



Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee

Hearing Date: 6 December 2023

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Received Date: 15 January 2024

1. **Samantha RATNAM, page 41**

Question Asked:

In relation to futureproofing and betterment and the like – I assume you have received this evidence – the Disaster Ready Fund received a lot of applications from Victoria, and they were in relation to projects related to floods in particular. If the committee would like it, I have got the full list of successful projects specifically related to flood research and preparedness. This is a fund from the federal government, and we were fortunate to receive nearly \$5 million with co-contributions from our government as well as delivery partners. There are things such as flood studies for various council areas, flood mitigation projects, infrastructure projects and levee upgrades. So there is a particular fund that is all about ensuring that we are well placed to understand what might happen and prepare for worst-case scenarios. Flood modelling is really important, and we want to make sure that people have those as up to date as possible. They are not sexy announcements when you go, ‘Grant recipients – they get to do some work on a study’, but they are really important, and there is a lot happening around the state in relation to that, which I can leave with the committee.

Response:

The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is the Australian Government’s flagship disaster risk reduction initiative which will provide up to \$1 billion over five years, from 1 July 2023, to fund projects that reduce the risk or impact of natural hazards and disaster events.

There are 15 Victorian projects specifically related to flood research and preparedness which have been approved for funding through DRF Round One:

Project Title	Organisation	Hazard Addressed
Strathbogie Shire Floods, Flash Flooding and Storm Surges Strategy	Strathbogie Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges

Latrobe City Urban Flood Study/Drainage Strategy	Latrobe City Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Mid-Goulburn Valley Flood Study	Murrindindi Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Hodgson and Burgoigee Creeks Flood channel asset repair and replacement	North East Catchment Management Authority	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Stawell Flood Investigation: Planning Controls Documentation	Northern Grampians Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Campaspe Shire Flood Review & Mitigation Project	Campaspe Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Corangamite Flood Study - Stage 2 Data Acquisition	Corangamite Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges Coastal erosion, and coastal inundation Sea level change
Understanding current flooding inadequacies in road infrastructure	Department of Transport and Planning	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Newstead Flood Study and Levee Design	Mount Alexander Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Shepparton Mooroopna Flood Intelligence Mapping	Greater Shepparton City Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Investigation of flood prone transport routes in North Central Victoria	Victorian Department Of Transport and Planning	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Numurkah Flood Mitigation Project - Stage 2 Southern Levee Design	Moira Shire Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Greater Geelong Connected Network Analysis – Flood Mitigation	City of Greater Geelong	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Flood Asset Infrastructure Upgrade	Swan Hill Rural City Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges
Merriwa Park Levee Bank	Wangaratta Rural City Council	Floods, flash flooding, including storm surges

Additional details (including descriptions and total costs) of each project, as well as the full list of projects funded for Victoria under Round One of the Disaster Ready Fund, is available at:

<https://nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund/round-one>.

The application process for Round Two will open on 22 January 2024, with funding for Round Two to become available after 1 July 2024.

2. **Wendy LOVELL, page 44**

Question Asked:

Yes, during the emergency. Then over and above all of that there is the state emergency management team that meet at the State Control Centre and have meetings and have minutes. I am just wondering, to give the committee a better understanding of the extent of the event and also the adequacy of the response to the event, if you would be willing to release to us each of the incident action plans and the minutes of all of those meetings.

Response:

During an emergency, each activated Incident Control Centre (ICC) develops an Incident Action Plan (IAP) which is approved by the Incident Controller.

IAPs are used by ICCs to inform teams of the situation at a given point in time, including a description of current incidents/hazards and risks along with any intelligence relevant to the event (such as potential impacts). IAPs also include strategies and tactics as part of the execution and key logistics along with key contacts.

IAPs are not a static document and will progressively evolve in response to the emergency and key priorities.

Given the scale of the emergency there is a significant volume of IAPs with multiple iterations. Transferring these documents would be a highly onerous exercise and would divert significant resources away from critical emergency management activities. These reports are produced for the express use of ICC and therefore I am not a recipient of them.

3. **David ETTERSANK, page 46-7**

Question Asked:

We talked before about the inspector-general's role, and when Tony Pearce was here he actually said to us that any inquiry that he would undertake would be based on his powers under the Act and that requires him to be

instructed to do that inquiry. Is that consistent with your understanding of the Act? In other words, he does not do inquiries of his own volition.

Jaclyn SYMES: He has got own-motion powers.

David ETTERS HANK: He does have own-motion powers?

Jaclyn SYMES: Correct.

Samantha RATNAM: He said he is able to. I looked at the transcript. I can see that.

The CHAIR: Yes, he did.

David ETTERS HANK: All right. There are obviously some further tensions that will require further investigation.

Jaclyn SYMES: Yes, I will get you a run-down of that, if you like. But as I have been minister he has done own-motion inquiries before, so I can point to some examples for you, I can follow that up to you.

Response:

As outlined in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (Vic) (EM Act), the objectives of the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) are to provide assurance to the government and the community in respect of emergency management arrangements in Victoria and foster continuous improvement of emergency management in Victoria.

IGEM achieves this through a range of activities which includes, but is not limited to, developing and maintaining the monitoring and assurance framework for emergency management; monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the state's emergency management *Strategic Action Plan*; and undertaking reviews.

With regard to IGEM's review functions, section 64(1)(b) of the EM Act provides that one of IGEM's functions is to undertake system-wide reviews, including reviewing the emergency management functions of responder agencies and departments in relation to the assurance framework. For the purposes of performing this review function, IGEM prepares an Annual Forward Plan of Reviews and provides a copy of that plan to the Minister for Emergency Services. This mechanism allows IGEM to initiate reviews as they see fit.

For example, the '*Review of 10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector*' was a review initiated by IGEM under the Act and was included in the 2019 Forward Plan of Reviews.