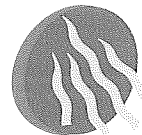




Hon Craig Wallace MP
Member for Thuringowa



**Queensland
Government**

Our ref: MC38125

Minister for Main Roads

Your ref: Petitions

23 JUN 2009

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

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

I refer to a petition number 1224-09 lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 19 May 2009, by the Honourable Jason O'Brien MP, Member for Cook, about the condition of the road between Almaden and Chillagoe, of which 16km remains unsealed.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is aware of residents' wishes for the remaining section of Burke Developmental Road to be sealed.

On 24 and 25 June 2009, I will be inspecting the section of Burke Developmental Road between Almaden and Chillagoe, as part of a road trip to inspect the inland road network between Charters Towers and Cairns. Departmental officers from Cairns and Townsville will accompany me on this trip, which includes visits to the towns of Georgetown, Almaden and Chillagoe.

The department advises the priority of its Regional Road Investment Strategy for Burke Developmental Road is to complete the bitumen seal between Almaden and Chillagoe and to include minor alignment improvements, as funding permits. The section of road between Almaden and Chillagoe is 32km in length, of which there are four remaining unsealed sections totalling 16.2km.

The strategy for the remainder of the link, west of Chillagoe, is to maintain the road in a safe unsealed condition. This position is based on competing priorities on other roads of regional significance, which carry significantly more traffic and provide access to numerous communities.

In line with this strategy, the state government is providing funding for projects on this section of Burke Developmental Road. In June 2008, a 3.44km section between Chillagoe and Fortunata Creek was sealed at a total cost of \$2.3m.

The department is currently investigating the possible staging and future funding requirements to progressively seal the remaining 16km section between Almaden and Chillagoe.

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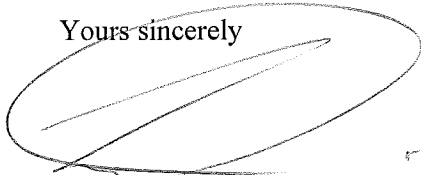
I will be discussing this matter with departmental officers during my inspection of Burke Developmental Road in late June 2009, to determine an appropriate way forward for the development of a strategy for this road link.

The Burke Developmental Road was one of many roads affected by flooding during the 2009 wet season. Regional areas of far north and northern Queensland experienced such significant flooding between January and March this year that a natural disaster event was declared.

The department, in conjunction with relevant local government authorities, is applying for funding through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) program, a joint state and federal government initiative to carry out restoration repairs to flood-damaged roads in north Queensland. A significant works program is currently being put together for these restoration repairs. A portion of the NDRRA funding for this program will be spent on restoring damaged sections of Burke Developmental Road.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Wallace', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Craig Wallace MP
Minister for Main Roads