



Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee

Hearing Date: 20 November 2023

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Department of Transport and Planning

Received Date: 13 December 2023

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Committee:	Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee
Inquiry:	Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria
Hearing date:	20 November 2023
Witness:	William Tieppo, Deputy Secretary Network Design and Integration Anthony Judd, Executive Director Hume Loddon Mallee Jimmy O'Connell, Executive Director Network Disruptions
Committee Members:	Sheena Watt, Rikkie-Lee Tyrell, Melina Bath, Ryan Batchelor, David Ettershank
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1. **Sheena WATT, page 43**

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Given the really dynamic nature of climate change, can you talk about what mechanisms are in place around the planning system to be adaptable to new policies and data and evidence around climate change in the planning work that you do? I am not sure who is best placed to answer that.

Response:

Victoria's planning framework provides for the consideration of climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.

Keeping the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and planning schemes updated using the best available climate science is a Government requirement and priority.

The VPP and planning schemes are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they continue to respond to state requirements for the mitigation, management and adaptation to climate change, hazard and risk.

Planning and responsible authorities are required to apply state planning policy and strategy addressing climate change in their decision making, as relevant.

2. Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL, page 44

Question Asked to Anthony JUDD:

McCoy's Bridge. I am just going to ask straight out: when can we expect a finalised date for that to be completed so it can go back to being used as it was before the floods?

Response:

The impacts of the October 2022 floods to McCoy's Bridge have required extensive assessment and monitoring since damage was first observed to the bridge structure during the floods.

DTP is currently finalising the process to return McCoy's Bridge back to full load capacity within the next month following the results of the extensive assessment and monitoring program.

In addition to returning the Bridge to full capacity, the work program to remediate structural damage is expected to commence in the first half of 2024.

3. Melina BATH, page 50

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Will it migrate to the VicEmergency app? Will the road closures migrate to that? Is that your recommendation?

Response:

The VicTraffic website provides important information about road conditions and closures during and outside of emergency events. This includes planned disruptions such as roadworks and special events, as well as unplanned disruptions caused by emergency incidents.

In addition to the website, the department manages an open API (i.e., a type of data source) that is available to the public. It contains the locations and details of all unplanned road closures and traffic alerts recorded by the department in near real-time. This data source can be integrated into any third-party websites and apps. As the responsible authority, it is the decision of Emergency Management Victoria to choose to integrate road closure information into the VicEmergency app.

Improvements are currently being made to the unplanned road closure API and operational processes for recording road information to improve data precision and accuracy. These improvements have been informed through extensive consultation with the public, local councils and emergency management services.

4. **Ryan BATCHELOR, page 52-3**

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Following on from Ms Bath's questions about funding, I could not tell from the whole of government submission exactly how much additional funding had been provided to do repairs post the floods. So maybe on notice could you give us a table of how much additional funding has been provided to do road repairs since the flooding event, and if that has not all been acquitted now, what is coming in future years, and then probably also more generally what the relevant funding streams are for generalised repairs and maintenance. So I assume there was some particular money for flood-related response and then there is probably a BAU stream.

William TIEPPO: That is right.

Ryan BATCHELOR: Could you give us, as you see fit, a table that can break that down for the benefit of the committee so we can understand just how much funding is there and available? To come back to where I started, what do you think the key lessons are out of this event for the road network?

Response:

In the immediate response to the October 2022 flood event, the \$165 million Emergency Road Repair Blitz was announced to find and fix potholes, asphaltting and repairing road surfaces damaged by the floods to reconnect impacted Victorian communities.

This funding also saw the most severely flood damaged roads across Victoria; Mclvor Highway, Prairie-Rochester Road and Elmore-Raywood Road receive full pavement rehabilitations to restore these roads to full functionality. The Emergency Road Repair Blitz funding was fully expended in the 2022/23 financial year, seeing works undertaken to over 1,400 kilometres of impacted roads across the Victorian arterial road network.

The 2023 State Budget saw an additional \$2.8 billion provided over 10 years for road maintenance and renewal works, with \$770 million of this funding provided in 2023/24. This additional funding includes the delivery of vital flood recovery works to Victoria's arterial road network.

5. **The DEPUTY CHAIR, page 55**

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Could I ask you perhaps just take on notice – I sort of feel like I am asking you for the answer to life, the universe and everything. But could I ask you just maybe to apply your minds to something that you can send back to the committee that sort of gives us some sense of what that future call on funds and resources might be arising from that change?

Response:

Infrastructure Victoria (IV) is required to produce a 30-year infrastructure strategy that requires them to identify Victoria's short, medium and long-term infrastructure needs with regard to a number of factors, which includes the response required to a changing climate, as required by the Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015.

As part of this 30-year strategy, Infrastructure Victoria is required to assess the options available to meet the identified infrastructure needs, including making recommendations on funding options and priorities for specified major projects.

The Department works closely with IV on this process to ensure alignment between priorities and policies between our respective organisations.

A copy of IV's Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051 is available at <https://www.infrastructurevictoria.com.au/victorias-infrastructure-strategy-2021-2051-home/>

6. Ryan BATCHELOR, page 56

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Chair, could I suggest, would that be something that Infrastructure Victoria does in its 30-year infrastructure plan?

William TIEPPO: We worked pretty closely with Infrastructure Victoria on its 30-year plan, so most of those things, whether it is climate change mitigation treatments, are embedded in our strategies and our corporate plan. There are probably other public documents that we can provide to the panel that talk about that.

Response:

Infrastructure Victoria's scope for their 30-year infrastructure plan requires them to consider the infrastructure required to respond to a changing climate. This includes consideration of these factors in their 3-to-5-year updates.

7. Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL, page 56

Question Asked to William TIEPPO:

Have you been investigating top ranking roads in the world to see how we can apply their structure and maintenance there here in Victoria?

Response:

Victoria's road network has a number of unique factors that can make it challenging to operate and maintain. For example, this includes rapid shifts between wet and hot weather seasonally, as well as an extensive regional road network to serve regional Victorians.

The Department regularly conducts formal and informal knowledge sharing with jurisdictions across Australia and the world, having recently hosted a delegation from the United States on transport infrastructure, in addition to its membership in organisations such as Austroads and the World Road Association, where DTP staff are members of technical committees.

Participation in these committees is limited to experts in their field, which enables knowledge sharing for the broader Austroads and World Road Association membership base.

Outside of Australia, there are very few jurisdictions that encounter the same set of challenges that Victoria does, so knowledge sharing is generally focused on individual asset types (for example, structure management, pavement materials and construction, and road design standards). A road asset management plan from another global jurisdiction is unlikely to be of benefit if applied directly to the Victorian road network.