



11 January 2011

**NOTICE OF EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

Your attendance is respectfully requested at the Ordinary Meeting of Cabonne Council convened for **Monday 17 January, 2011** commencing at **9.30am**, at the Cabonne Shire Office, Bank Street, Molong to consider the undermentioned business.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GLP Fleming', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

GLP Fleming  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- 1) Consideration of Mayoral Minute
- 2) Consideration of General Manager's Reports
  - a) Emergency procedures
  - b) Councils road works program for 2010/2011
  - c) Natural Disaster Funding
  - d) Natural disaster/storm damage repair works

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**ITEM 1 - APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	To allow tendering of apologies for Councillors not present.
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	GOVERNANCE - Procedural
<b>Annexures</b>	Nil
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**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

A call for apologies is to be made.

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT any apologies tendered be accepted and the necessary leave of absence be granted.

**ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	To allow an opportunity for Councillors to declare an interest in any items to be determined at this meeting.
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	GOVERNANCE - Procedural
<b>Annexures</b>	Nil
<b>File Number</b>	\\My Workspace\Business Paper Report Directory\Working Reports InfoCouncil 2010 - 218261

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

A call for declarations of interest.

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Declarations of Interest be noted.

**ITEM 3 - DECLARATIONS OF POLITICAL DONATIONS**

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	To allow an opportunity for Councillors to declare any political donations received.
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	GOVERNANCE - Procedural
<b>Annexures</b>	Nil
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**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

A call for Political Donations.

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT any Political Donations be noted.

**ITEM 4 - MAYORAL MINUTE**

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	Mayoral Minute regarding the Queensland Floods and increase in Rural Fire Service Contributions for Council's consideration
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Yes - potential major impact on budget due to increase in RFS contributions
<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	Governance
<b>Annexures</b>	1. RFS Contribution Increases.pdf
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**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Mayor has provided the following report for Council's consideration.

**MAYORAL MINUTE**

Councillors, I wish to submit the following Mayoral Minute in relation to two matters being:

1. Queensland floods
2. Rural Fire Service extraordinary increase in contributions

### Queensland Floods

Councillors would be acutely aware of the disastrous floods that have swept through Queensland during December and January and, more particularly, the unfortunate loss of lives. The situation in Queensland certainly puts into perspective the damage and inconvenience that we have suffered right across the Cabonne area.

When we experienced the impact of major flooding in Molong and Eugowra in 2005, the then Mayor, John Farr, launched The Mayor's Flood Appeal which saw some \$211,969.35 donated, which included some \$59,000 from Council's throughout NSW. This amount includes a donation of \$928.42 received late 2006 which has been held in trust and is available for distribution.

In Queensland's time of need I believe it appropriate for Cabonne Council to consider a donation to the Flood Appeal and believe that an amount of \$2,000, which would include the late donation unallocated in Trust, would be appropriate. It would also seem appropriate to invite other Councils to consider a similar donation.

Council staff in the Molong and Cudal offices are also making donations through their monthly Muffy Day charity event and staff BBQ.

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), through the LGSA has advised that the best way for individuals, families and businesses to help affected communities is by making a financial donation to the Premiers Flood Appeal.

### Rural Fire Service – Extraordinary Increase in Contributions

Council has received preliminary advice from the Rural Fire Service of an extraordinary increase in the contributions for:

- a) 2010/2011 (retrospective increase)
- b) 2011/2012

For Council's information the allocation in the 2010/2011 budget for contributions for the Rural Fire Service amounted to \$152,031 and was advised to the RFS in August 2010. Consideration of the estimates resulted in the RFS advising Council that the allocation had increased to \$156,432.

Council subsequently received telephone advice on 5 January that the allocation for 2010/2011 would be in the order of \$220,000. At a meeting attended by the General Manager on 12/1/11 the amount was estimated to be increased to \$226,601 which represents a 49.2% increase on Council's budget allocation or some \$74,570 extra. This increase would account for an approximate 1% rate increase across the board in Cabonne. When it is considered that the allowable increase for 2011/2012 is 2.8% this obviously presents some difficulty for Council.

The bulk of the increase in Council's contributions appear to cover 'Program Charges' which relate to Head Office and Statewide expenses which, on current advice, now amount to \$2,204,227 for the Canobolas Zone (Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra and Orange).

The increase in RFS contributions has occurred generally across NSW, although inexplicably a small number of Councils have received a reduction.

My concerns with the situation are that:

1. There has been no prior consultation by the RFS of this significant increase.
2. The retrospectivity of the payment for 2010/2011.
3. There has been no consideration of the ability of Councils to pay the increase.
4. The impact on reduction of other bush fire expenses such as tankers, equipment and maintenance expenses etc.
5. The impact on not only the current year's budget 2010/2011 but also the 2011/2012 and future budgets.
6. This is a further example of major cost shifting onto local Councils and ratepayers.

