

MAV STATE COUNCIL May 2023

The Motion should be no longer than 250 words (1700 characters) and rationale no longer than 350 words (2400 characters).

1. Name of Motion

MAV to Advocate to State Government on behalf of rural and regional Councils to include betterment as part of the Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFFA) scheme.

2. Motion (max 1700 characters)

Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to the safety of its people and has an obligation under Roads Act 2004 to provide a safe environment for the travelling public.

The current State Government Betterment Funding arrangements falls short of Council's requirements.

The ongoing impact of our variable climate has seen increasing levels of extreme weather which in turn creates a higher volume of maintenance activity on our roads and drainage network.

After the October 2022 flood event about 22km of unsealed roads, more than 3km of sealed road patches and 98 bridges and major culverts required flood restoration works beyond the capacity of Council's Operations unit.

As a small rural Shire our ability to generate enough revenue to cover the actual costs of emergency events, to repair damage and recover our essential assets is impossible without assistance from State and Federal governments which in times of disaster including Natural Disaster Recovery Funding (NDRF).

To stem the rapid deterioration of our Shires rural road network, and to reduce the cost to the budget of future climate events, the current State Government Betterment Funding arrangements falls short of Council's requirements. A fundamental shift in the way the NDFFA scheme supports recovery is required.

The increased rain and October flood event we've experienced over the past three years are unprecedented. What Council is calling for is unprecedented funding – not just to repair our roads, but to strengthen them for future events. It just makes good business sense to create resilience and build back better.

That motion seeks:

- That the MAV urgently advocates to State Government for the need to implement a betterment program within the NDFFA that will enable rural and regional Councils to build on existing infrastructure to a resilient level.

A fully funded betterment model would eventually see a reduction of future claims in effected areas and enable small rural Councils to be better prepared for future events.

3. Submitted by (Council name)

Strathbogie Shire Council

4. Other supporting councils (please list councils that support this motion) (optional)

Nil

5. Please attach written confirmation from supporting councils.

6. Is this motion supported by resolution of council?

Yes

7. If yes, please insert date of resolution

Tuesday 21 February 2023 (pending endorsement)

8. Does the subject matter of this motion have state-wide significance to local government?

Yes

9. Does this motion relate to the MAV Strategic Plan 2021-25?

Yes

10. If yes, please select the primary MAV Strategic Plan Priority to which the motion relates (choose one):

Sector capability and good governance.

11. Is this motion identical or substantially similar to a motion submitted by your Council to State Council in October 2018, May 2019, October 2019 or May 2021.

No

12. Rationale for Motion

Over the past three years the Strathbogie Shire Council has seen a substantial increase in extreme weather such as localised hurricanes, increased wind, increased rain events and a flood in October 2022.

The increase of rain due to three years of La Nina and the October 2022 flood event has seen the unsealed and sealed road network deteriorate at a higher rate than previously experienced.

Strathbogie Shire has 2,210km of roads – 1,465km unsealed and 748km sealed. Council also maintain and renew 521 bridges and major culverts. Maintenance and renewal of this extensive road network including culverts is a significant ask on a small rural Council, even when conditions are good.

After the October 2022 flood event more than 22km of unsealed roads, 3km of sealed road patches and 98 bridges and major culverts required flood restoration works beyond the capacity of Council's Operations unit. As a small rural Shire our ability to generate enough revenue to cover the actual costs of emergency events, to repair damage and recover our essential assets is impossible without assistance from State and Federal governments which in times of disaster including Natural Disaster Recovery Funding (NDRF).

The Natural Disaster event (Flood October 2022) has since been declared eligible for Victoria's Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA) scheme by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV). Eligibility requirements relate specifically to 'essential public assets' which primarily relate to transport infrastructure.

The structure of the funding provision is in 3 (three) parts:

- Emergency works
- Immediate works
- Recovery works

However, the State Government Betterment Funding arrangements falls short of Council's requirements. Current engineering betterment estimates are at \$3.8M in culvert repairs alone and this amount is not sustainable by Council given that the same infrastructure could be affected in future events.

Our community expects Council to not just repair our roads, but to strengthen them for future events.

A total funded betterment model would eventually see a reduction of future claims in the flood effected areas and allow small rural Councils to be more resilient for future events.

It simply makes good business sense to create community resilience and build back better.