



Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal - Donations & Grants

C5.1

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear administration of the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal donations and the distribution of grant payments which are specifically targeted towards direct assistance for communities affected by declared disaster or crisis events. It aims to ensure that support is delivered fairly, efficiently, and responsively, addressing the diverse needs resulting from various disaster impacts.

Scope

This Synod-wide Policy applies to all activities of the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal planned within the bounds of the Synod of Queensland. This includes the Synod entities within The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q.) and entities fully owned by The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q.) as well as ministries of Congregations and Faith communities, Presbyteries, and the Synod office. For Congregations, the Church Council is responsible for overseeing all local activities involving the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal undertaken within the Congregation. Synod office and Presbytery committees shall have specific and oversight obligations as prescribed within this Policy.

Policy

Queensland has a strong tradition of generosity and community support during natural disasters and crisis events. While immediate donations of money and goods are appreciated, uncoordinated aid can sometimes cause problems. To ensure efficient and effective assistance, monetary donations are preferred as they allow response teams to address urgent needs quickly, avoid logistical challenges, and prevent burdening recipients with unsuitable items.

When distributing grants to communities impacted by disaster events, it is essential to establish clear yet adaptable criteria and grant levels. This ensures fairness, transparency, and the ability to respond effectively to the diverse and evolving needs of affected communities.

1. Eligible Disaster and/or Crisis Events

For the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal to be activated, a disaster or crisis event needs to be approved as eligible for disaster relief by the General Secretary or delegate.

1.1. Disaster or Crisis Event Eligibility

To be deemed eligible, a disaster or crisis event -

- 1.1.1. needs to meet the characteristics for disaster or crisis event as outlined in 1.2 & 1.3 herein, or



- 1.1.2. be declared as a disaster or crisis event at the discretion of the Moderator or General Secretary, and
- 1.1.3. the General Secretary or delegate has determined that a disaster or crisis event is of a level of significance to warrant grant relief options.

1.2. Disaster Event Characteristics (see also definitions)

The characteristics of a disaster event are that -

- 1.2.1. a disaster has occurred, and
- 1.2.2. a designated disaster-affected area has been declared at the time of the disaster event, and
- 1.2.3. there is demonstrable impact from the disaster, such as property damage, loss of income, or injury.

1.3. Crisis Event Characteristics (see also definitions)

The characteristics of a crisis event are that -

- 1.3.1. a crisis event has occurred, and
- 1.3.2. a designated crisis-event area has been declared by the government at the time of a major traumatic event (e.g. local tragedy, disease outbreak, terrorism) has occurred and has directly and deeply affected the community, requiring significant time for recovery, and
- 1.3.3. there is demonstrable impact from the crisis event, such as injury, property damage and/or loss of income.

2. Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal Donations

Once a disaster or crisis event's eligibility has been approved, the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal can be activated requesting monetary donations.

2.1. Money Donations rather than Goods

- 2.1.1. Substantial research has shown that individuals who have experienced traumatic events do not benefit from the additional burden of accepting clothing or other goods that may not be useful or valuable to them.
- 2.1.2. Providing monetary assistance empowers Presbyteries by giving them the autonomy to choose what their community truly needs, helping them and their community regain a sense of control in an otherwise chaotic situation.

2.2. Activating the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal

The General Secretary or delegate shall be responsible to activate the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal.



3. Moderator's Disaster Relief Grants

Presbyteries have a close understanding of the needs, challenges, and resources of their local communities and, because of their direct connection and ongoing relationships with these communities, they are well positioned to assess and decide what type of assistance or support would be most effective and appropriate.

Grant opportunities are best established at a Presbytery level and are specifically directed towards helping people significantly impacted by a disaster or crisis event. Grant funds may be allocated, in limited circumstances, for preventative measures that can help people prepare for potential disaster events in their community provided there is a clear connection to disaster relief.

Project funding must be for the purpose of assisting with any additional/extraordinary expenses Congregations and/or Presbyteries incur in responding to their community's needs following the recent disasters such as:

- practical support for individuals, households, or communities, or
- specialised ministry to enable community recovery.

It is not intended that applications for funding of normal Presbytery and/or Congregation expenses will be considered by the Queensland Synod Disaster Recovery Team (eg paying stipend for a ministerial supply in a Congregation, unless the supply is related to the Minister in placement being called to community focused outreach and assistance).

3.1. Conditions required for Grant Provisions

In accordance with the Fundraising Institute of Australia's (FIA) Code of Conduct compliance obligations, it is a requirement that:

- 3.1.1 marketing communications for fundraising appeals specify how the monies will be used, and monies can be disbursed only for these purposes,
- 3.1.2 Presbyteries / Congregations, on completion of a project, complete a report including stories or examples of people who have been assisted, photographic evidence and invoicing pertaining to work performed, and
- 3.1.3 the UCAQ Synod office to publish in the Uniting News a communication to interested parties including donors outlining how the donations have been distributed.

