



## **Media Release**

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### **Time to build on our resilience to respond to disasters in the Kimberley**

The closure of the Great Northern Highway between Kununurra, Broome and Derby is having widespread regional impacts, including on the supply of food and other essentials, as ex-tropical cyclone Ellie batters the Kimberley Region.

“Our thoughts are with the people of the Fitzroy Valley whose lives have been disrupted and have had significant damage to their properties, homes and businesses due to the floods,” said Cr David Menzel, Chair of the Kimberley Regional Group. “This incident has highlighted the vulnerability of critical social and economic infrastructure and highlights the need for better emergency management planning across the Kimberley region to ensure that our communities and supply chains are resilient to weather or other disaster events.”

The Kimberley Regional Group are pleased that the State and Federal Government have acted quickly to provide special permits to transport operators, allowing longer road trains to travel between Coolgardie and the South Australian border and to continue their journey on the South Australian side of the border, and up to the Northern Territory. “This swift action is very welcome, said Cr Menzel, “as standard supply chain routes for food and essential supplies across the Kimberley have been impacted by the floods.” So too is the support of the Australian Defence Force to assist communities impacted by the floods. “We would like to thank all the emergency workers who are assisting our communities during this time,” said Cr Menzel.

As the floods subside and the true scale of the damage is assessed it is important that we look forward and take this opportunity to invest in mitigation measures to future proof the region to enable better preparation and responses to these disasters. Also, that the State and Commonwealth work in partnership with local government for an improved process for disaster relief funding payments. “It is imperative that the timelines for approval and payment under the joint Australian, state and territory government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements are streamlined so that local councils and communities can plan with certainty their response and recovery,” said Cr Geoff Haerewa, President of the Shire of Derby West Kimberley.

The four Kimberley Shires look forward to working with State and Federal governments in partnership with local communities to respond to the floods, and to ensuring in the recovery efforts that there is better planning for disaster management and resilience.



### **About the Kimberley Regional Group**

The Kimberley Regional Group (KRG) is an alliance of the four Shires of the Kimberley, being the Shire of Broome, the Shire of Derby West Kimberley, the Shire of Halls Creek and the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley. Our Vision is to maintain and enhance the rich diversity and liveability of the Kimberley for its people and the world. Collaboratively the group seeks to drive positive impact across the region through improved social, economic and cultural outcomes

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