To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to express my concern over the management, or lack there of, of our Victorian roads.

I live to western Victoria, near the South Australian boarder. Our roads have been a disgrace for years now, with huge pot holes, disintegrating road edges and in general, roads that are just not safe to drive on.

The actions taken by VicRoads have included putting signs up saying ‘Road works ahead’ ‘rough surface’ lowering speed etc. and then not touching the roadways for months and months. Simply placing signage up to cover themselves is just not good enough.

Through 2017, some ‘roadworks’ started on the road (Casterton-Naracoorte rd) I drive on everyday, with my young children. I say ‘roadworks’ very flippantly, as with in a week or two, sometimes a month if you’re lucky, the roads are back to the terrible state they started in, or even worse.

Multiple accidents have occurred on our road and sadly multiple fatalities too. Just last week, a man in his mid 20s was driving to work and had a terrible accident, allegedly due to a truck coming over to the wrong side of the road – I dare say, due to the poor roadways. He was flown to Melbourne and has incurred multiple injuries, including a smashed ankle, fractured ribs and vertebrae, hands in splints due to deep wounds, problems with his chest, lack of oxygen in his blood and his spleen not working, so classed as non-existent now. I am not in the field of medicine, but I am sure this young mans life has been significantly changed and he has a long road ahead of him.

Increased usage of trucks, including log trucks, have also seriously affected our roadways.

Vicroads managing country roads is not effective at all.

I believe that dismantling VicRoads and creating a specific Country Roads organisation separate to the Metropolitan roads body is a good idea. But to make this idea effective, funding must be looked at as well.

Our roads need to be fixed properly. Wasting time, money and resources is not an option.

First of all, the drainage needs to be looked at, fixed and regularly maintained. Our drains on the side of our roads have not been maintained well, and therefore, water is one of the main reasons our roads are a disgrace. With poor drains, water has nowhere to go and then seeps under the bitumen and ruins the foundations. Once the foundations are wrecked, there is no point ‘fixing’ the roads by simply filling in potholes. The water damage is done, foundations are wet, moisture will continue to work its way up through the bitumen and create unstable surfaces – potholes etc.

Once the drainage systems have been fixed, our roads need to be stripped back and the foundations need to be worked on. This would include leaving them as dirt roads for an extend period of time (at least a year).
Then, once the drainage and the road foundations have been sorted, then the resurfacing can begin.

There needs to be a clear outline and plan for fixing our country roads and communities need to be informed: plan of attack, when works are expected to start, how they are developing through the process and of course the expected completion date.

Another problem that we have incurred is the increased trucks, including log trucks, using our roadways. Our roads are very narrow and I have often been in the position where the oncoming trucks are over my side of the road, including one tanker nearly running me off the road, as the driver came around the corner too fast.

I believe widening the roadways would help this problem and even adding an extra ‘slow’ lane on hills and dangerous bends. The Muntham Hill is a perfect example (but not the only one) that would benefit from an extra ‘slow’ lane being added.

Every time I drive with my young family on the roads, I am putting our lives at risk. Our roads are not being managed properly and lives are being lost.

Thankyou for taking the time to read my concerns. I’m hoping that you will consider my submission, as I value the safety of my friends and family on the Victorian road network.

I look forward to hearing the solutions and how we can fix our roads properly and maintain them consistently.

Kind Regards,

Sophie Simson