

Natural Disaster Financial Assistance

Bulletin 17, 2 June 2026

NDFA Bulletin 17

The Bulletin is sent out on a regular basis and includes updates and reminders around the Victorian Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and the CMS (Claims Management System). It is emailed to all Council CMS registered users, Council contacts and Council's general email.

End of Financial Year Reminders

As we approach the end of the financial year, a reminder to:

- **submit 2025-26 claims by 31 August 2026** with the exception of claims relating to approved certified estimates. However, where possible, please submit the claims well before this final date to avoid claim spikes and assist with the disbursement of claim assessments; and
- **review estimates** for all events based on the latest information for the event/s.

Fuel vulnerability

The Commonwealth has recently provided advice to all jurisdictions that where a certified estimate has already been approved, that any impacts with the recent fuel increases is to be managed within the approved projects escalation and contingencies. Fuel increases do not meet the special circumstances criteria outlined in the DRFA for a variation in the approved project value. We will continue to monitor ongoing impacts in Victoria.

CMS generated emails relating to sub-clause estimates

Councils will have recently been receiving emails requesting that sub-clause estimates on the CMS Portal be reviewed and where necessary, updated with renewed event information following impact assessments as well as to align with the actual eligible expenditure Council incurred.

These emails are triggered automatically and are sent on a monthly basis to staff who have access to the CMS Portal. Due to the importance of this information, these emails will continue to be sent as a reminder/request.

Events marked as **'Complete'** on the CMS are **active** events and can/are to be updated if required. No further action is required for older events which show 'closed' status on the CMS.

Estimates are not funding commitments and can be updated at any time for all sub-clause estimates listed under the **'Sub-Clause Estimates'** module on the CMS.

Timely updates of the estimates assist with confirming that the Commonwealth's minimum event financial threshold will be met, budgeting and plan appropriate assessor resourcing requirements.

Reports are available on the CMS which lists the claims (actual expenditure) to assist with the estimate update process. There are short two-minute videos available under the 'User Guide' tile on the Home page of the portal, and a Cheat Sheet is also attached. However, if there are any queries at all, please don't hesitate to contact the NDFA Team at: NDFA@justice.vic.gov.au

Claims supporting documentation structure










One of the main aims for the Assessor Team is to progress Council claims through the assessment process efficiently to enable timely reimbursement. To support this process, it is recommended that 'Invoices' and the 'General Ledger' be saved to the one folder, and another folder for 'Photos'.

To assist with photo storage and requirements, a zip folder has been created containing the sub-folders applicable for 'Immediate Reconstruction Works' and 'Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets' (REPA) claims.



This zip folder can also be used for other claim types, deleting the folders not applicable for that claim type. It is worth highlighting that there is a limit of 2GB per zip folder.

A link to the zip folder has been provided in the Table below and is also available under the ‘**Toolbox**’ on the website. **Please do not rename the folders.**

Zip Folder (will open your Download directory)	Contains the following sub-folders along with a Photo Report Template and How To document
GL-3-Photo Zip Folder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  01_Pre-Event_Photos  02_Post-Disaster_Photos  03_TempRepair_MakeSafe_Photos  04_Damage_Monitoring_Photos  05_Construction_Photos  06_Completed_Works_Photos  07_Reimpacted_Location_Photos  QGIS Compatible Photo Report template  Victorian DRFA How to Sheet 2 - Category B Photographic evidence - July 2024

Standing Items

DRFA User Reference Group (URG)

These meetings are a way to provide valuable feedback to the NDFA Team on both the CMS Portal as well as the DRFA Guidelines, as to how improvements can be made to better support Councils. It also provides an opportunity to share challenges and experiences, and to network amongst councils (community of practice). The time commitment is around 1 hour per month. If your Council is currently not represented in the Victorian DRFA User Reference Group, we encourage that you join the conversation by sending an email to chad.ryan@erv.vic.gov.au or ndfa@justice.vic.gov.au to be included on the invite list.

Training on DRFA Guidelines and Eligibility

A reminder that group training sessions on the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements is available for all Council staff involved with the DRFA process, and is extended beyond the registered CMS User/s. The group should include a cross section of staff involved with the DRFA activities including those from the following Council Teams: emergency management, asset management, engineering/infrastructure, parks, depot and finance. Training sessions are approximately 2 hours in length. To arrange group training, please contact Lyndee Peters at: Lyndee.peters@transport.vic.gov.au

New Users to the CMS

Councils wishing to add a New User to the CMS portal should email NDFA@justice.vic.gov.au and the form will be emailed. Please note the form will need to be signed by Council’s CEO before access can be arranged. CEO is required because the documentation is lodged directly onto the portal on behalf of CEO/Council. Access to the CMS has been capped at five (5) users per Council.

Previous versions of the Bulletin

Previous versions of the Bulletin are now available on the website at the following link: <https://www.vic.gov.au/ndfa-bulletin-library-councils>