details:

Date: August 26

Locations and Times:

Morgan – River Front Reserve, 09:30 am – 11:30 am

Bow Hill – Bowhill Community Centre, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Waste Collection

The collection of flood-affected waste has been considerable and cleared the path for recovery. This includes materials from demolitions, kerbside collections, and sandbag disposal. Remarkably, over 30% of the collected waste has been diverted from landfills for recycling purposes. If you have flood-affected waste that has yet to be collected, please continue to place it on the kerbside if feasible or contact DMA at 1800 418 491 to arrange a collection.

Currently, a barge is in operation along the river to collect waste from within and near the vicinity of the river. This effort follows a comprehensive survey and identification process to determine items for collection and disposal. To date, we have recovered over 900 items, amounting to roughly six tonnes of waste. Items retrieved include tanks, furniture, and pallets. The collection work has been carried out upstream from Morgan, and work will progressively move downstream in the coming days.

For those who still possess sandbags for collection, kindly register them with DMA. We aim to complete this collection within the upcoming weeks. If you have already registered, rest assured that we have your details, and we will be scheduling a collection. However, if you seek an update, please get in touch with DMA and your assigned case manager.

We are beginning to notice some waste placed out for collection that is not flood-affected. We wish to remind everyone that only flood-affected waste falls under the program's scope. We appreciate the community's understanding and support in adhering to this guideline.

Hazard Reduction

Registrants interested in opting for hazard reduction, including mould treatment and the removal of flood-affected asbestos, should contact their Case Manager. To facilitate this process, a Structural Assessment will be conducted to evaluate your property and define the necessary scope of work. This assessment may involve taking samples from your property by a hygienist. Once your Scope of Work is approved, your assigned site supervisor will contact you to coordinate the signing of your consent agreement. For more information about work consent, please reach out to your Case Manager.

We have closely collaborated with other government agencies to prioritise urgent hazard reduction work for registrants. If you require urgent work, please communicate this with your Case Manager.

Demolition

Demolition remains the primary focus of the program and is currently ongoing

throughout the affected area. Demolition involves the complete removal of structures, enabling the construction of new dwellings. If you are interested in demolition, please contact your Case Manager via the provided DMA number below.

Structural Assessment

The assessment of flood-affected properties continues, and while the demand for assessments has decreased, we anticipate an increase as more affected individuals register. If you haven't had an assessment yet, please contact DMA to schedule one.

Program Registration

If you have not yet registered your property and need assistance, please register with GISA at 1800 302 787 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. If you have already registered and wish to discuss your case, please contact DMA at 1800 418 491.

Info - Demolition

Insured and uninsured properties are eligible for a **free demolition**.

1. The first step is to talk to your insurer and follow their assessment process.
2. If you are advised that your property is considered a total loss and that you will receive a payout from your insurance provider you can opt in for a free demolition.
3. Check your settled sum against your policy details. Some policies include the cost of a demolition in the sum insured, while others will be in addition to the sum insured. As the South Australian and Australian government are covering the costs of demolitions, insurance providers have agreed to pass on these savings to policy holders. If your policy has demolition costs as an additional sum, make sure this has been paid to you. You can discuss this with your insurance provider.
4. Have your insurance documents ready for discussion
5. Once you have done these steps, or if you are uninsured, please call Disaster Management Australia (DMA) on 1800 418 491 to discuss next steps.

Important Update - River Murray floods Tax relief on new build



Home > Stamp Duty on Land > River Murray Floods Tax Relief

River Murray Floods Tax Relief

If you own a home which is your principal place of residence and that home was destroyed/substantially damaged due to the River Murray Floods in the specified flood area, relief from stamp duty on the purchase of a replacement home which is to be your principal place of residence is available.

Stamp duty relief is also available on the transfer of vacant land on which a replacement home will be built within 3 years from the date of purchase and become your principal place of residence.

[More information can be found here.](#)

Important Changes - New planning rules in place now



A suite of new planning rules designed to protect River Murray regions from future flood events and assist with a strong recovery and rebuild came into effect last fortnight.

To enhance the region's recovery, the interim changes came into immediate effect from the 29th June 2023, allowing building approvals to be fast tracked.

This coincided with the start of community consultation to shape the final, long-term code amendment – the River Murray Flood Resilience Code Amendment – which seeks to enhance the region's resilience and reduce the impact of any

future flooding events or declared emergencies.

