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## Program contact

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## Key dates

**Opening date for Council EOI:** 08:00, 14 March 2022

**Closing date for Council EOI:** 18:00, 25 March 2022

**Commencement of Flying Squad assessment:** 1 April 2022

**End of Flying Squad assessment:** 30 June 2022

### Acknowledgement of Country

NSW Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to all Elders past, present and future.

## Introduction

Through direct engagement with regional councils and analysis of NSW Planning Portal data the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Planning Delivery Unit (PDU) has identified that a shortage of planners across NSW, which is worsened in regional NSW where there are fewer qualified planners. Council planning departments are experiencing vacancies of up to 30%, with some roles vacant for up to a year. Under-resourced councils have reduced capacity for DA assessment, which is causing longer assessment times, fewer DAs being determined, and delays in the delivery of regional housing.

To support local government and the delivery of housing in regional NSW, the PDU has created the Regional Housing Flying Squad, which will:

- contribute to the NSW Government and council objective of delivering housing in Regional NSW;
- respond to the recommendations of the Regional Housing Taskforce – a key DPE priority for 2022;
- provide support to councils to expedite assessment of DAs; and,
- help address the planner shortage in Regional NSW.

## Program overview

The Regional Housing Flying Squad program provides successful councils with the opportunity to outsource regional housing DA assessments to a panel of planning consultants, facilitated and funded by the NSW Planning Delivery Unit. Councils need to demonstrate that DAs will support the delivery of housing in Regional NSW.

The PDU, which is facilitating the program, has engaged with a panel of planning consultants to conduct assessments for DAs for regional housing on behalf of councils. Councils will be asked to nominate DAs that deliver regional housing, through a formal EOI process, and nominations will be assessed against predetermined criteria by an evaluation panel. PDU will allocate consultants to selected DAs, and consultants will report directly to council staff while conducting the assessments. Once assessment reports are completed to the satisfaction of council, council or the relevant regional planning panel will determine the DA. PDU will finalise payment to consultants for their services, before 30 June 2022.

Council-nominated DAs will be accepted and assessed as they are received, through an EOI process from 14 March 2022 to 25 March 2022.

## Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Regional Housing Flying Squad, councils must:

- be one of NSW's 96 regional councils as identified in Appendix A;
- nominate DA(s) that will deliver housing through the formal EOI process; and,
- nominate DA(s) that will be lodged by council in the Planning Portal by 1 April 2022.

## EOI process

Regional councils will be eligible to nominate DAs for regional housing via an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process administered by the PDU. EOIs will be via a webform on the Planning Portal, at <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/regional-housing-flying-squad> and will request that councils provide the following information in order to nominate a DA through the EOI process:

- **Project details**
  - Street address or Lot/DP
  - Planning portal application number (PAN)
  - Date of submission of DA by applicant
  - Date of lodgement of DA by council
  - Number of dwellings
  - Dwelling type
  - Number of construction jobs
  - Capital investment value
  - Has this LGA been impacted by a natural disaster in the past two years (flood, bushfire, drought, etc.)?
- **Project status**
  - Who is the consent authority for this DA?
  - Will the DA result in the delivery of Aboriginal housing?
  - Will the DA result in the delivery of social housing?
  - Will the DA result in the delivery of affordable housing?
  - Will the DA result in the delivery of any other forms of housing that will deliver local strategic objectives?
  - Has council requested any additional information from the applicant?
    - If yes, when?
    - If yes, has the applicant responded to requests for additional information?
  - Has council referred the DA to any government agencies?
    - If yes, which ones and when? If no, which agencies will this DA be referred to?
    - If yes, have government agencies responded to referrals? If so, which ones?
  - Has notification/exhibition occurred, or scheduled to occur?
    - If scheduled to occur, when?
  - Is this DA consistent with local and regional strategic plans?
  - Are there any concerns or local issues that might prevent council from supporting approval of the DA?
- **Primary council contact**
  - Full name
  - Role
  - Local government area
  - Phone number
  - Email address

## Evaluation criteria

Councils may nominate multiple DAs for this program. Council EOIs will be evaluated against the program criteria below:

**1. Dwelling volume**

The number of dwellings proposed in the council-nominated DA

**2. Dwelling impact**

The ratio of number of dwellings proposed in the council-nominated DA to the population of the respective LGA

Delivery of affordable housing, social housing, Aboriginal housing or other forms of housing that are required in a particular LGA will also be considered

**3. DA status**

DAs that are at the assessment report stage (meaning RFIs, referrals and public exhibition have already occurred) will be prioritised, to increase the likelihood of the DA assessment being completed by 30 June 2022

**4. Council's support for approval of DA**

Delivery of regional housing is a key aim of this program, so DAs that are generally supported by council and are consistent with both regional and local strategic plans will be prioritised

**5. Geographic considerations**

Ensuring that support is provided to councils across regional NSW will be considered, esp. LGAs affected by natural disasters (bushfire, flood, drought, etc.)