This issue is also being considered by the LGSA who have issued an urgent circular to all Councils. A copy of the correspondence is attached for Council's information. Council should note the issues raised by the Association and the actions they have taken.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT:

1. Council observe a minute's silence for the victims and their families of

the Queensland flooding.

2. Council donate an amount of \$2,000 to the Queensland Flood Relief Appeal.
3. Based on the information currently before Council, that Council withhold any additional Rural Fire Service contributions above the 2010/2011 budget allocations as previously approved by Council.
4. That a further report on the Rural Fire Service contributions be presented to Council's February Meeting.

## **ITEM 5 - FLOOD AND STORM NATURAL DISASTER 2010**

### **REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	Provide Council with an interim report on the impact the flood and storm events of December 2010 will have on Councils Operations.
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Natural Disaster funding
<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	Operations
<b>Annexures</b>	Nil
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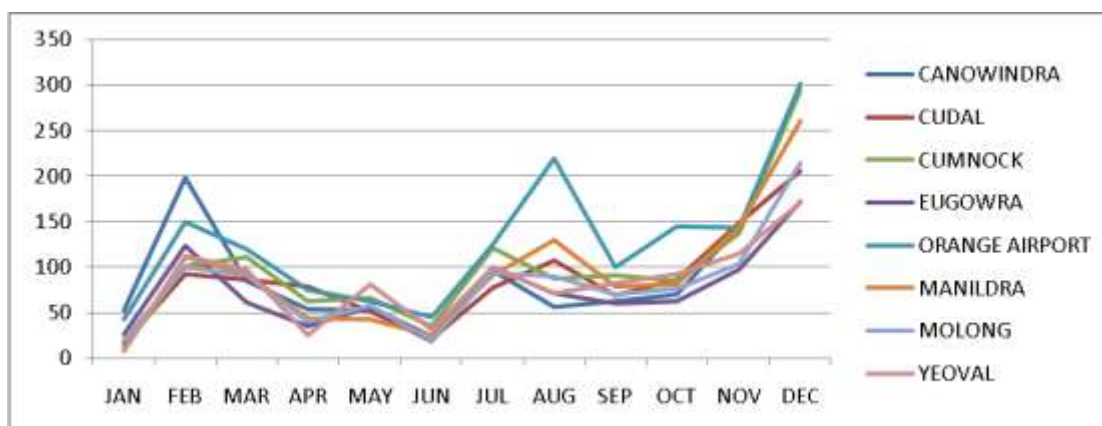
## **DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES' REPORT**

### **A NATURAL DISASTER**

Council would be aware the Minister for Emergency Services the Hon. Steve Whan MP announced Natural Disaster Assistance for the Cabonne LGA for the flood and storm events of December 2010.

Significant and unseasonal rainfall during the later part of Winter and Autumn 2010 caused river systems and catchments in the Cabonne area to become saturated resulting in a series of flood watches in the region. From mid August to late December there were no fewer than 20 flood events in the Cabonne area. In December alone there were three significant events where the SES issued Major flood warnings for river and creek systems in the Cabonne LGA.

### **RAINFALL CABONNE LGA**



### **NATURAL DISASTER FUNDING**

SES has advised the series of storms and floods in December are all under the one declaration of Natural Disaster.

With the announcement of Natural Disaster funding council is eligible to seek financial assistance for the restoration of public infrastructure caused by flood and storms. The RTA acts as Treasury's agent in managing disaster repairs to road infrastructure. This includes Crown roads where council is engaged to carry out the work as contractors.

Under the conditions of the RTA's Natural Disaster Arrangements 2008, Section 4 **Provision of Funds**, council will receive:  
Emergency works – 100% of approved actual costs  
Regional Roads – 100% of assessed value of work  
Local Roads – 75% of assessed cost up to \$116,000 and 100% thereafter.  
(Councils excess = \$29,000).

Financial assistance is for restoration of the asset to the pre-storm or flood condition and does not cover improvements or damage due to saturation. It is likely that Council will need to direct funds from the existing road maintenance area and the "additional" asset renewal funds to address these. It is not intended to redirect funds from the capital works or construction program to the flood and storm damage repair works.

The interim damages assessment is over \$5m, however this figure is expected to increase significantly as a result of the Boxing Day Storm.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

#### a) Council's Involvement

Council's activities are coordinated with the SES which is the combat agency for flood and storm events. Council's Director of Engineering and Technical Services is the Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) whose position



is to assist the combat agency in securing resources to assist in the management of the emergency.

