



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Minister for
Transport and Main Roads

Our ref MC7086

Your ref: 289-04

17 AUG 2004

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

**Re: Petition No 735 - Widen the Diamantina Developmental Road
near the Ward River Bridge**

I refer to the petition lodged by Mr Vaughan Johnson MP, Member for Gregory on 15 June 2004 in relation to the widening of the section of the Diamantina Developmental Road between Charleville and Quilpie towards the Ward River Bridge.

Officers of the Department of Main Roads met with community representatives on site on 29 March 2004 following the accident on 3 March 2004. After that meeting, Main Roads conducted a safety audit of the bridge and approaches. That audit recommended some immediate safety improvements and long-term actions.

Main Roads engaged Murweh Shire Council to complete the immediate improvements to the sight distance on the western approach to the bridge by clearing some vegetation, removing the tops of some earth banks and flattening the batters of the road. This work has improved the roadside for drivers.

Other safety improvements that Main Roads has completed consist of warning signs and the installation of 60km/h advisory speed signs on the approach to the bridge. Main Roads will carry out similar improvements at the nearby Woolshed Gully Bridge. This will remove any need to construct rumble strips to alert drivers of the approaching bridge.

Main Roads has spotted the road surface on the approaches to the Ward River Bridge for line marking. The line marking contractor will paint the new lines the next time their program brings them into the area. This will probably happen by the end of September this year.

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The long-term action to construct a new bridge and approaches will require significant funding. The current Roads Implementation Plan (RIP) does not include the replacement of the Ward River Bridge because Main Roads has higher priority works in the area. These works include widening the Charleville-Morven and Quilpie-Windorah Roads and completing the sealing of the Quilpie-Bundeena link.

Main Roads will nominate the construction of a new bridge over the Ward River for federal Blackspot funding when it calls for nominations in the next round. This will happen in February next year. The federal government announces successful projects by the following July-August.

~~Yours~~ sincerely

PAUL LUCAS MP

Minister for Transport and Main Roads