

Labor calls on Stone to quit

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Former NT chief minister Shane Stone has been urged to resign as co-ordinator of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency. Picture: Matt Thompson

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FORMER Northern Territory chief minister Shane Stone has been urged to resign by federal Labor over comments he made during the East Coast flood crisis, despite local mayors praising his performance.

Mr Stone is co-ordinator of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency, which helps organise local, state and federal responses to disasters.

On Tuesday, Labor senator Murray Watts said the former CLP leader "should have (resigned) by now" over comments he made about flooding in northern NSW.

Mr Stone faced criticism from Labor in March this year after saying flooded homes should not be rebuilt in the same location.

Senator Watt, who is Labor's disaster and emergency management spokesman, on Tuesday described the comments as "disgraceful".

"We have called on Shane to resign," he said.

"And he should have done that by now because of the disgraceful comments he made, blaming victims of floods for the circumstances they found

themselves in when his own government has a fund that has now reached \$4.8m because they haven't built a single disaster mitigation project."

Mr Stone, who was NT chief minister between 1995 and 1999, has been contacted for comment.

On Wednesday, Ballina mayor Sharon Cadwallader and Lismore mayor Steve Krieg backed in Mr Stone's response.

Ms Cadwallader said Labor's criticism of the co-ordinator was "politicking".

"He has come into our region with care, compassion and interest in finding solutions to what have been long-standing problems," she said.

Mr Krieg said he did not agree with Labor's assessment, saying he hoped Mr Stone would stay on regardless of who won the federal election next month.

"What we need as a region is we need a bit of consistency and stability in the rebuild, and we don't need politicians chopping and changing these organisations because it doesn't meet their political opinions or views," the Lismore mayor said.