



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



**Queensland
Government**

Our ref: MC22655

**Minister for
Transport and Main Roads**

Your ref:

10 JUL 2006

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

Dear Mr Laurie *M-L*

Re: Petition No 657/06 - Pedestrian crossing on Cartwright Street, Ingham

I refer to a petition lodged by Mr Marc Rowell MP, Member for Hinchinbrook, in Parliament on 24 May 2006 about the pedestrian crossing on Cartwright Street, Ingham.

The state government is committed to improving road safety, including the safety of pedestrians, as shown through its development and implementation of the Queensland Road Safety Strategy and convening of a Queensland Road Safety Summit earlier this year.

I am advised that the intention of the Department of Main Roads is to replace the existing pedestrian crossing with safer access for pedestrians, by way of a pedestrian refuge. In general, pedestrian refuges have a better safety record than crossings, mainly because they reduce the walking distance and time that the pedestrian is exposed to the approaching traffic while crossing the road.

I am advised that research has also shown that pedestrian or "zebra" crossings encourage a false sense of security in some pedestrians, particularly the younger age groups. Some people believe that all vehicles will stop for them once they step onto the crossing and this is not always the case. Zebra crossings only operate effectively if both the motorist and the pedestrian exercise due care and attention to pedestrian safety on the crossing.

Pedestrian refuges remove the zebra crossing marking and emphasise an onus on the pedestrian to ensure that it is safe to cross the road before stepping off the kerb.

I am advised that the request to remove this pedestrian crossing, along with some others, was raised with Main Roads by a member of the public in Ingham. The request was based on concerns about a number of near misses at the nominated sites. Main Roads referred the matter to the Hinchinbrook Road Safety Advisory Committee (HRSAC), which includes representatives from Main Roads, local police, Hinchinbrook Shire Council and other community members. There was consensus within the committee that Main Roads should review the appropriateness of all of the pedestrian crossings in question.

Main Roads has reviewed traffic and pedestrian volumes and road safety statistics for each site. Main Roads personnel also observed each crossing to study both the usage and behaviour of pedestrians who used the crossing and motorists approaching the crossing. As stated earlier, zebra crossings only operate effectively and safely if both the motorist and the pedestrian exercise due care and attention to pedestrian safety on the crossing and observation indicated that this was not happening at these sites.

Based on the findings of this study, Main Roads recommended to the HRSAC that the pedestrian crossing in Cartwright Street be replaced with a pedestrian refuge. This recommendation was endorsed.

I am advised that Main Roads Northern District staff are confident that the installation of a pedestrian refuge will improve road safety and not reduce it. The district has given a commitment to the Ingham community not to remove the existing pedestrian crossing until the pedestrian refuge is installed. This is expected to occur by December 2006. The district staff will continue to consult with the Hinchinbrook Shire Council, the HRSAC and the key stakeholders in Cartwright Street, during the design and installation of the refuge, to ensure that it meets the local community's needs and contributes to improved safety for all road users.

Yours sincerely

PAUL LUCAS MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads