

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



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BEGINNING VICTORIA'S FLOOD RECOVERY

The Andrews Labor Government is helping flood-affected communities begin their recovery with extra funding for families, roads and clean-up efforts.

A \$351 million package will give regional Victorian communities the immediate support they need as the state's recovery from the floods begins.

To re-connect communities and get people and freight moving quickly across the state, the Labor Government will deliver a \$165 million emergency road repair blitz – finding and fixing potholes, asphaltting and repairing road surfaces damaged by the recent weather event to get Victorians in flood-affected areas back on the road.

The package will also cover larger-scale works like the rebuilding of roads, bridges and culverts – particularly in the Western, Hume and Loddon Mallee regions which have been most heavily damaged to date.

To help Victorians worst-affected by the flood event, up to \$15 million will deliver support with housing, health and wellbeing, financial and legal counselling alongside practical assistance with accessing grants and completing paperwork, and advice for business owners whose livelihoods have been affected by the floods.

An investment of \$6 million will station Community Recovery Officers in affected LGAs to help identify the recovery needs of individuals and families – making sure communities are getting appropriate support for their unique requirements, and support government to identify if any further support is needed.

A further up to \$15 million will be dedicated to boosting the capability of Emergency Management Victoria, the State Control Centre and Emergency Recovery Victoria – organisations that play a critical role in coordinating emergency responses and helping the recovery from disasters like floods.

A Victorian Flood Recovery Management Plan will deliver \$150 million for an immediate state-coordinated clean up – allowing crews to move quickly into the worst-affected areas to undertake hazard assessment and demolition of any severely damaged structures.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are working cooperatively together to finalise funding arrangements under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

The Personal Hardship Assistance Program's *Emergency Re-establishment Assistance* fund will support Victorian families whose properties are hardest-hit beyond the initial payments for food and shelter – providing up to \$42,250 for uninsured properties, helping to pay for clean-up, repairs, rebuilding and replacing household contents.

Since the beginning of the flood emergency, 509 roads have been closed, with 150 already reopened. Where water levels have subsided to safe levels and emergency services deem it safe to do so, crews are working around the clock to restore access.

In just a few days, hundreds of crews have already undertaken more than 500 individual inspections, found and fixed 10,000 potholes and attended more than 20 landslips right across Victoria.

Major Roads Projects Victoria is working closely with contractors across the Big Build's road program – including Fulton Hogan, Downer, Winslow and BuildGroup – who have offered to join in a coordinated effort with Regional Roads Victoria to repair our roads.

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Crews have already made significant progress on repairs on the Hume Freeway, the Western Highway, the Goulburn Valley Freeway and the Murray Valley Highway.

With more rain forecast in the coming days, the immediate focus is on making key roads usable and safe for emergency services and freight, so vital supplies can reach affected communities as quickly as possible.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“There isn’t a second to waste as we begin recovery in flood-affected communities – whether it’s support for households, clean-ups or local roads, we’ll deliver the support Victorians need.”

“There is a significant job ahead of us but we’re equal to it – I know that all levels of government will keep working together to get this job done.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

“Local communities and emergency services have done an incredible job as they manage the immediate threat of floods – we’re working hand in hand with the Commonwealth to give them the support they need to recover.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

“We are getting on with repairing regional roads and supporting communities to recover from this significant flooding event.”