



PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 8, 2026

ARC Justice report highlights insurance affordability pressures

A [new report](#) from ARC Justice, launched this morning (**Note: May 8**) to more than 100 people online, shows regional Victorians are being priced out of insurance, with some forced to choose between basic living costs and staying covered.

Impossible Decisions: Community insights into access to affordable insurance in north central Victoria is based on 23 in-depth interviews, 79 survey responses, community forums in Shepparton and Mooroopna and ongoing conversations with people across flood-affected communities since the 2022 floods.

It finds insurance affordability has become a daily pressure for many households in the region, with costs now out of reach for a growing number of people. About 40% of those ARC Justice spoke to were uninsured or under-insured for flood, with a further 9% unsure if they had cover at all.

***“Do I go without food for three days a month to have insurance?
Can’t do that. Insurance is becoming a luxury.” – Interviewee***

ARC Justice CEO Damian Stock said the findings show a shift that is spreading beyond those on low incomes. “People aren’t opting out of insurance. They’re being priced out,” he says.

“We’re hearing from working families, older people and small business owners who simply can’t make the numbers work anymore.” The report shows premiums are rising sharply and inconsistently, with people reporting large variations between insurers and little transparency about how prices are set.

***“My premium went from \$2,000 to \$28,000 overnight
and I didn’t have any claim.” – Interviewee***

For many, going without insurance isn’t a choice but the end point of sustained financial pressure. “Without cover, people are constantly living in anxiety ... every time it rains.”

The report finds the impact extends well beyond individual households. As more people lose or scale back coverage, the effects are spreading across communities, such as rising financial stress and mental health impacts and pressure on small businesses and local services. “What starts as a household cost issue doesn’t stay there,” he says. “It affects housing stability, local economies and the long-term shape of towns.”

Stock says the findings point to a broader shift in how risk is being carried. “What we’re seeing is risk moving away from systems and onto individuals and communities. In high-risk areas, where insurance matters most, it’s becoming hardest to afford.”

The report outlines 20 community-driven ideas to improve access to affordable insurance, increase transparency and strengthen housing resilience. “These are grounded in what people are living through. They show there are ways forward, but it will take co-ordinated action across government, insurers and the housing system,” he says.

ARC Justice has already amplified these community insights through its contribution to the national [Housing Resilience Action Plan 2030](#) and will continue working across sectors and with government to ensure the experiences of disaster-affected communities, and their ideas for change, are central to any reforms.

About ARC Justice

ARC Justice is a rights-based, social justice organisation incorporating the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre in Bendigo, the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre in Shepparton and Housing Justice, a specialist renter support program. ARC provides legal and tenancy support services across 13 local government areas in central and northern Victoria, with a team of close to 70 staff working to advocate for and uphold the rights of rural and regional Victorians.

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