

Build to Withstand: A Regional Infrastructure Resilience Fund

For rural and regional councils, natural disaster recovery has become routine. But the current funding model under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) limits councils to rebuilding infrastructure to pre-disaster standards, even when repeated failures are occurring.

MRGC councils have been hit by major floods in 2011, 2016 and 2022, with the same roads, culverts, bridges, and drains damaged each time, cutting communities off and disrupting freight and essential services.

DRFA rules meant infrastructure had to be repaired "as was", preventing upgrades even when councils knew better solutions—like replacing gravel crossings with concrete—were needed.

Councils lack the financial capacity to fully fund these upgrades independently.

Our member councils have many examples of betterment funding being denied, even though current engineering standards require them because they were deemed ineligible under DRFA rules.

- Repeated damage means repeated costs to governments and taxpayers.
- Essential infrastructure is left vulnerable to failure again and again.
- Communities, businesses and emergency services are repeatedly disrupted.

More money is being spent fixing the same problems multiple times than it would cost to fix them properly once. This is inefficient and unsustainable.

We call on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated **Regional Infrastructure Resilience Fund** to

- Support pre-disaster assessments to identify vulnerable infrastructure
- Allow councils to upgrade to modern, resilient standards during recovery works
- Reduce disruption to communities, businesses and emergency services
- Protect lives and livelihoods in the face of more frequent disasters
- Save governments millions in avoided repair and recovery costs

A Regional Infrastructure Resilience Fund will strengthen communities, reduce long-term costs, and ensure that regional Australia is ready for the next disaster – not just recovering from the last.

Let Councils Build It Right the First Time

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BUILD TO WITHSTAND: A Regional Infrastructure Resilience Fund.

- Recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters is becoming business as usual for regional councils.
- Current funding is being wasted by not rebuilding to a standard that can withstand future disasters.
- We need a **Regional Infrastructure Resilience Fund** let council's build it right the first time to safeguard our communities.

For Further Information:

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