



# Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee

**Inquiry:** Inquiry into Climate Resilience

**Hearing Date:** 9 October 2024

**Question[s] taken on notice**

**Directed to:** Infrastructure Victoria

**Received Date:** 29 October 2024

## 1. **Jacinta ERMACORA, page 32**

**Question Asked:**

**Jonathan SPEAR:** Yes, there are. I mean, none of them stand out universally as being the jurisdiction that is doing it super well, but there are patches and examples of good practice that we observe throughout the report, and often it is the case studies that you will see. For example, New South Wales have got some pretty good guidance on how to include climate change risk in risk assessment more consistently. Ireland have pretty good information that is publicly available about the nature of risks to inform the public. We see our colleagues in Queensland doing a pretty good job in terms of making their roads more resilient post the floods that they have had up there. I am probably missing a few. Llewellyn and Caroline, are there any other examples?

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** It may be worth maybe taking that on notice, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** It might be useful for the committee to receive a list that you have reflected on subsequent to today, if that is agreeable to everybody.

**Response:** Examples of good practice contained in Infrastructure Victoria's Weathering the Storm report include:

- Case study on making Queensland roads more resilient and reducing damage caused by extreme weather events through the Transport Network Reconstruction Program (page 12, Weathering the Storm).<sup>1</sup>
- Case study to assess climate risk for Victorian regional hospitals by the Department of Health, which will assist with embedding climate resilience into the health system (page 16).<sup>2</sup>
- The UK Government produces a Climate Change Risk Assessment and a National Adaptation Programme every 5 years (page 33).<sup>3</sup>
- Ireland's Translate project delivers a dataset to support Ireland's climate adaptation and mitigation efforts (page 36).<sup>4</sup>

- Collaboration and preventative approaches to better support school asset management undertaken by the Department of Education (page 40).<sup>5</sup>
- La Trobe University has conducted new flood modelling of their university campuses to increase resilience to drought and flooding (page 42).<sup>6</sup>
- The New South Wales Government manages climate risks through the *Internal audit and risk management policy for the general government sector* and has the *Climate risk ready NSW guide* which can be used to achieve a consistent approach to climate risk assessment and management (page 44).<sup>7</sup>
- The European ICARUS project seeks to better implement resilience into existing asset and maintenance guidelines and decision-making processes (page 49).<sup>8</sup>
- The Canadian Government is supporting adaptation with funds to help manage the risks and impacts of climate change (page 54).<sup>9</sup>

## 2. **David ETTERSHANK, page 38**

**Question Asked to Jonathan SPEAR:** Yes. I am happy to put this as a question, or for you to take it on notice. Given your research I would really like to know what a good estimate is for what Victoria should be spending on adaptation. In your report you say we do not spend much on it, but I am not seeing what is a good amount, so could you perhaps tell us what is? How does what Victoria spends on adaptation compare to other jurisdictions – other states and such like? And following on from that, if there was money applied, what would be the priorities for urgently spending additional funds on climate adaptation measures?

### **Response:**

**Jonathan SPEAR:** Happy to answer that now. Firstly, we do not have a number, because we do not have enough information currently to come up with that number. It relates to the previous question, actually, because we need to do more fine-grain work about the exact places and the highest risks to inform where the investment is. What we do know is that those few cents in every dollar that we are spending on adaptation rather than recovery seems way too low, on any account, when –

**David ETTERSHANK:** But you have got no benchmarks if we were looking at, say, a percentage of gross state product or something for what would be –

**Jonathan SPEAR:** No. When you look at other jurisdictions like New Zealand and Canada, they are creating funds that are ranging from hundreds of millions of dollars to – correct me if I am wrong, Caroline – the Canadian one is around \$1 billion Canadian. Keep in mind that what we are recommending is that adaptation becomes part of business as usual, so there is an opportunity for us to be using business as usual maintenance funding and targeting that to help some of this task. So it is not all new money, and also when we build new infrastructure, build it so it is a lot more resilient.

Like a number of areas of public policy, we are unlikely to ever reach perfection in this. But what we do need to do is have a greater level of focus and rebalance both the amount of spending we are having on recovery so that there is more on future resilience, and make sure that we are at least incentivising some additional investment through a fund that actually focuses everyone’s mind so it becomes business as usual. I know that is a somewhat unsatisfying answer to your question.

**David ETTERSANK:** Deeply.

**Jonathan SPEAR:** It is because we need more information and more work about exactly what the priorities should be, and then having done that we should focus on those priorities and those priority risks. Government is always going to have limits to its resources, and that is why we think an application of the sort of approach that we are recommending, which is to do the assessment of risk, prioritise those risks, look at your options, look at the ones that get the best return and then start investing in those – that is the way to go.

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<sup>1</sup> National Asset Centre of Excellence, ‘[Asset management – accounting for life-cycle costing implications and network performance risks of rain and flood events](#)’, NACOE website, n.d., accessed 10 August 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, ‘[Health and human services climate change adaptation action plan 2022-2026](#)’, 2022; Information provided by the Department of Health, 19 September 2023.

<sup>3</sup> OECD, ‘[The United Kingdom’s pioneering Climate Change Act](#)’, 2021, accessed 23 August 2023; Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, ‘[UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022](#)’, HM Government, 2022, accessed 23 August 2023; Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, ‘[The third National Adaptation Programme \(NAP3\) and the fourth strategy for climate adaptation reporting](#)’, HM Government, 2023, accessed 23 August 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Met Éireann, ‘[TRANSLATE: one climate resource for Ireland](#)’, Met Éireann website, 2023, accessed 18 July 2023; Irish Government, ‘[A common climate resource for Ireland: Met Éireann releases first climate projections from the TRANSLATE initiative](#)’ [media release], Irish Government website, 29 June 2023, accessed 25 August 2023.

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<sup>5</sup> Victorian Auditor-General's Office, '[Managing school infrastructure](#)', 2017; Department of Education and Training, '[Public Accounts and Estimates Committee: Inquiry into managing school infrastructure](#)', submission 19, *Inquiry into the Victorian Auditor-General's report no.253: Managing School Infrastructure*, 28 February 2020, accessed 29 October 2024.

<sup>6</sup> La Trobe University, '[La Trobe Nangak Tamboree Vision](#)', 2019, accessed 4 August 2023.

<sup>7</sup> NSW Treasury, '[TPP20-08 Internal audit and risk management policy for the general government sector](#)', State of New South Wales, 2020, accessed 14 August 2023; Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, '[Climate risk ready NSW guide](#)', State of New South Wales, 2020, accessed 31 August 2023.

<sup>8</sup> ICARUS, '[Road resilience and climate change](#)', ICARUS website, 2023, accessed 29 October 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Environment and Climate Change Canada, '[Canada's national adaptation strategy building resilient communities and a strong economy](#)', Government of Canada, 2023; United National Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, '[Canada's success in harnessing nature for infrastructure resilience](#)', UNDRR website, 30 August 2023, accessed 14 September 2023.