Union checks on members impacted by cyclone

By Antony Pearson
Occupational safety and health organiser

Along with the SSTUWA's Mid-West schools organiser Sam Yates, I recently visited schools and members badly affected by Cyclone Seroja which tore through the region in April this year.

Our aim was to check in on the health and well-being of our members and their colleagues in the schools and communities affected and provide support and help where we could.

We visited the following schools who were impacted by Cyclone Seroja:

- Binnu Primary School
- Northampton District High School
- Kalbarri District High School
- Western Australian College of Agriculture – Morawa
- Morawa District High School

We also learnt that union members at Carnamah District High School had been severely impact by Seroja through their personal property being badly damaged.

Many schools we visited received damage from the cyclone, with Binnu Primary School and Kalbarri District High School among the most severely hit.

Staff and students were not able to return to their schools until later in Term 2.

Many members have experienced damage to their properties with some even losing their homes completely.

They are now in the process of constant communication with insurance companies to have assessments done and scopes of works completed.

Many have temporary roofs of timber battens and tarps to protect them from the elements which they will have until their houses are repaired permanently, which may not be until 2022.

Through all of this the SSTUWA's role has been to assist and support members affected by this tragic natural disaster in every way we can – one being the National Disaster Relief Payment that members can access.

This payment was approved by senior officers and SSTUWA Executive. Members who either live in or work at a school in one of the designated postcode areas are entitled to a one-off payment to give them some financial assistance during this difficult time.

Members in areas that have been impacted should contact Member Assist if they require assistance or wish to claim the disaster relief payment.

Sam and I would like to thank all the SSTUWA members we spoke to. Our hats go off to them, they are actively working on rebuilding their schools, homes and communities and are steadfast in their dedication to the education of their students.

And as they continue to do that, we'll be there for them.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026