Inquiry Name: Inquiry into VicRoads' Management of Country Roads

Mr. Rodney Hayes

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Currently roads in the southwest of the state are in a shocking, almost impassable condition particularly those arterial roads leading to the Port of Portland. It is common place for speed restrictions to be in place as low as 40kmh because of dangerous potholes and on one occasion the Henty Highway had to be closed for a period of time until repairs could be made to make the highway driveable. This is supposed to be an "A" class highway. We have to weave our way along these roads ignoring double white lines at times, even though this is an extremely dangerous practice it is the only way to find a path to proceed, this is even more dangerous at night when the road condition cannot easily be seen. One weekend in 2017 the local RACV road service provider attended 6 vehicles with smashed wheels, not just blown tyres. It is also commonplace to see vehicles with the suspension collapsed as a result of hitting a deep pothole. 

As a result of minimal use of the railways as a means to transport freight, the roads have to take the majority of freight movement. Added to this the weight limits for trucks have increased to over 80 tonnes in our district.

For many years country roads have been seriously underfunded with road foundations totally inadequate. Not enough attention is made for our wet climate [2016 we received 1000mm of rain, 2017 - 950mm]. There is a significant deterioration of the road surface after heavy rain. Another issue that is neglected these days is the condition of the table drains at the edge of the roads. It used to be commonplace for graders to travel along the roads keeping the drains clear, this no longer happens so now they are so overgrown with weeds and grass that they are no longer effective; which means moisture cannot drain from the road foundations.

It would be great to have our roads brought up to the standard of our interstate neighbours as there is a distinct difference in road quality at the South Australian border. It will take a totally different approach to achieve that and a significant boost in funding.

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