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Six months after Cyclone Debbie, more than 75 per cent of insurance claims are completed

More than 75 per cent of insurance claims lodged following Cyclone Debbie have been closed just six months after the Category Four cyclone struck the Queensland coast near Airlie Beach.

Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) figures show households and businesses in Queensland and New South Wales lodged 68,848 Debbie-related claims, with insurance losses estimated at \$1.473 billion.

Insurance Council CEO Rob Whelan said insurers had worked diligently to help their customers, with claims stretching from the Whitsundays through to southern NSW – an area three times larger than the United Kingdom. He said the closure rate was running 12 per cent ahead of similar disasters.

“Insurers have now closed more than 75 per cent of Cyclone Debbie claims,” he said. “This means more than 31,000 homes and businesses have been repaired or received settlements, 20,000 families have had their possessions replaced, and more than 4500 motor vehicles have been fixed or new vehicles provided.

“Insurers have contracted hundreds of local builders and trades to work on property repairs, and are injecting more than \$5 million each working day into local communities.

“This is a great result for consumers, especially given the scale of the catastrophe and the challenges of working in regional areas, where building supplies and qualified tradespeople can be hard to source.

“Most of the remaining claims are large-scale building repairs, with often complex scopes of work. These naturally can take longer to finish, as with any significant building projects.

“However, some customers have raised concerns about the pace of rebuilding. The industry is listening and is committed to resolving these matters as swiftly as possible.

“The ICA and large insurers recently held one-on-one meetings with policyholders in the Whitsunday region, and this has helped to identify and escalate issues to the satisfaction of most customers.

“The insurance industry continues to learn from its disaster recovery response, and seeks to improve its processes to provide the help its customers deserve.”

Customers who would like to discuss issues with their claims may contact the ICA Disaster Hotline: 1800 734 621

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