South Australians are invited to have their say on the River Murray Flood Resilience Code Amendment on the [yourSAy](#) site.

Some excerpts for your interest are:

If a property owner currently has an existing ground level dwelling that cannot be repaired (which is explained further below) it will generally need to be replaced with an elevated dwelling.

New dwellings and dwelling additions should also avoid impeding floodwaters. To achieve this, they must either:

- ***be wholly located outside of the 1956 floodplain, or***
- ***limit undercroft enclosures to 15 square metres in area that do not contain habitable rooms and that are clad with removable panels or roller doors.***

Further, the following forms of remediation works generally require approval and you will be required to consult with the relevant council for confirmation:

- ***replacement (or addition) of structural framing (floor, wall and roof) members, and***
- ***replacement of stairs and/or balustrades.***

The interim amendments to the Planning and Design Code include:

- ***Requirements around height of floor above ground – the ‘finished floor level’***
 - ***Maximum height increased from 2.5 metres to 3 metres, or up to 4 metres to be above the level of a one-in-100-year flood event.***
 - ***Minimum heights along the river based on updated one-in-100 year flood event data.***
- ***Maximum overall building height increased to 8 metres, up from 7.5 metres, with a two-storey cap.***
- ***Updated resilient design and materials for underfloor structures***
 - ***Installation of roller doors or similar on all four sides of any enclosed area to ensure the free passage of floodwaters.***
- ***Maintain open space areas around storage areas, with maximum storage area increased to 60 square metres, up from 15 square metres.***
- ***Streamlined assessment for sheds, carports and garages which are located behind a riverfront dwelling, removing previous red tape.***
- ***Rezoning flood-affected shack settlements, including Paisley and Murbko, to assist development applications and rebuild efforts.***

[Everything you need to know, and the Code Amendment can be found at yourSAy.](#)

Info - Community Justice Services: Disaster Legal Support Program



Please find some information about the [Disaster Legal Support Program](#) through Community Justice Services SA. They can offer free legal advice appointments (phone or in person at an outreach) on a range of issues, and Community Legal Education throughout the region, on request.

Information about the Disaster Legal Support Program, including support for communities impacted by floods is also online at:
<https://www.communityjusticesa.org.au/how-can-we-help/dlsp/>

There will also be some Lifeline **Wellness Sessions for people impacted by the River Murray floods** where the Riverland Community Justice Centre / Disaster Legal Support Program will be guest speaking at the following events (included in this newsletter below also):

Blanchetown 8th August. 10:30 – 2:30pm :
<https://events.humanitix.com/accidental-counsellor-workshop>

Bowhill 9th August, 10:30 – 2:30pm : <https://events.humanitix.com/wellbeing-sa-grant-funded-accidental-counsellor-workshops>

You can follow their **social media page(s)** and/or sign up to the **mailing list**:

Riverland Community Justice Centre Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RiverlandCommunityJusticeCentre>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/riverlandcommunityjustice/>

Disaster Legal Support Program Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/disasterlegalsupport/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/disasterlegalsupportprogram/>

Mailing List Sign Up: <https://www.communityjusticesa.org.au/contact-us/community-justice-mailing-list/>

Grants - Small Business Flood Grants application periods extended and eligibility updated



The poster features a dark teal background with a light blue semi-circle at the top. The text is centered and reads: 'River Murray Flood' in white, 'Small business grants' in white, and 'Application periods extended & eligibility updated' in yellow. At the bottom, there are two logos: the Office for Small & Family Business logo on the left and the Government of South Australia logo on the right.

River
Murray
Flood

Small business
grants

Application periods
extended &
eligibility updated

 Office for
Small & Family
Business


Government
of South Australia

Small business flood grants – application periods extended and eligibility updated

Flood Recovery Grant has been extended until 31 December 2023.

The **Flood Recovery Grant** is available to help pay for costs of clean-up and reinstatement of small businesses and not-for-profit organisations that experienced damage as a result of the River Murray flood. Recently the definition of a **sole trader small business** changed, to those that derive at least 50% of the income from the business.

Industry Support Grant has been extended until 30 September 2023.

The **Industry Support Grant** is a \$10,000 payment for an eligible business that usually operates in the affected area and has experienced a downturn of 30% or more in revenue over three consecutive months, up to and including

April-June 2023. This grant may cover your usual business costs or used to make changes to your business so it can operate effectively post-flood.

