

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Regional Transport Resilience Fund

April 2024



Australian Government



Transport for NSW acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and pays respect to Elders past and present.

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### What is the RTRF?

The \$32 million Regional Transport Resilience Fund (RTRF) is jointly funded by the Australian and NSW governments to reinforce and upgrade priority transport networks in Central West NSW after recent catastrophic weather events.

The RTRF will be equitably distributed amongst the highest scoring projects between the local government areas of Cabonne, Parkes, Forbes and Lachlan, which were badly impacted by the Australian Government Reference Number (AGRN) AGRN 1030 and AGRN 1034 floods in August and September 2022.

The RTRF aims to deliver betterment to essential public infrastructure assets by ensuring infrastructure damaged is not just reinstated, but rebuilt stronger, better, and more able to withstand the challenge posed by future natural disasters.

Betterment promotes rebuilding infrastructure in a way that will ensure it is more resilient during future disasters, making it more cost effective to maintain, with less time out of action when disasters strike.

The RTRF forms part of the \$100 million Central West Recovery and Resilience Package.

### How is Transport for NSW working with councils on RTRF?

- TfNSW is working collaboratively with the four councils to identify opportunities for betterment projects as part of their IRW or EPAR and support council to make a submission for Category D funding under this package.
- Since December 2023 TfNSW and the NSW Reconstruction Authority (NSW RA) have engaged with the councils to keep them informed as the RTRF progresses.

### How will successful projects be identified?

TfNSW Regional Disaster Recovery representatives are in discussions with the councils to help identify projects eligible for funding. Further details on the application and assessment process are available via the Fund Guidelines.

TfNSW is using valuable learnings from its sister program, the [Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package](#) in the Northern Region, in rolling out the RTRF.

## **How will this funding be used/what eligible works will be covered?**

Projects will be prioritised for funding based on their ability to deliver against:

- Strengthening the regional transport network's capability to withstand natural disasters
- Improve the reliability of the regional transport network for regional communities during and after disaster events.
- Enhance the adaptability of the regional transport network during and after disaster events
- Improve the regional transport network's ability to respond and recover when disasters occur
- Improve community safety through enabling a safer regional transport network
- Readiness and ability to deliver the nominated program.

## **What types of projects can be funded?**

Works may include:

- Stabilisation works to address high risk slopes where they form part of the essential public asset vulnerable during natural disaster events.
- Raising the level of key vulnerability points on the road network to mitigate community connection risks due to flood.
- Upgrading road pavements to improve resilience of road assets during flood and fire as a measure to ensure timely recovery when flood and fire events occur.
- Installing flood mitigation and other resilience infrastructure to mitigate flooding risks to key road networks.
- Upgrades to road corridors to provide improved resilience through enhanced culvert and drainage performance
- Low level bridge replacements and upgrades on key corridors where bridge assets are vulnerable to natural disaster.

## **What are the eligible grant amounts for RTRF?**

Eligible grant amounts range from \$250,000 to \$8 million per project. Applicants are limited to three successful projects.

## **How many applications can be made by each council?**

There is a maximum of five submissions per council, although similar-type projects such as culverts or causeways can be grouped into one submission.

## **Will there be a two-phase assessment process used to determine funding?**

There will be two phases. The first phase will be an eligibility assessment and will run parallel with the current assessment for Category B projects against the DRFA requirements. The second phase will be conducted by an assessment panel, which will assess the submissions against five criteria.

Please refer to the RTRF Guidelines for further information.

## **What projects are eligible for RTRF funding?**

To meet the RTRF funding requirements, Councils must have an approved IRW or EPAR on an Essential Public Asset directly damaged by AGRN 1030 and AGRN 1034 floods in August and September 2022 to bring it back to the asset's pre-disaster function. This is often referred to as Category B works delivered under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

## **What is Category D?**

This is RTRF's betterment component, in which reconstruction works on an Essential Public Asset directly damaged by AGRN 1030 and AGRN 1034 floods in August and September 2022, are made more resilient to future disasters. Betterment is about building better assets that are safer, more reliable and better equipped to deal with natural disasters.

## **What are the five criteria used to assess applications and are they all equal in consideration?**

Each criteria have an individual weighting, ranging from 10% to 30%.

- Strategic (30%) – a project's alignment with the RTRF's objective and outcomes, and relevant government strategies
- Resilience (30%) – the extent of current and future hazard (s) and risk mitigation expected with the addition of the betterment activity
- Viability (15%) – the deliverability and/or affordability of the project
- Economic (15%) – the quantification and or/qualification of the economic benefit/s
- Social (10%) – improving a community's ability to function during and after a disruption to an asset.

## **How will the assessment panel ensure equitable betterment outcomes across the four councils?**

The panel will look to equitably distribute funding across the eligible LGAs where there are sufficient meritorious projects in each LGA. The assessment panel may also defer assessment of an application until a later time in the assessment process to assist equitable decision making.

## **Will funding recipients be required to provide key benefits and outcomes during delivery and completion of their projects?**

Applicants will be required to provide both the NSW and Australian governments with substantiating evidence both during delivery and on completion of projects. As well, both governments may choose certain projects for a comprehensive assessment of benefits during project delivery and when completed.

## **How is RTRF governed?**

All decisions will be made in accordance with

- [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018](#)
- [NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines 2021](#)
- RTRF Guidelines.

## **Is funding provided for the administration of RTRF?**

Up to five percent of the total RTRF funds will be used to cover TfNSW administration for the delivery of RTRF. This includes providing support to applicants, supporting delivery of successful projects and evaluating outcomes.

## **How is funding distributed?**

Distribution of funds will follow an assessment process, with decisions on funding awarded based on the individual merit and geographical spread of projects directly impacted by AGRN 1030 and/or AGRN 1034 across the four Local Government Areas. Funding will be distributed based on project milestones.

## **Will funding be equitable across all four councils?**

It is expected there will be an equitable distribution of projects and funding amounts across the councils.

## **What happens if applications do not meet the expected eligibility requirements?**

The assessment panel of NSW Reconstruction Authority and TfNSW representatives, technical representatives not involved in the initial assessment and Independent Probity Advisor (non-voting member) reserves the right to reconsider and potentially redirect funds to other projects demonstrating eligibility and a direct need for funding. The final approval for distribution of funding lies with the NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads.

## **What happens if a successful project is withdrawn?**

If a successful project is withdrawn, the next highest-scoring project for the relevant council will be considered for funding. TfNSW will ensure the project aligns with eligibility criteria. If the project surpasses available funding, attempts will be made to adjust its scope or select the next highest-scoring project that fits within the funding limits and eligibility criteria, with input from the council.

If no eligible projects are found, TfNSW will engage with the next highest-scoring council project. Confirmation from NSW Reconstruction Authority will be sought prior to final approval from the NSW Minister of Regional Transport and Roads.

## **Additional information**

[NSW Natural Disaster Essential Public Asset Restoration Guidelines](#)

[Natural Disaster Infrastructure Betterment in NSW – Vision 2022](#)

[National Emergency Management Agency](#)

[NSW Reconstruction Authority | NSW Government](#)