3.2. Grants Funding

Presbyteries and Congregations with ideas for specific projects to provide pastoral support, rehabilitation and recovery programs for individuals, families and communities affected by recent disasters can apply for Grant Funds of up to \$5,000 to support communities affected by declared disaster or crisis events subject to distribution requirements. Amounts more than \$5,000 may be considered on request though granted in exceptional circumstances only.

3.3. Initiating Grants Requests

Requests for Grants can be initiated from Congregations, or officers of the church with input sought from the Presbytery Minister. The Presbytery Minister would need to consider regional equity and the possibility for merging requests into single regional response.

The Presbytery Minister is required to endorse any Grant requests prior to submission for approval.



3.4. Grant Specifications

As articulated in the Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal, donations shall be specifically distributed to support communities affected by declared disaster or crisis events. Grant requests can seek provision of funds for:

- practical support for individuals, households, or communities, and
- special ministry to enable community recovery.

Examples include:

- community response and recovery projects
- disaster recovery peer support for Ministry Agents
- disaster recovery chaplain (for special ministry supply with a specific focus of enabling a Ministry Agent to take leave)
- targeted proactive and pre-emptive training directly linked to supporting the Congregation and local community, provided there is a clear connection to disaster relief.

Specialised ministry arrangements shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and subject to Presbytery and General Secretary approval.

For more information on *Peer Support and Special Supply Ministry*, refer to the *Disaster Resilience and Recovery Framework – Supporting Presbyteries & Congregations*.

3.5. Exclusions

Exclusions to Grant opportunities include:

- cost of general Presbytery and/or Congregation expenses (eg paying the stipend for ministerial supply in a Congregation unless the supply is related to the minister in placement being called to community focused outreach and assistance).
- repairs to church and community buildings and/or equipment even if damaged by the natural or human-made disaster,
- payment of insurance premiums or insurance excess.

3.6. Grants Endorsement and Approval Requirements

All disaster relief grant applications shall require:

- Presbytery Minister endorsement and submission to the Associate General Secretary,
- The Associate General Secretary shall objectively assess all submissions for fairness and compliance with this policy, and
- On recommendation by the Associate General Secretary, submission to the General Secretary for approval.

Related documents

1. Disaster Resilience and Recovery Framework – Supporting Presbyteries and Congregations
2. Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal – Donations Procedure
3. Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal – Grants Procedure
4. Moderator's Disaster Relief Appeal – Project Grant Application Form
5. QDCN Disaster Chaplaincy Policy



Definitions

| Term | Meaning |
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| Disaster | <p>A disaster is a serious disruption in a community, caused by the impact of an event, that requires a significant coordinated response by the State and other entities to help the community recover from the disruption.</p> <p>Disaster Management Act 2003 - Queensland Legislation - Queensland Government</p> |
| Disaster Declaration | <p>A district disaster coordinator or the Minister or Premier may declare a disaster. A district disaster coordinator for a disaster district may, with the approval of the Minister, declare a disaster situation for the district, or a part of it, if satisfied—</p> <p>(a) a disaster has happened, is happening or is likely to happen, in the disaster district; and</p> <p>(b) it is necessary, or reasonably likely to be necessary, for the district disaster coordinator or a declared disaster officer to exercise declared disaster powers to prevent or minimise any of the following—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) loss of human life;(ii) illness or injury to humans;(iii) property loss or damage;(iv) damage to the environment. <p>(2) Before declaring the disaster situation, the district disaster coordinator must take reasonable steps to consult with—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the district group for the disaster district; and(b) each local government whose area is in, or partly in, the declared area for the disaster situation. <p>The Minister and the Premier may declare a disaster situation for the State, or a part of the State, if satisfied—</p> <p>(a) a disaster has happened, is happening or is likely to happen, in the State; and</p> <p>(b) it is necessary, or reasonably likely to be necessary, for a district disaster coordinator or a declared disaster officer to exercise declared disaster powers to prevent or minimise any of the following—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) loss of human life;(ii) illness or injury to humans;(iii) property loss or damage;(iv) damage to the environment. <p>Disaster Management Act 2003 - Queensland Legislation - Queensland Government Sections 64 & 69</p> |



| Term | Meaning |
|--------------------------|--|
| Disaster or Crisis Event | An event means any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a cyclone, earthquake, flood, storm, storm tide, tornado, tsunami, volcanic eruption, or other natural happening• an explosion or fire, a chemical, fuel or oil spill, or a gas leak• an infestation, plague, or epidemic• a failure or, or disruption to, an essential service or infrastructure• an attack against the state• another event similar to an event mentioned above,• an event may be natural or caused by human acts or omissions,• other traumatic event (eg local tragedy, disease outbreak, terrorism) |
| Serious Disruption | A serious disruption means— (a) loss of human life, or illness or injury to humans; or (b) widespread or severe property loss or damage; or (c) widespread or severe damage to the environment. Disaster Management Act 2003 - Queensland Legislation - Queensland Government |

Revisions

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