



# CHRMAP: Frequently Asked Questions

## CKI Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan

### Background to the CHRMAP

#### 1. What is a CHRMAP?

- A CHRMAP is a Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan. It estimates future coastline change, and recommends management options.
- This CHRMAP was developed in line with WA State Planning Policy 2.6 – Coastal Planning, which applies on CKI.

#### 2. Why did the Australian Government, and not the Shire of CKI, produce the CHRMAP?

- In 2016, the Shire agreed the Australian Government would lead the development of the CKI CHRMAP due to resourcing and financial constraints. The CHRMAP process requires years of work underpinned by detailed scientific data and engineering expertise, and so external consultants are typically engaged to complete this work. This was the case for the CKI CHRMAP. The Shire was consulted throughout the CHRMAP's development.

#### 3. What should I know when reading this CHRMAP?

- CHRMAPs recognise that predictions might change over time – they are designed to show potential impacts in a worst-case scenario.
- A CHRMAP is never 'final': it is a planning document based on the best available information. Further studies and ongoing research are needed.
- The CHRMAP will be updated every five years to reflect new information and input from ongoing community engagement.

### Key recommendations of the CHRMAP

#### 4. How do the key recommendations of the CHRMAP affect long-term outcomes?

- The CHRMAP shows all assets, infrastructure and people on CKI will be significantly impacted by coastal erosion and flooding. These effects are already being seen and experienced on island.
- The CHRMAP recommends protecting CKI's settlements and critical assets in the short term, largely using seawalls and levees, to provide more time for further research and long-term planning.
- Further studies are recommended to support long-term planning. This includes local land use planning, resilience planning and monitoring, asset planning, emergency management planning, and ongoing research.

- Early planning will create better long-term outcomes for the community, including for protection of the community's culture.

## **Community consultation**

### **5. How was the community consulted for this CHRMAP?**

- In 2022 and 2023, the project team visited CKI to consult the community about coastal hazards and adaptation strategies. More than 400 people were directly engaged during this period.
- The draft CHRMAP was released for feedback in January 2025, and was open for submissions until June 2025. More than 115 people were directly engaged during on-island consultations on the draft CHRMAP, and online information was provided in English and Cocos Malay.
- Approximately one-quarter of the CKI population made or signed a submission on the draft CHRMAP. This feedback has been incorporated into the final report.

### **6. What was the main feedback from the community?**

- Key themes from submissions included:
  - Objections to planning for retreat away from the islands, or concern about losing connection to the islands.
  - Calls for short- to medium-term actions, particularly related to the Home Island cemetery.
  - Requests for support managing flooding on Home Island.
- The community has also asked to be part of an ongoing partnership to manage the coastal hazards on CKI.
- This feedback has been incorporated through the CHRMAP.
- The Summary of Submissions report which is part of the final CHRMAP outlines the key feedback received from the community, and changes made as a result.

### **7. When will a decision be made about the CKI community's future?**

- There is no one decision point. The CHRMAP provides flexible options for decision-makers to consider and prepare for, as coastal hazards evolve.
- Monitoring and evaluation will identify when decisions are needed.
- Ongoing engagement between governments and the community will ensure adaptation actions are appropriate for community needs and the unique cultural heritage on CKI.

### **8. How is the Australian Government addressing the frequent flooding on Home Island?**

- The Australian Government has funded a flood study to assess the frequent flooding of the Home Island settlement.
- This is a CHRMAP recommendation that has been implemented prior to CHRMAP release, due to the current impacts on the community. The flood study is expected to be released in the coming months.
- The findings will be discussed with the Shire of CKI, as the Shire is responsible for housing on Home Island, and the community and we will work together on options to address this issue.

## **Next steps**

### **9. Is the CHRMAP a legally binding document?**

- No. The CHRMAP is an assessment used for planning and risk management. It recommends ongoing research and study to understand coastal impacts. It is a basis for decision-making only.

### **10. What is the Australian Government doing now that the CHRMAP has been released?**

- Managing coastal hazards on CKI is a partnership between the community, stakeholders and government.
- The Australian Government has established a Ministerial Working Group on the Future of CKI. It will oversee the development of a whole-of-government response to the impact of climate change on CKI. The

Working Group is being led by the Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories.

- The Australian Government has provided \$23.3 million over four years from 2024-25 to improve emergency preparedness and safety on CKI, including improvements to cyclone shelters and seawalls. This funding is for immediate works on CKI, while we continue future planning in consultation with the community.

**11. Does the community get a say in which recommendations are brought forward into action?**

- Yes. In line with Action 1 of the CHRMAP, the Australian Government is establishing a CKI community reference group to guide adaptation decisions.
- Every member of the CKI community is affected by coastal hazards, and more than half the CKI community has indicated their desire to be involved in decisions.
- The Australian Government recognises the right to self-determination in any options considered.

**12. Who is responsible for delivering the recommendations of the CHRMAP?**

- Governments, businesses and the community all have a role in adapting to the impacts of coastal erosion and flooding.
- The Australian Government and Shire of CKI are responsible for managing risks and impacts to the public assets and services they own and manage.
- For privately owned land:
  - The CHRMAP identifies areas at risk from coastal hazards and when hazards may occur.
  - Individual landowners are responsible for their own housing upkeep, and responding to hazards is an important consideration.
  - The Shire and the Australian Government will work with affected landowners to plan responses.
- For land in the Trust:
  - The Trustee is responsible for ensuring the land is serviced properly and housing is maintained and replaced, if necessary. The Trustee has the same responsibility as any other landlord to their tenants.
  - The Australian Government will continue to work with the Trust and the Cocos Malay community to plan responses.

**13. Who will pay for climate adaptation on CKI?**

- All adaptation options in the CHRMAP require further investigation, detailed design, and consultation with community. Costs and potential funding sources will be considered through this process.

**14. Why is the Australian Government investing in the Defence Airfield Upgrade on CKI when the CHRMAP recommends managed retreat from the islands?**

- The CKI Airfield Upgrade Project will enable use of larger Defence aircraft, as well as improving airfield facilities for all users. The upgrades will improve aircraft operations and airfield resilience against weather events.
- This will help provide some resilience against climate change, and ensure transport in the case of rising sea levels, flooding and weather events that might require emergency management responses – consistent with CHRMAP recommendations.