



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET3285-20
Your ref: A552498

22 May 2020

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

1 William Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 2644 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7300
Email transportandmainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Website www.tmr.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition number 3285-20 lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 22 April 2020 relating to the standard of roads in Queensland.

Queensland has Australia's longest state-controlled road network, comprising 33,369 kilometres of roads, including 4996 kilometres of the National Land Transport Network and 3119 bridges. Queensland's road network also faces a unique variety of circumstances, whether in the form of occasional cyclonic conditions, heavy rainfall, high and low temperatures and a variety of other factors which impact on the condition of the road network.

Queensland's dispersed population means moving people and goods across vast distances, between regions and cities, and between the state's key resource production areas and markets. While the majority of Queensland's population resides and works within south-east Queensland, roads in the Metropolitan region do not receive more funding than roads in regional Queensland.

In fact, in the current Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program (QTRIP) (2019–20 to 2022–23), a record \$23 billion has been invested in transport infrastructure over four years, supporting an estimated 21,500 direct jobs over the life of the program. Of this total investment, approximately \$14.5 billion, or more than 63 percent, has been allocated to deliver projects outside the Metropolitan region.

Petitioners will note that the current QTRIP comprises an extensive list of projects ranging from progressive sealing and upgrading of bridges on lower-trafficked roads, such as the Gulf Developmental Road in North Queensland, to paving and sealing sections of the Quilpie-Thargomindah Road in south-west Queensland.

We continue to plan and construct dual carriageways, where traffic demands warrant and funding permits. This includes the Bruce Highway between Brisbane and Cairns, where TMR is delivering a 15-year (2013–14 to 2027–28) \$12.6 billion jointly-funded (federal:state) program of works to improve safety, flood resilience and capacity. Major works either currently under construction or in the detailed planning phase include:

- Mackay Ring Road Stage 1 (\$497 million) – under construction
- Mackay Northern Access duplication (\$120 million) – under construction
- Rockhampton Northern Access Upgrade duplication (\$121 million) – under construction
- Rockhampton Ring Road, a \$1 billion project, which is scheduled to commence in 2021.
- Townsville Ring Road Stage 5 (\$230 million), with construction scheduled to commence in 2021

- Edmonton to Gordonvale south of Cairns (\$481 million) – under construction.

The Peninsula Developmental Road between Lakeland and the Rio Tinto Boundary at Weipa totals 527km, of which 155km was sealed prior to 2014. As part of the five-year, \$276 million Cape York Region Package (2014–15 to 2018–19), jointly-funded by the Australian and Queensland governments, a further 173km of the PDR between Lakeland and the Rio Tinto Boundary at Weipa was sealed, leaving around 200km of unsealed road.

Based on an 80:20 (federal:state) funding arrangement, a further \$190 million has been allocated over 10 years from 2019–20 towards further progressive sealing and bridge upgrades on the PDR. A new high-level bridge at Archer River to improve flood immunity at this location will also be completed. The level of investment in continuing to progressively seal sections of the PDR since 2014 demonstrates the strong commitment of both levels of government to completing this task in the foreseeable future.

In addition, our government's investment in regional roads includes delivery of almost \$1 billion in western road upgrades, with a plan to deliver a further \$800 million – almost \$2 billion in total – in road upgrades in western Queensland.

Our strong investment is also reflected in funding for maintenance. Our most recent four-year maintenance budget was more than \$4.1 billion, compared to \$2.7 billion in the last year of the Newman LNP Government.

Our government also restored funding levels for the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme after it was cut by the Newman LNP Government. That scheme provides \$70 million a year to councils so they can prioritise important roads and infrastructure upgrades for their local communities.

In the past week, our government has also announced an extra \$400 million in roads stimulus funding to accelerate delivery of key road projects across the state to assist with the COVID-19 economic recovery effort. This stimulus package includes \$200 million in funding to increase network resilience, widen and seal key freight routes, as well as upgrades of older bridges and culverts, which is a direct injection for regional jobs and will help support council crews.

Most of these road projects are in rural and regional Queensland and Mayors in those communities have welcomed the announcements.

Despite what has been suggested by your petitioners, the Palaszczuk Government has a very strong record of delivery and investment in Queensland's road network and our approach to increased investment (not cuts, like under the LNP) is what is needed now more than ever as we aim to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely



MARK BAILEY MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads