
Local Roads Grants

As a component of the financial assistance grants provided by the Commonwealth Government, local roads grants are an important form of support for Victorian councils.

The Victorian Commission has historically recommended the allocation of these grants based on a formula that considers the length of local roads each council is responsible for, the traffic volumes carried on those roads, and various factors reflecting local characteristics, including climate and soil type conditions.

This methodology requires the annual collection of road length and traffic volume data from all councils. In addition to being a significant impost on councils, the Commission holds concerns about the robustness and consistency of the data provided.

Following extensive research and consideration, the Commission intends to move away from an allocation based on road length and traffic volume information provided directly by councils to one that draws on road length and road-purpose hierarchy data sourced from Vicmap.

This project will require a significant improvement in the accuracy of the local roads data held on Vicmap. However, it is anticipated that this work will deliver several major benefits. Councils will no longer be required to provide separate road length and annual traffic information to the Commission. Additionally, the project will provide higher quality and more accurate data for road users, including emergency services and the freight industry, as well as offering councils data to support asset reinstatement claims made after natural disaster events.

Local Roads Data Reconciliation Pilot

To support the transition to the new data collection method, the Commission recently completed the Local Roads Data Reconciliation pilot project. This project reconciles local road length data collected by councils for the Commission with corresponding local road length data in Vicmap.

The pilot project, which involved five rural councils, was completed with significant success. Undertaken by Vicmap Spatial Services (VSS), it resulted in a data model that will assist in ensuring the consistency and reliability of the report metrics provided to the Commission on local roads. The data model is fully integrated with Vicmap through the [Vicmap Transport \(land.vic.gov.au\)](https://land.vic.gov.au) layer.

The pilot involved workshops with participating councils to reconcile their local road datasets with Vicmap's dataset. It included a thorough analysis and a comprehensive consultation process with the councils involved.

Councils' local road responsibilities were captured, and authority codes representing their ownership and responsibility within their municipality were assigned and added to the Vicmap Transport dataset. Using these assigned authority codes and additional analysis of segmentations and road naming conventions, Vicmap has extracted road lengths for council owned and responsible roads reportable to the Commission.

Many thanks to the five councils that agreed to participate in and complete this valuable pilot: **Buloke, Loddon, Northern Grampians, Towong, and Yarriambiack.**

Transition history

Over the next three-four years, councils will work towards reconciling their roads data with the Vicmap database, which will become the data source for the Commission.

To assist councils in providing local roads data in this new format, a specific allocation from the local roads grant will be provided in the 2024-25 financial year for data support. This allocation is part of the total local roads grant pool and will be allocated based on a base amount of \$10,000 per council, with the balance distributed in proportion to the total length of local roads in each council.

The allocation will assist all remaining councils to proceed to the first stage of the LRDRP. Each council will be asked to assign Vicmap authority codes according to an agreed road classification within the Vicmap Transport Layer and report this in the VLGGC Annual Data Return in a new tab – VGC3+.

VGC3+ allows for the collection of road classification data, including urban/rural splits and strategic routes in the [Vicmap road classifications for local roads](#). Bridge data will also be collected in length of each road classification.

The data is requested to be categorised into urban/rural splits, strategic routes, and total maintenance expenditure.

Councils can elect which year of the next three-four years they wish to undertake their transfer and reconciliation process. The transition to Vicmap data will happen over a period of time, and it is expected that allocations will not be fully based on the new data sets until 2028.

In addition to eliminating the need for councils to complete local roads returns, this initiative will achieve a reliable and centralised local road data source for the entire state.
