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Natural Disaster Recovery

The task of repairing roads damaged in major storms continues following on from a natural disaster being declared in Warrumbungle Shire.

“A wet summer of severe storms and heavy rain has seen extensive damage to our road network,” said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Ambrose Doolan.

“Unfortunately, the unsealed roads have been the hardest hit with many being so badly damaged they were impassable for days and sometimes weeks.”

The Natural Disaster declaration allows for Council to make a funding submission to assist with the cost of road repairs. While that funding submission is being prepared, the road operations crews are continuing to do emergency repairs to make the roads passable and have commenced some immediate reconstruction works.

In January, Council submitted the estimated recovery cost to Resilience NSW for consideration. This high-level estimate is what Council believes it will cost to return the roads to their pre-disaster condition. This is only an initial estimate and may change as more detailed estimates are prepared for each road segment damaged.

“Council now has to make a detailed submission to the NSW Government to support our claim for funding,” said Cr Doolan. “Under Natural Disaster provisions, Council can make damaged roads passable, but cannot undertake full restoration works until the funding submission is approved.”

Council has engaged an organisation that specialises in assisting councils to prepare detailed submissions for disaster recovery funding. Built Environment Collective Pty Ltd (BEC) is working in partnership with Council to review rural roads and bridges, and collect essential information about the damage sustained from the natural disaster. 270 roads across the local government area have already been audited and photos have been taken to prepare the detailed cost estimate submission.

“If the funding is approved, Council will work to restore our rural road network to its pre-disaster condition. This will be a long process and Council cannot attend to all roads at the same time. The full recovery of the roads expected to take around 18 months at a cost of about \$9 million,” said Cr Doolan.

“The rural road network is vital to the sustainability of the Shire and its people and Council is doing everything we can to get the road network back to an acceptable condition,” Cr Doolan concluded.

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