Eligibility now includes **businesses that have been operational for less than one year**, if the business can demonstrate that income received was 30% less than anticipated.

Information on all small businesses flood supports, including guidelines and eligibility criteria can be found at www.business.sa.gov.au/floods.

Financial counselling through Rural Business Support (RBS) is available to help you on 1800 836 211 (freecall), email enquiries@ruralbusinesssupport.org.au or visit Rural Business Support.

Grants - Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal



The Strengthening Rural Communities (SRC) Prepare & Recover program supports communities in remote, rural and regional communities across Australia to implement initiatives that **prevent and prepare** for future climate related impacts, or **recover** from existing disasters in the medium to long-term timeframe, generally one to ten years after the disaster.

Grants **up to \$25,000** are available for not-for-profit organisations to deliver a broad range of initiatives to strengthen the capacity and capability of local people, organisations, networks, and systems that help communities to be informed, skilled, connected and resourced for the future.

For more information and specific funding requirements for South Australian flood-impacted communities, please visit the Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal website. **Application close 31 August 2023** (with funding announced in late November).

Grants - Non-Government Organisation (NGO) grants



Non-Government organisations (NGOs) and/or Not-for-profit organisations (NFP) play an important role in assisting communities and individuals with recovery from emergencies and disasters.

These organisations generally deliver their services through volunteers who are crucial in helping out communities. While volunteers offer their time for free, it is acknowledged that NGOs/NFPs have ongoing costs in providing the supervision, training, equipment, and supplies that enable volunteers to undertake activities and work safely and effectively.

In recognition of this, funding is available to support non-government and not-for-profit organisations assisting flood-affected communities to recover from the flood. Grants can be used towards supervising or training volunteers, purchasing critical supplies and assist with the rapid deployment of crews on the ground to assist with recovery activities.

The first round of flood-related NGO grants was announced in February 2023 and Round 2 is now open. If you are an eligible organisation, we encourage you to have a look at the fund guidelines and get your application in to help you help others.

There is no closing date for Round 2 at this time so please contact us if you wish to put in an application. For more information or to apply, please visit [Relief and financial assistance | Recovery](#).

Contact - Riverlands & Murraylands mental health support

Fact Sheet

Riverland and Murraylands mental health support

When a disaster happens, it is common to feel stress and grief. Some people will recover without formal help, and others might need some extra support to help get things back on track.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed and struggling to cope, reach out to local services that can provide mental health and wellbeing support – they're here to help.

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Click here to view the [Riverlands and Murraylands mental health support fact sheet](#) where you will find all the relevant contact information for each service and provider.

Contact - Marine safety hazard reporting



As the water subsides, people are back on the water, and clean-ups begin, you may notice some substantial debris either in the water or submerged. If you do, and believe it to be a safety hazard created, please do not hesitate in reporting it. The most effective method to do this is via the Report a marine safety concern link (listed below). This will ensure that the report is directed to the

appropriate place to have it assessed and dealt with as necessary.

[SA.GOV.AU - Report a marine safety concern \(www.sa.gov.au\)](http://SA.GOV.AU - Report a marine safety concern (www.sa.gov.au))

Info - Visit a Recovery Centre



Recovery centres are operating in Mannum and Murray Bridge, with recovery services also available at the Berri Housing SA office. A range of agencies are available through these centres including Disaster Ministries, Services Australia, Good Shepherd, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) and the Department for Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS).

In addition, another round of pop-up recovery centres are continuing. Have a chat with a friendly Recovery Officer who can help with:

- Access to recovery information and referrals
- Quick and easy grant assessments
- Well-being check-ins and referral if needed
- GISA clean-up registrations and assistance with follow up
- Access to clean up suits, paint brushes and cleaning products
- A friendly ear to talk to
- Assistance with recovery grant applications

Berri

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm
Housing SA office
[29 Vaughan Terrace, Berri](#)

Mannum

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday,
9:30am to 4:30pm
Mannum Institute
[47 Randell Street, Mannum](#)

Info - PIRSA's flood recovery update

Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

ABOUT CONTACT CAREERS

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Storms & floods

- River Murray flood recovery
- Lower Murray reclaimed irrigation areas
- Flood recovery update

Flood recovery update

On this page

- [Levee recovery and dewatering update](#)
- [Predicted water levels](#)
- [Meter readings](#)
- [Grants closing](#)
- [River Murray flood impacts survey](#)
- [LMRIA Recovery Subcommittee update](#)
- [Structural assessments for flood-affected properties](#)

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) continue to provide regular updates through their flood recovery update web page.

