

Saturday February 2, 2019

Insurance Council declares catastrophe for Townsville inundation

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) tonight declared a Catastrophe for Townsville insurance policyholders affected by torrential rain and inundation.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said: “The Queensland Government and emergency services have informed the Insurance Council that dozens of homes and businesses may have been affected by the downpour and resulting inundation of the past few days.

“Many other properties, as well as private and commercial vehicles, may have also have been damaged.

“It is possible many more will be inundated in coming days, with some state government projections indicating thousands of homes could be affected. Therefore, the ICA has declared a Catastrophe to help escalate the insurance industry’s response.

“As of 8pm on Saturday, insurers have received about 1900 claims, with insurance losses estimated at \$16.7 million. Many more claims are expected this weekend as residents examine the extent of their losses and contact their insurers.

“The ICA has declared this Catastrophe to help reduce the emotional and financial stress being experienced by families and businesses, and provide them with peace of mind that their insurer is there to help.”

Under the declaration:

- Claims from affected policyholders will be given priority by insurers
- Claims will also be triaged to direct urgent assistance to the worst-affected property owners
- The ICA has activated its disaster hotline – 1800 734 621 – to assist policyholders if they are uncertain of their insurance details, or have general inquiries about the claims process. Note: This is NOT a claims lodgement line
- ICA representatives will be mobilised to work with local agencies and services and affected policyholders
- An industry taskforce has been established to address and identify issues that arise

Further information will be available soon on www.disasters.org.au.

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