

Our ref MC9551

Your ref: 374-04

Mr Neil Laurie

The Clerk of the Parliament

Parliament House

George Street

Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Re: Petition No 374-04 lodged by Mr Vaughan Johnson MP about the Diamantina Developmental Road, approaches to Ward River Bridge.

I refer to the petition lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Vaughan Johnson MP, Member for Gregory, on 30 September 2004 about the approaches to the Ward River Bridge on the Diamantina Developmental Road.

A safety audit of this section of road was undertaken on 1 April 2004 as a result of discussions between officers of the Department of Main Roads and petitioners on 29 March 2004. That report identified several actions.

I am advised that the following immediate and short-term actions have been completed.

- improvements to sight distance by the removal of vegetation and dirt mounds
- installation of warning signs
- installation of 60km/h advisory speed signs
- spotting for line marking

The only outstanding short-term action from the audit is line marking, which will be undertaken when the contractor is in the area. This is expected to be before Christmas this year.

The request for rumble strips will be considered when Main Roads reviews how traffic operates along this section of road. Feedback received regarding the actions taken to date has been positive.

The long-term action to investigate the construction of a new bridge and approaches is currently underway. This investigation will also include issues raised by petitioners, Murweh and Quilpie Shire Councils.

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

Murweh and Quilpie Shire Councils, together with Main Roads, will nominate the approaches to the Ward River Bridge for federal Black Spot funding when Main Roads calls for nominations in the next round, which is in February 2005. The federal government announces successful Black Spot projects by the following July-August.

I encourage the petitioners to support this nomination with representations to the Black Spot Consultative Committee through the secretariat at Roads Programs Division, Department of Main Roads, GPO Box 2595, Brisbane 4001.

If you need any further information, please call Mr Murray Peacock, acting district director in Roma, on 4622 9511.

Yours sincerely

PAUL LUCAS

Minister for Transport and Main Roads