

Enquiries: Melissa Crane
Our Ref: E364



6 March 2023

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: rdit.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

Roads Resilience Inquiry

I am writing in relation to the Roads Resilience Inquiry currently being undertaken through the House of Representatives Standing Committee.

It is noted that the inquiry is looking into the implications of severe weather events on the national, regional, rural and remote road networks, with the following focus:

- ▶ Road engineering and construction standards required to enhance the resiliency of future road construction;
- ▶ Identification of climate resilient corridors suitable for future road construction projects;
- ▶ Opportunities to enhance road resilience through the use of waterproof products in road construction;
- ▶ The Commonwealth's role in road resilience planning; and
- ▶ Any related issues.

We are aware that the Municipal Association of Victoria has submitted to this inquiry, and Mansfield Shire Council supports this submission.

We also wanted to reiterate two points, as follows:

1. The amount of road infrastructure Council needs to maintain is large, and with the limitations on raising funds through increased rates, the renewal gap is only going to get wider. While we recognise that rate capping has an impact, we are also acutely aware that any increase in rates has an impact on our communities. In the current fiscal environment, with interest rates rising and housing affordability becoming a bigger issue every day, we feel that increased and more flexibly funding from both the State and Federal government to assist with the renewal of Council's road network is the key to providing a more resilient road network.

2. Resilience is not only about waterproofing. Good construction standards for roads, including the provision of adequate drainage, will naturally lead to a more resilient network. Consistent and reasonable funding to manage these networks is critical to the success of the overall network. There needs to be an ongoing and consistent commitment to funding maintenance and renewal on all roads, in an effort to avoid the current situation where it will now take significant funds to provide for appropriate infrastructure, but this funding needs to be flexible to allow a range of solutions to be applied.

From a Mansfield Shire Council perspective, we believe that the continuation and expansion of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program would be one excellent mechanism to achieve this outcome. This will provide an avenue for Local Government to continue to identify and undertake renewal works based on local knowledge of needs, with minimal impact on the individual ratepayer.

Two local community members have expressed their interest in participating in the Roads Inquiry Indi local panel/hearing – their details are below:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to consider the position of Mansfield Shire Council. I would be happy to discuss this submission in more detail and we will look forward to the results of the inquiry.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Kirsten Alexander
Chief Executive Officer

