

NATURAL DISASTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

Guidelines for Council Claims

What are the arrangements for access to Natural Disaster financial assistance?

Under the guidelines for Municipal Emergency Management Planning the Victorian Government provides financial assistance to councils for specified types of emergency management expenses, consistent with the Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief arrangements.

Eligible events are: bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, floods, storms (including hail) and land slippages caused by any of the above defined natural disasters.

What is Natural Disaster financial assistance available for?

- *Emergency protection works* – including works undertaken to protect community assets and to restore essential public services; and/or
- *Restoration of municipal and other public assets* – including repair of roads and bridges, reserves and associated community facilities, and destroyed public buildings.

How much is the financial assistance?

- *For emergency protection works* the Victorian Government will meet the full cost of approved works; and/or;
- *For restoration of municipal and other public assets* the Victorian Government will meet 75 per cent of approved restoration costs between \$10,000 and \$110,000, and 100 per cent of the proportion of costs above \$110,000. Costs are only recognised for the restoration of assets to their prior condition and the first \$10,000 is to be contributed by the council.

How do Council's apply?

The claim can be submitted from either the Council's municipal engineer or chief executive officer to:

Department of Treasury and Finance
Director: Mr Tony Bates, Budget and Financial Management
Level 4, 1 Macarthur Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

A copy of the claim can be simultaneously submitted to the VicRoads central office to enable the assessment of the claim to commence.

What should be included in the claim?

The *NDFFA Municipal Claim Form* (available at the Department of Treasury & Finance (DTF) website at <http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/CA25713E0002EF43/pages/bfm-natural-disaster-financial-assistance>) outlines all the information required from Councils by DTF and VicRoads to conduct a formal assessment of a claim.

In exceptional circumstances, and where a Council can demonstrate financial hardship, a request can be made to the Treasurer for an advance payment of asset protection and restoration costs based on an estimate of likely costs. Any request for exceptional circumstance advance funding must be made to the Treasurer in writing as soon as practical after the event.

The decision to lodge a claim based on expected or actual costs for asset protection and restoration costs is up to the Council. Any difference between the advance provided and the final expenditure will either be provided to the council as an additional grant or returned by the council. *Please refer to the NDFFA Frequently Asked Questions for further information.*

How long is the claim process?

Upon receipt of the claim, VicRoads carries out the formal assessment of any damage to roads and bridges etc. It is anticipated that this process will take up to six-eight weeks; however may take longer if there have been multiple natural disasters in the municipality.

The *NDFFA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)* and *NDFFA Municipal Claim Form* spreadsheets used to assist Councils with their claims are also available from:

<http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/CA25713E0002EF43/pages/bfm-natural-disaster-financial-assistance>