



MEDIA RELEASE

IV findings back RCV call for urgent regional roads investment

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) says a new report released today by the Victorian Government's independent infrastructure advisor has reinforced the urgent need for major investment in regional roads.

Infrastructure Victoria's *Warning Signs* report warns that bushfires, floods and extreme heat will inflict worsening damage on Victoria's transport network over coming decades and calls on the Government to begin upgrading infrastructure now to improve resilience.

RCV Chair Ben Blain said the findings directly support RCV's advocacy for a dedicated \$2 billion regional roads package.

"We've been warning for years that the Government's annual roads maintenance spend is not keeping pace with the deterioration of the regional network," Cr Blain said.

"This report confirms what regional communities are already experiencing – our roads are under growing pressures compounded by underinvestment."

RCV is calling for a \$2bn regional roads package for an additional \$500 million per year over four years above existing maintenance funding to stabilise and begin rebuilding regional roads.

Cr Blain said current funding levels are a Band-Aid on a bullet hole, while the condition of the network continues to worsen.

"The State is required to maintain roads. That's not new investment, that's basic responsibility – but we can't keep patching roads that are structurally failing.

"The funding just hasn't kept pace with the task, meanwhile billions have been absorbed by major metro transport blowouts."

Cr Blain said the consequences were becoming increasingly serious.

"This report says what regional Victorians already know: You can't climate-proof roads with pothole funding."

"The Government's own independent advisor is now saying we need to strengthen these roads for the future, and that the cost of delay will only grow.

"It's no longer just about potholes and rough roads. Regional Victorians are driving on ageing infrastructure that is more at risk of deterioration and becoming more dangerous every year."