



Ernst and Young's Andrew Metcalfe and chief executive and chair of the advisory board Shane Stone spoke to locals at a roundtable in the Burdekin Shire regarding the North Queensland Livestock Recovery Agency.

Burdekin Shire roundtable kicked off strategies earlier this morning for longer-term recovery and improved resilience

Angela Ruggeri, Townsville Bulletin
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Home Hill played host to the North Queensland Livestock Industry Recovery Agency roundtable earlier this morning.

The Burdekin roundtable is the first in a series that will gain on the ground feedback and insights to inform the development of a strategy for the region's longer-term recovery and resilience.

The NQ Livestock Industry Recovery Agency is developing a strategy for consideration by the Australian Government to help identify practical steps that individuals, communities and government can take to assist with longer-term recovery, and build resilience and preparedness for future natural disasters and catastrophic weather events.

This morning's roundtable focused on issues facing primary producers and their businesses following the monsoon trough earlier this year.

Ernst and Young's Andrew Metcalfe is among those doing work with the agency to support the strategic workshop that took place.

Mr Metcalfe said the workshop aims to think about the long-term future.

"Having come through the response and the initial recovery, the agency is really focusing on the long-term future,' he said.

"The discussions that will be had today are very much getting input from key people in the community to really help focus on what the future should be."



Chief executive and chair of the advisory board Shane Stone said he is out on the road where he can do the most and best for people who need a hand up not a handout.

"He (prime minister) wants a public service that delivers," he said.

"He believes that the federal public service is there to deliver the services to the client base.

"... and in this particular case it's those that were impacted by the very severe monsoonal event that occurred from Australia Day onwards."

Mr Stone said there has been a range of assistance since day one of when the floods first hit.

"This has been an enormous challenge for many people who have tried to pick up the pieces and get on with their lives.

"We are looking for confirmation for what we have done so far.

“We work off the mantra ‘we want to see local solutions, locally led and locally implemented.’”

“We need to hear from people ... and today is an opportunity to consolidate and recap what we have done so far and what can we do differently and what else needs to happen.”

Mr Stone said no one knows the region better than the people living here.

“Their input will help ensure that the strategy hits the mark and is of real practical benefit,” he said.

“Six months on from the disaster, we’ve seen that farmers, businesses and communities are starting to get back on their feet – their spirit is returning but the job is far from over.

“Recovery from this event will take years, and it’s important for us to identify what we can be doing now and in the future to enable the region’s recovery and prosperity.”

Other roundtables planned for Townsville and the shires of McKinlay, Richmond and Winton will look at a number of issues facing primary producers, small businesses and communities.

In addition to the roundtables, Agency representatives will continue to meet with stakeholders and attend community and industry events over coming months to get further input.