Cabonne Council's Disaster Recovery Plan (Displan) describes council's role in an emergency as follows:

- Provide manpower, plant and equipment as available and required to assist in dealing with an incident or emergency.
- Promote expenditure and support to:
  - Engineers functional services;
  - Health Services functional services;
  - Environmental Services functional services.
- Support recovery operations.
- Provide liaison officer/executive support to the Local Emergency Operations (LEOC) Centre and Controller (LEOCON).
- Coordinate engineering resources associated with disaster response and recovery operations.
- Clear and re-establish roads and bridges.

Council staff have worked closely with SES and other agencies involved in dealing with the many emergencies associated with the floods and storms. Eugowra experienced three floods being evacuated twice, causing road closure and property damage. Similarly, Molong experienced two floods causing road closure and property damage in less than 12 hours.

The most recent of the storms on Boxing Day, stretched Council's available resources to the limit and called on all staff on the emergency contact list. The Manager of Operations posted a list of employees who indicated availability over the Christmas period prior to the Christmas break. All calls to Council's emergency (after hours) number [63923234] were dealt with by the duty officer who then assigned or directed the request to the appropriate Overseer.

The Boxing Day storms resulted in Major flooding of five river systems;

1. Bell River Water over the new bridge on the Euchareena Road causing damage to approaches and bridge infrastructure. Damage to roads and causeways.
2. Belubula River - 5.6m Closing the Main Road to Cowra and Eugowra
3. Mandagery River Closing the Orange to Parkes Road at the Monument and Flash Jacks. Damage to roads and causeways.
4. Boree Creek Flooding of property in Cudal
5. Molong Creek Two peaks (4.0m at 11am and 4.1m at 1am) Closure of Mitchell Highway and flooding of Commercial property.

Boree Hollow Creek also flooding councils depot and closure of local roads.

The emergency works/requests resulting from the Boxing Day storms were handled by Councils Overseers who were able to call on 10 employees to carryout emergency works.

The SES as the combat agency for Flood and Storms has the overall control of operations in the response to emergencies resulting from these events including coordination of evacuation and welfare of effected communities.

b) Local Emergency Management Committee

The Local Emergency Management Committee de-brief for the Boxing Day flood and storm events was held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January. The SES provided a brief overview of the emergency stating that over 100mm of rain fell in the Orange area. There was little warning from the BOM and flood watches were not issued in the normal early warning timeframes.

SES have indicated a need to look at establishing Flood Wardens for areas not covered by SES units including Yeoval, Cumnock, and areas in the east of the shire. This may call on RFS units to play a more formal role in flood emergencies.

Traffic control and road closures remains a concern and need for additional resources to be found for manning road closures. Council to look at purchasing Variable Message Boards (VMB). Council also to discuss with RTA erection of permanent "drop-down" flood signs for closure of the Escort Way and MR6.

SES also advised that the Canowindra Unit had difficulty in reaching the after hours telephone no. This may have been due to the number of calls coming through, Council to look into the answering service and any improvements that can be made.

Community Services have concern with establishing evacuation sites in Eugowra, would like to see the site established in Parkes. However SES have concern with this making reference to the 2005 floods.

NSW RFS commended on the resources and effort in reducing flood damages in Molong, 31 personnel assisting the SES.

In general the SES praised the efforts of the agencies assisting in the emergency and reiterated the need to inform people needing assistance in flood and storm events to use the SES 132500 number.

**COUNCIL'S 2010/2011 WORKS PROGRAM & NATURAL DISASTER AND STORM DAMAGE REPAIR**

The following information is designed to give Council an initial overview of the situation in addition to the 2010/2011 Works Program and Repair Works. More detailed assessment will be carried out as staff are now returning to work and discussions commence in earnest with the RTA. A more detailed report will be presented to the February Works Committee for consideration and determination by Council at its February meeting. In the interim, it is proposed to address the Works Program and Repair Works in a multi-faceted approach through:

- Attention to emergency works.
- Continuation of 2010/2011 Works Program – Capital and Construction Projects.
- Resheeting and general repairs.

a) Natural Disaster Works Program And Recovery

Following the Ministers Natural Disaster declaration in early December, council staff began inspection of road and drainage infrastructure in areas affected by flood water and storms. Council submitted an interim damages report mid December as required by the Department of Emergency Services. However, since the Natural Disaster declaration there has been a number of significant events in the Cabonne LGA. Each event has caused staff to do a re-assessment of roads as well as assessment of roads not previously affected. Inspection of the road network is continuing and should be completed by the end of January, early February barring further storms.

The interim damages report for flood events of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December reports an estimated 110kms of gravel roads requiring gravel re-sheeting and removal of silt from table drains. This figure is expected to grow when assessment of the Boxing Day storms is completed.

The priority for natural disaster works is:

1. Continue inspection and assessment of damaged infrastructure including roads, causeways, drainage and urban services.
2. Carryout emergency works to roads and drainage infrastructure to restore access to isolated properties. A priority to be given to school bus routes.
3. Reinstatement of roads and drainage infrastructure to pre-storm/flood condition.

