

8.2 MAYORAL MINUTE -

File Number: M3
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Annexures: Nil

MAYORAL MINUTE

Councillors

I submit below a Supplementary Report to my Mayoral Minute:

1. Official Rain Gauge – Coonamble Aerodrome

For some time now the official rain gauge located at Coonamble Airport has not been registering rainfall readings and, although its maintenance is the responsibility of the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), Council staff inspect the unit from time to time.

I believe the issue has been under investigation following action by staff to clean the unit being unsuccessful. Staff has been in contact with the BOM, but to date no action has been taken by that agency. With current weather conditions and those forecast for months to come it is disappointing that the BOM is not taking responsibility for the upgrading of this gauge. The Bureau has advised that its forecasts and weather warning service has been designed so that it is not reliant on any one piece of equipment, but in my opinion that's not the point! When a community experiences severe hail and storm damage to premises and property, affected residents lodge insurance claims which are assessed on the BOM weather records.

There is an article in this week's Coonamble Times drawing attention to this matter and I would like to thank the Editor for exposing the situation we are currently trying to negotiate with the Bureau.

In my opinion, not having access to reliable rain fall recordings is unsatisfactory on so many levels. The recordings are paramount for historical purposes and the day-to-day management of any emergency situations that may arise from heavy rains causing flash flooding

With recent unseasonal, ongoing and excessive rainfall it is paramount that the gauge be repaired to register correct rainfalls, particularly as the BOM is forecasting widespread flooding and more heavy rainfalls.

In the BOM's recently released long-range forecast the country can expect a severe weather season with October to April being the peak time for flooding, severe thunderstorms and other severe weather events.

I suggest that Council make contact with the Bureau of Meteorology requesting urgent action to have the official rain gauge repaired so that during times of heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding Council and the emergency services can make informed decisions regarding the safety of residents and property.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council contact the bureau of Meteorology requesting urgent action to have the official rain gauge at Coonamble Aerodrome repaired so that during times of heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding Council and the emergency services can make informed decisions regarding the safety of residents and property.