

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Inquiry into the 2026-27 Budget Estimates

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**RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

<b>Committee member:</b>	<b>Aiv PUGLIELLI</b>
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**Transcript extract:** Page 7-8

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay. Can I ask: in this budget is there an increase in FTE terms for caseworkers?

**Vicki WARD:** That is within the \$421 million that is in the budget for recovery.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Sorry. Just to clarify: is that a yes?

**Vicki WARD:** No. What I am saying is that there is \$421 million in the budget to support recovery, and in terms of – I do not have on me what the individual allocation is for caseworkers within that.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** That is okay. Is that something that could be provided on notice? We are talking FTE of caseworkers compared to the previous budget period.

**Vicki WARD:** Well, we fund organisations who then coordinate their own staffing.

**Mariela DIAZ:** So for local recovery support there is \$27 million for recovery support. Each event is funded individually. So if you mean previous events – is that what you mean? –

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Yes. Correct.

**Mariela DIAZ:** like the floods and the fires, we can take that on notice in terms of what was available in other events.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Thank you. That would be appreciated. Thank you so much.

**Question:** In this budget is there an increase in the number of local recovery support case workers compared to the previous budgets?

**Response:**

The Emergency Recovery Support Program's objective is to assist impacted individuals and families by supporting them to 'navigate' the recovery process. The State engages providers (e.g. Windermere) to engage Recovery Support Workers – or 'case workers' – who establish a professional relationship with each client and provide a consistent point of contact for them. The Recovery Support Workers delivers case management, advice on available services, trauma-informed support and practical assistance.

The Emergency Recovery Support Program is a demand-driven program that has been implemented during major events. Each program is designed specifically to cater for the unique needs of each disaster. FTE are engaged to respond to demand for support which can experience multiple peaks as disaster-affected people present themselves throughout the program's lifecycle.

The 2026-27 Budget includes an increased funding allocation for the Emergency Recovery Support Program, including an increase in case worker FTE allocation.



**Vicki Ward MP**  
**Minister for Natural Disaster Recovery**