

## Media Release No. 435

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### **TORRES STRAIT RELOCATION OF ISLAND COMMUNITIES NOT ON IMMEDIATE HORIZON**

Low lying communities of the Torres Strait are reinforcing their call for government investment in seawalls to protect them for flooding and sea level rise.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority Chairperson, John ‘Toshie’ Kris, said there has been a lot of focus of the possibility of relocating communities following an ABC Background Briefing report.

“Our message to communities and government is that relocation is not an option in the immediate to mid term future.

“The issue now is flooding that is damaging infrastructure, cemeteries, gardens and increasing the disease threat” Mr Kris said.

“According the Torres Strait Extreme Sea Level Study commissioned by TSRA, relocation is unlikely to be an issue for communities for many decades to come.”

Communities are currently impacted annually by king tides and storm surge.

Seawalls are planned for five communities to protect them and millions of dollars worth of infrastructure from corrosion and damage from tidal inundation.

“If we do not get the estimated \$22 million dollars to protect these strategically and culturally significant communities, it is likely that within a decade tidal flooding will have caused significant damage to key infrastructure such as roads, buildings and key health and water infrastructure “Mr Kris said.

“We can’t afford to wait any longer to invest in protecting current investments and community wellbeing”.

ENDS

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