



The Honourable Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PP1774-11

Your ref: Petitions

04 JUN 2012

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition number 1774-11 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Howard Hobbs MP, Member for Warrego on 17 May 2012, about urgent works to upgrade the Warrego Highway.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring Queensland's regions receive a fair share of the wealth generated by those regions. The Queensland Government recognises a safe and efficient Warrego Highway is essential for residents of the Darling Downs and south-west Queensland, and enables all Queenslanders to share in the economic benefits the region provides.

Funding of the Warrego Highway is primarily the responsibility of the Australian Government, as it is part of the National Land Transport Network. The Queensland Government is committed, however, to working with the Australian Government to deliver better infrastructure and planning for the Warrego Highway. This includes:

- continuing to deliver existing road upgrade projects on the Warrego Highway committed under the current *Nation Building Program*. Construction of overtaking lanes and rest areas between Oakey and Dalby, and road upgrading between Mitchell and Roma, including a new bridge across the Maranoa River at Mitchell to replace the bridge severely damaged in the recent flood event are examples.
- ensuring priority projects identified in the current *Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy* and Infrastructure Australia submission are sufficiently advanced by the Department of Transport and Main Roads to inform federal funding negotiations in the lead-up to the next five-year Nation Building Program which commences 2014-15.
- upgrading capacity of the Warrego Highway between Brisbane and Dalby, including providing funding for the planning of 6km of duplication between Toowoomba and Oakey (Stage 1).

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- delivering investments aimed at improving long-term immunity from flooding along the Warrego Highway, including the raising of floodways when associated with adjoining works. In the meantime, recovery and restoration works to flood damaged sections of the highway will continue, funded jointly between the Australian and Queensland Governments.
- within the Royalties for Regions initiative, establishing a *Roads to Resources Fund* to deliver much needed funding to enhance the safety, connectivity and capacity of roads servicing Queensland's resources communities. This includes overtaking lanes, shoulder sealing, bridge and culvert restoration, pavement rehabilitation and flood mitigation works.
- developing an updated business case for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing to ensure a cost-effective solution is delivered for Queensland. This business case will also consider options for moving freight from road to rail.
- improving travel times and freight efficiency as key outcomes of upgrading the Warrego Highway. Proposed highway upgrades west of Dalby will aim to provide a 110 km/h design standard wherever possible however, lower speed zones will remain through populated areas and rural townships for road and community safety.

The Queensland Government will work with all levels of government, industry and the community to deliver priority infrastructure upgrades on the Warrego Highway and the region more generally.

Yours sincerely



Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads