

19 September 2022

Natural Disaster Roads Update - September 2022

A number of roads right across the Warrumbungle Local Government Area (LGA) were badly damaged by the Natural Disaster in November 2021 activating a Natural Disaster Funding claim to assist with the extensive repairs.

“Due to the severity of the Natural Disaster and the broad impact it had on Warrumbungle Shire Council’s Road Network, funding assistance was sought through jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to help with the restoration of our rural road network,” said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Ambrose Doolan. “Funding has been applied for in packages, and each package will be bundled in geographical locality. There are 9 packages that have been applied for. It will be a slow process, but if we do not adhere to the rules of natural disaster funding, Council is at risk of not receiving any funding at all to restore our damaged roads.”

Council has been advised that the first package of almost \$446,000 has been approved by the NSW Government and works on this first lot of roads have begun.

Council has yet to be advised by the NSW Government if the remaining packages have been approved. Over 1,770 defects have been identified with the value of the restoration work estimated to be over \$12 million. Restoration works including grading 440km of unsealed roads, pavement and surface repair of 500km of sealed roads, bulk filling 1,350,300m³ of gravel and rock at 43 locations, reshaping of 6.5km of table drains and repair of 12 major causeways, culvert and bridges. Council has spent over \$1 million to date on emergency and immediate restoration works.

Since the natural disaster of November 2021, there have been multiple rain events which has impacted conditions of the roads across the local government area. Council has submitted a further application for a natural disaster application following rain events in early August 2022 that resulted in over \$1 million of additional damage to council roads and infrastructure.

“While Council waits for the outcome of the submission, roads crews across the Shire are still constantly out and about doing those works they reasonably can, although are hampered by ongoing wet weather,” said Cr Doolan.

“While progress is being made, many roads are still saturated with water meaning works must proceed with caution as there is still a risk of bogging machines and doing more damage than good. One of the focus areas as Council repairs our road network is to ensure that tackle the drainage is tackled first, ensuring roads to dry out quickly and to assist with any future rain events that may make the problem worse,” Cr Doolan concluded.

This funding from the NSW Government is to be expended by June 2024. Council is working through this funding process and works associated as quickly as possible.

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