

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE RESPONSE TO
MAJOR FLOODING ACROSS NEW SOUTH WALES IN 2022**

Response to Question Taken on Notice - Mayor of Hawkesbury Cllr Patrick Conolly

Question:

How many evacuation routes like that do you have in the council area? (Refer page 9 of Transcript)

Response:

There are currently eight major regional evacuation routes identified for the evacuation of Hawkesbury residents during flood events, including:

- Pitt Town Route
- Windsor Road Route
- Hawkesbury Valley Way
- Richmond Road route
- The Northern Road Route
- Llandilo Road Route
- Londonderry Road Route
- Castlereagh Road Route

These major regional evacuation routes are a combination of local roads (including local roads within Hawkesbury, Blacktown and Penrith Local Government Areas), access roads through National Park, and state controlled roads.

Of primary concern for Council and the community is the Pitt Town Route and the issues experienced with this evacuation route during the March 2022 flood event. It should also be noted that at the time of providing this response the Hawkesbury Local Government Area is currently experiencing a further flood event where flood levels have exceeded the March 2022 flood event, and the issues associated with this evacuation route have been exacerbated.

The Pitt Town Route utilises a combination of the local road network and access roads through the Scheyville National Park. When not in use as an evacuation route, this local road network and access roads meets the service needs, function and capacity requirements. However, when used as an evacuation route, the function and capacity is increased significantly and has proved to be substandard to say the least.

The increased use of this evacuation route has been a consequence of the increase in urban residential development within Pitt Town that was approved by the NSW State Government as a Part 3A approval for the Pitt Town development. To date there has been no significant State Government funding to improve the function and capacity of this evacuation route commensurate with the increased use of the route from the NSW Government approved Pitt Town development. Additionally, from the Community's perspective there is uncertainty about who is responsible for the operation and maintenance of this evacuation route, and put quite simply the Pitt Town community deserves a safe and reliable evacuation route to use when this community is most vulnerable and in need.

In terms of the other major regional evacuation routes, it should be noted that as devastating as the March 2022 (13.8 metres at Windsor) and now July 2022 (13.93 metres at Windsor) flood events have been, they have still only represented either a 1:20 year flood or slightly over a 1:20 year flood event. The 1:100 year flood event at Windsor is 17.3 metres (over 3 metres higher) and the 1867 flood of record at 19.7 metres (almost 6 metres higher). As such the other major evacuation routes have not had the same pressures and been tested to the same degree as the Pitt Town Route.

It is noted that the NSW Government through Transport for NSW is currently undertaking the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Road Resilience Program. I strongly urge for any available funding to be allocated towards providing safe and reliable evacuation routes from the Hawkesbury Local Government Area, particularly the Pitt Town Route.

I would also take this opportunity to highlight that the NSW Government proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam by 14 metres for flood mitigation purposes, whilst not preventing flooding, would significantly decrease the severity of flooding within the Hawkesbury Local Government Area and decrease the pressure on evacuation routes.