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## Policyholders can begin flood clean up, says ICA

Residents of Bundaberg and other flood-hit towns can begin cleaning up as soon as emergency services declare it is safe for them to return to their properties, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) said today.

ICA CEO Mr Rob Whelan said as flood waters receded from affected towns, thousands of policyholders were faced with the difficult task of returning to their homes and businesses to survey the damage and begin to rebuild.

“Policyholders do not need to wait for insurance assessors to visit their property to begin cleaning up. However, safety is paramount. Heed the advice of emergency services and only return to your home or business when they say it is safe to do so,” he said.

“Once you return to your home remove any water or mud-damaged goods that pose a health risk. Remember, you do not need to wait for an assessor to begin cleaning up, but contact your insurer, lodge a claim and advise them of your intention as soon as possible.

“As evidence to support your claim take pictures of damage to property and possessions, and keep samples of materials from damaged goods. This will be used by your insurer to process your claim as quickly as possible. Contact your insurer before authorising repairs. Emergency repairs should only be carried out in the first instance to make the property safe.

“As of 4pm today insurers have received about 25,800 claims for the Queensland floods with estimated insured losses of about \$290 million. The ICA expects these numbers to rise rapidly as assessors enter inundated homes and businesses across flood-affected areas. Insurers are working as fast as possible to inspect damaged properties, complete their assessments and speed up the recovery effort.”

The ICA is now operating its disaster hotline – **1800 734 621** – to help people affected by the Queensland floods who are not sure which insurer they are with, or who have general inquiries about the claims process.