The web page provides important information on flood recovery activities undertaken by the PIRSA and the Department of Environment and Water (DEW), including the dewatering progress and levee assessment and stabilisation. Key flood recovery contacts are also provided.

[Click here](#) for more information and to view the latest updates.

Info - DEW River Murray SA newsletter

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Department for Environment and Water

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< Topics

Topics > River Murray > Latest news and announcements

River Murray news

River Murray floods

The *River Murray SA* newsletter will help keep you updated on the latest environmental projects, opportunities and events for industry and community in

the River Murray area. The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) send the newsletter to subscribers once a month.

To read more or to subscribe, [click here](#) or the click the image above.

Info - Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine (JEV) still available

★ ★ ★ ★ **AT HOME OR ON HOLIDAY** ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **FIGHT** *the* **BITE** ★

PROTECT YOURSELF *against* **DISEASE-CARRYING MOSQUITOES**

★ **COVER UP. REPEL. ELIMINATE.** ★

WEAR LONG, LOOSE FITTING CLOTHING.

USE INSECT REPELLENT.

ELIMINATE THE WATER THEY BREED IN.

Mosquitoes spread serious and potentially even deadly diseases when they bite. For more important information on how you can Fight the Bite, contact your local council or visit sahealth.sa.gov.au/FightTheBite


Government of South Australia
SA Health

Eligible people are encouraged to book their vaccination now.

Eligibility:

- regularly spend time outdoors placing them at risk of mosquito bites, or
- are experiencing homelessness, or
- are living in conditions with limited mosquito protection (e.g. tents, caravans, dwellings with no insect screens), or
- are engaging in outdoor flood recovery (clean-up) efforts, including repeated professional or volunteer deployments.

For more information about JEV, eligibility, and where to get vaccinated please follow the link below:

[Japanese encephalitis virus \(JEV\) vaccine | SA Health](#)

Info - Flood recovery health fact sheets

The screenshot shows the SA Health website interface. At the top left is the Government of South Australia logo and 'SA Health' text. A red emergency button says 'DO YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY?'. Below are 'Accessibility' and 'Language' dropdowns, and a search bar. A blue navigation bar contains links for Careers, Clinical resources, Conditions, COVID-19, Healthy living, Public health, Services, About, and Contact. The breadcrumb trail is 'Home > Public health > Flood - staying safe and healthy'. The main heading is 'Staying safe and healthy during and after a flood'. A sub-heading reads: 'During and after a flood, there are increased risks to health and safety. The main health risks while in flood-impacted areas include:'. To the right, an 'On this page' section lists: 'Avoid contact with floodwater', 'Cleaning up after a flood', 'Protect against disease as floodwaters recede', and 'Watch out for snakes, spiders and other pests'.

SA Health has developed a series of fact sheets to assist flood-affected communities recover from the River Murray flood event. These fact sheets cover a range of topics including managing flies after flooding, dealing with mould and snake bite first aid advice.

For more information and to view these fact sheets [click here](#).

Info - Keep informed



Helping flood-affected River Murray communities recover



1800 302 787
State Relief and Recovery Infoline



sa.gov.au/floods
Latest recovery information,
financial assistance and support



For clean-up information and assistance,
call the State Relief and Recovery Infoline on 1800 302 787

Recovery can be complicated so we are frequently updating our website to ensure you remain up to date.

Visit sa.gov.au/floods for information on the River Murray flood recovery. You can also view details of upcoming community meetings, subscribe to this newsletter and view previous editions.

Feedback - Tell us what you think

Please use the link below to let us know what you would like to see in upcoming newsletters.

[Provide your feedback](#)

Catch up - Missed a newsletter?

Missed a previous edition of the recovery newsletter? Catch up on all the recovery news.

Please share this newsletter with anyone interested in the River Murray flood recovery.

[See previous editions](#)

[Sign up for future newsletters](#)

 Share this newsletter



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Department of the Premier
and Cabinet

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