

MEDIA RELEASE

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The Hole Truth: Victoria's crumby roads

Fort-eight per cent the state's roads are in poor or very poor condition, so says the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.

How can Victoria's roads be this bad? We are supposedly a wealthy country? Why doesn't that wealth result in decent roads?

Farming out road construction to the cheapest bidder may look good on state budgets but real cost is shifted to motorists, costing us millions in tyres, wheels, shocks, strut repairs and broken windscreens, even four-wheel drives! Where is the incentive to build roads that last?

A pothole tragically took the life of an unsuspecting motor bike rider this month. And it's not hard to imagine. We all know the terror of swerving suddenly to avoid a pothole. It's not just the insubstantial road building techniques, such as loose crushed rock without a concrete binder, it's how the technique is applied. For example, is care given to the curvature required to ensure water runs off?

When contractors are making profit from deterioration, we are bound to get a substandard product. We need experts in control of building out roads. And we should be using those experts, not farming out construction for public works to the cheapest bidder.

Necessary services and foundations, without the availability of competition, should not be privatised.

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