

That Dáil Éireann:

Notes that:

- Storm Éowyn made landfall in Ireland on January 23rd 2025 breaking all-time record wind speeds.
- The scale of damage and disruption to transport, energy, water, and telecommunications and internet services was unprecedented, exposing the fragility of our infrastructure, in the face of an ever-worsening climate crisis.

Further notes that:

- The Humanitarian Assistance Scheme (HAS), was activated on the 23rd January 2025 to assist all those affected across the country by Storm Éowyn.
- The scheme was intended to offer immediate supports including providing for food or shelter (Stage One); replacement of white goods and other essential household items (Stage two); or providing supports to ensure the home or accommodation of the applicant was brought back to a habitable condition in the aftermath of a storm (Stage Three).
- Those right across the country were encouraged to apply for the scheme, with the Taoiseach assuring the public that the scheme was *“open to those in need”*.
- Minister for Enterprise Peter Burke assured the public that “The government remains committed to supporting businesses through this recovery period and beyond. We will continue engaging with the business community to monitor emerging needs and ensure appropriate responses are in place.”

Notes with concern that:

- Some 768,000 homes, farms and businesses were left without electricity in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn, with power only being restored to all homes by February 12th.
- Some 270,000 homes were left without internet access in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn with EirGrid taking over two weeks to restore broadband to every affected customer.
- Figures indicate that damage to households will total almost €112m, while commercial claims will run to just under €122m.
- No humanitarian assistance was provided to businesses or farms.
- The Humanitarian Assistance Scheme appeared to have closed for an unspecified period of time, and without informing the public.
- Thus far, of the 133,774 applications from people in need made to the Humanitarian Assistance scheme, only 45,744 have been paid out. That is to say, only 34% of applications to the Humanitarian Assistance scheme were ever paid out.
- Differing reports suggest that Stage One claims were compensated on an ad-hoc case by case basis with no clear instructions on what items merited compensation.
- To this day, the HAS has only paid out €10.5 million in financial support to applicants. This is blatantly insufficient given the extent of property damage in the wake of the storm.

Commends:

- the work of our frontline ESB workers, EirGrid workers and Uisce Éireann workers together with emergency responders, carers, logistics and supply chain workers and community hub volunteers, volunteers from local GAA clubs and men and women's sheds and other voluntary organisations who worked to relieve the effects of the storm.

Condemns Government for:

- Failing to provide clear instructions to departmental staff dealing with HAS application forms to determine what was and was not covered under the scheme.
- Closing the scheme without informing the public.

Calls on the Government to:

- Provide clarity as to the duration of the scheme's application window
- Expand the HAS to businesses and farmers.
- Ensure a thorough and timely fulfilment of reviews submitted by HAS applicants who have been refused or are not satisfied with the amount awarded.
- Put forward a comprehensive Climate Adaptation strategy to ensure all communities will be climate resistant by 2050.

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