The PDU has established an evaluation committee that also includes representation from the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) and DPE's Local and Regional Planning team (L&RP). The evaluation committee will determine how program funding is allocated guided by the evaluation criteria.

## How to apply?

EOIs for the Regional Housing Flying Squad program can be submitted on the NSW Planning Portal, at <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/regional-housing-flying-squad> between 08:00 on 14 March 2022 and 18:00 on 25 March 2022.

## EOI acceptance and assessment

Councils will be formally notified by email from the PDU as to whether or not their EOIs were successful.

Successful councils will be paired with a planning consultant and may choose to establish non-disclosure agreements or other confidentiality agreements with the respective consultant, if desired. Councils will then be required to share all DA documentation and information with the respective consultant in order for them to commence assessment. Throughout the assessment process, the consultant will report directly to council staff. Council will be responsible for briefing the consultant on the specifics of the DA and may meet with the consultant as needed to discuss ongoing progress and questions or concerns that arise. Council should approach the PDU immediately if the DA encounters any issues that may result in an increased scope, potential refusal, or extension of timeframe beyond the 30 June 2022 deadline.

Once the consultant has completed the assessment report, the PDU will check in with council to confirm that the report has been completed to council's satisfaction.

Funding for the Regional Housing Flying Squad program is only available until 30 June 2022, by which time all DA assessments must be completed.

The PDU may accept late application, but this is subject to program capacity.

## Program milestones

Milestone	Timeframe
<b>EOI process for Regional Housing Flying Squad</b> EOI will be open for 2 weeks, with discretion for PDU to consider late applications.	14-25 March 2022
<b>Evaluation committee to review council EOIs and assign flying squad consultants to selected DAs</b>	28 March – 1 April 2022
<b>PDU to notify councils on outcome of EOI process</b>	4 April 2022
<b>Flying squad to prepare assessment reports for council DAs</b>	4 April – 30 Jun 2022

## Appendix A – Eligible Regional Councils

Table 2. Eligible regional councils

Albury City Council	Coonamble Shire Council	Lake Macquarie City Council	Richmond Valley Council
Armidale Regional Council	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Leeton Shire Council	Shellharbour City Council
Ballina Shire Council	Cowra Shire Council	Lismore City Council	Shoalhaven City Council
Balranald Shire Council	Dubbo Regional Council	Lithgow City Council	Singleton Council
Bathurst Regional Council	Dungog Shire Council	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Bega Valley Shire Council	Edward River Council	Lockhart Shire Council	Snowy Valleys Council
Bellingen Shire Council	Eurobodalla Shire Council	Maitland City Council	Tamworth Regional Council
Berrigan Shire Council	Federation Council	Mid-Coast Council	Temora Shire Council
Bland Shire Council	Forbes Shire Council	Mid-Western Regional Council	Tenterfield Shire Council
Blayney Shire Council	Gilgandra Shire Council	Moree Plains Shire Council	Tweed Shire Council
Bogan Shire Council	Glen Innes Severn Shire Council	Murray River Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Bourke Shire Council	Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Murrumbidgee Council	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Brewarrina Shire Council	Greater Hume Shire Council	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Uralla Shire Council

# Regional Housing Flying Squad

## Program Guidelines



Broken Hill City Council	Griffith City Council	Nambucca Valley Council	Wagga Wagga City Council
Byron Shire Council	Gunnedah Shire Council	Narrabri Shire Council	Walcha Council
Cabonne Shire Council	Gwydir Shire Council	Narrandera Shire Council	Walgett Shire Council
Carrathool Shire Council	Hay Shire Council	Narromine Shire Council	Warren Shire Council
Central Coast Council	Hilltops Council	Newcastle City Council	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Central Darling Shire Council	Inverell Shire Council	Oberon Council	Weddin Shire Council
Cessnock City Council	Junee Shire Council	Orange City Council	Wentworth Shire Council
Clarence Valley Council	Kempsey Shire Council	Parkes Shire Council	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Cobar Shire Council	The Council Of The Municipality Of Kiama	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	Wollongong City Council
Coffs Harbour City Council	Kyogle Council	Port Stephens Council	Yass Valley Council
Coolamon Shire Council	Lachlan Shire Council	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Lord Howe Island <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Howe Island is administered by the Lord Howe Island Board, a NSW Statutory Authority established under the Lord Howe Island Act 1953. While it is not a council, it is required to adopt the NSW Planning Portal from 1 July 2021 and is not classified as being in a metropolitan area.