

Gawler River Flood Awareness and Preparedness

Project Overview



This Gawler River Flood Awareness and Preparedness project received funding from the Australian Government.

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) has partnered with the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority and SA State Emergency Service (SA SES) to develop flood awareness and preparedness materials for the Gawler River region.

Background

The Gawler River, which stretches from the Barossa and Adelaide Hills to the coast, floods on average once every ten years. The most [recent flood event in 2016](#) caused an estimated \$51 million in losses to agricultural businesses and significant damage to infrastructure. Despite this, recent community research commissioned by DEW has shown that community awareness and preparedness is generally low, with only 10% of participants reporting they have a written flood plan.

The *Gawler River Flood Awareness and Preparedness* project is a joint collaboration between DEW, GRFMA and the SA SES to manage the impact of flooding in the Gawler River region. The flood awareness and preparedness materials developed as part of this project will build on the existing DEW, SA SES and Bureau of Meteorology resources to inform and support the community to be better prepared for future flood events.

Project funding

This project is jointly funded with \$258,000 from the South Australian government and project partners, and \$258,000 from the Australian Government's [Disaster Ready Fund](#) (DRF), an initiative for disaster resilience and risk reduction.

Project objectives

1. Seek feedback from relevant partners and the community to ensure the flood awareness and preparedness materials will effectively:
 - o Raise awareness of flood risk in the Gawler River area
 - o Support understanding of [SA SES](#) and [Bureau of Meteorology](#) flood messages and warnings
 - o Encourage action and preparedness using [existing SA SES tools](#)
2. Develop and test the flood awareness and preparedness materials
3. Support implementation of the flood awareness and preparedness materials with our partners GRFMA, SA SES, and local councils to disseminate

Project timeframe

The project will run from March 2025 to March 2026.

Previous Community Engagement

DEW commissioned flood-related research in the Gawler River region in 2022 and 2023 as part of the *Gawler River Flood Preparedness and Response Project* (2022) and the *Flood Management – Phase 2* research (2023). The department engaged with a broad cross-section of residents, businesses, and community leaders. The research revealed key challenges – including low levels of flood preparation, inconsistent understanding of messaging, and varied trust in authorities. This project will build on this research to develop flood awareness and preparedness materials for a more flood resilient community.

Project stakeholders

A full list of relevant stakeholders is currently being compiled for this project.

More information

DEWFloodProjects@sa.gov.au

www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/flood

Prepare for flood

www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/Flood-Awareness

www.ses.sa.gov.au/flood