The emergency works and reinstatement of drainage structures is in progress with expenditure to the 24/12/10 being:

Local Roads -	\$162,000
Regional Roads -	\$133,000
State Roads -	\$44,000

It is noted the above works does not include re-sheeting of gravel roads with the exception of isolated areas where reinstatement was required as emergency or access situations.

The gravel re-sheeting task is expected to take approximately three months to complete utilising two gangs with two graders in each gang working in tandem. The limiting factor in the daily productivity for gravel re-sheeting is the haulage of road base. Council's capacity to haul material is 720 cubic metres utilising all trucks and dogs. An additional four truck and dogs will be required (contract) to meet the daily requirement.

(Calculations based on a nominal 20 km haul, 6 loads per day, 12 t per truck unit and density of 2t/m<sup>3</sup>.)

Gravel re-sheeting is not expected to commence until early February due to the areas adjacent to the road being saturated and unsuitable for mitre and table drain works.

b) Resource Allocation And Impact On Councils Works Program

The flood and storm events in December and the extreme wet weather leading up to these storm events has had a significant impact on councils resources and the scheduled works program. Already capital works have been delayed due to either re-allocation of resources to emergency works or unfavourable weather conditions. Council allocated an additional \$750,000 to asset renewal in October 2010 to meet the additional work effort required to repair damage to road pavements caused by the saturated conditions. Expenditure of the additional asset renewal allocation is \$529K ytd. The flood and storm damage works has also deferred this activity, however it will continue when resources become available. The RTA also allocated an additional \$500,000 for rehabilitation works on the State road network.

Major capital works that were scheduled to start in November/December have been setback, the projects now rescheduled for February/March include;

- Burrendong Way Blackspot (Mulyan intersection)
- Pauls Lane Canowindra
- Gaskill Street Canowindra
- White Rocks Road

Council's works program will be re-visited and reported to the February Works Committee. An interim works program and allocation of resources has been developed to address the natural disaster works and allow continuation of the scheduled works program.

**Capital Works – Full construction gang**

**Bitumen Roads Rehabilitation and REPAIR** – Full construction gang  
**Natural Disaster Works** – 2 x Gravel re-sheeting gangs with additional grader for table drain work and form-up.

**Maintenance Grading** – 2 x maintenance graders.

Discussions with our WBC Alliance partners indicate that they have also been affected by the storms and floods and are not in a position at this time to provide additional resources.

It should be noted that contract equipment and resources will be used as necessary to supplement Councils own fleet and resources.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT:

1. Council note the Natural Disaster report and approve in principle the allocation of resources for Capital works, Bitumen Road Rehabilitation, Natural Disaster Works and Maintenance Grading.
2. Further reports be presented to the February Works Committee and February Ordinary Meeting.

**URGENT-----To all Mayors and General Managers ----- URGENT**

**Emergency Services Contributions 2010/2011**

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The Associations have been following this issue, which by and large represents yet another massive cost shift to Local Government, closely.

The issues are as we see them are as follows:

- The total increase in RFS contributions across all councils is over **\$4.6 million**, increasing from around **\$25.3m in 2009/10** to **\$30.1 million for 2010/11** an increase of **18.9%**.
- According to the RFS, a large proportion of the increase is the result of the NSW Government's response to the findings of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.
- Because of the complex and localised RFS budgetary process there are wide variations between councils. Some have exceptionally high increases, while some actually have decreases and the balance are in between. Variations range from increases over 100% down to reductions of 25%.
- There appear to be numerous anomalies, discrepancies and inequities.
- Final RFS budget allocations to councils were not advised to councils until mid December 2010, half way through the financial year. Sign off was delayed pending determination of the governments response to the findings of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.
- The average increase of 18.9% was much higher than could have been reasonably anticipated and many individual council increases are beyond comprehension.
- Late advice and the scale of increases means that they were not factored into council budgets. Increases will have a severe impact on many council budgets necessitating cuts in other areas.
- There was a lack of consultation on the levels of increase.
- It represents a major cost shift onto Local Government.
- This situation highlights the need for the current anomalous RFS/Emergency services funding arrangements to be scrapped and replaced with a broad based property levy as advocated by the LGSA. Such systems work effectively in other states such as Queensland, SA and WA.

**Actions Taken**

The Associations have sought urgent meetings with the:

- The RFS Commissioner,
- The office of the Minister for Emergency Services, Steve Whan, and
- The Opposition Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Melinda Pavey

All 3 have agreed to meet, meetings are being scheduled ASAP.

Further information will be provided to all councils as it becomes available.

Should you wish to contact the Associations about this matter, please contact:

**Shaun McBride**

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