

Public Works Inquiry into the state controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah

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WORKING TOGETHER - CARRYING QUEENSLAND



18 July 2023

Mr Shane King MP
Chair
Transport and Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Via email: trc@parliament.qld.gov.au

RE: Public Works Inquiry into the state controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah

Dear Mr King

I am writing to you on behalf of the executive and members of the Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Queensland (LRTAQ) to work collaboratively with government to deliver safer, effective and successful transport services from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah.

By way of background the LRTAQ is the voice of the livestock and rural transport industry in Queensland, made up of approximately 100 member businesses from across the state. We work with governments, regulators, industry groups and the media to ensure a safer industry that provides good conditions and a safe working environment for our drivers and other employees, demonstrating to the community the positive and essential role that rural and livestock transport companies play in the economy and quality of life for all Australians.

Queensland has Australia's largest beef cattle herd and is the nation's largest producer and exporter of beef. Historically, beef comprises approximately 83 % of the gross production value of all of Queensland livestock industries and is the state's largest agricultural industry. With a great portion of beef coming out of the channel country.

As the freight task continues to increase, we wish to deliver solutions to Queensland transport businesses that overcome barriers in network connectivity, maximise productivity and support the local economy of South West Queensland. It's why we've provided a submission to the public works inquiry into the state-controlled roads between Birdsville and Bedourie and from Birdsville to Windorah.

The livestock and meat supply chain is multi-dimensional, with high nodal activity required to move livestock from the stations through saleyards and feedlots, and ultimately through abattoir nodes to the export and domestic consumption supply chains.

The LRTAQ has undertaken consultation with transport business that operate in Quilpie, Windorah, Birdsville, Bedourie and Boulia seeking feedback on the current road conditions. As a critical component within the beef supply chain, livestock transport operators and drivers must ensure

Queensland's cattle are transported safely and responsibly to processing facilities however we see disruptors to this with current road conditions in these areas. Especially with the thousands of vehicles & caravans on these regional roads during tourist season, livestock transport is impacted by way of transit times. Better signage is required to educate motorists about sharing the roads with trucks and how to overtake.

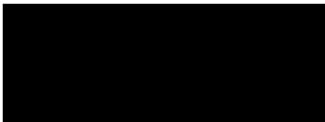
In dry conditions, the bulldust on unsealed roads is severe and visibility for road users becomes extremely low and therefore quite dangerous. There are frequent closures of roads due to flooding. Our members are loading trucks at daylight, it then takes 7 + hours to get to sealed roads so it can be very common for an afternoon storm to roll in & the road shut. These circumstances do not assist animal welfare, fatigue management for drivers, workplace health and safety, and productivity within the region.

The LRTAQ acknowledges that there are road infrastructure challenges, and we would like to work together with the road managers to get a full understanding of the improvements that may be required to build a safer and more productive freight corridor.

We recommend that the roads between Birdsville and Bedourie and from Birdsville to Windorah be sealed with bitumen at an appropriate width to allow for safe passing of oncoming traffic. This will improve trafficability in wet weather, reduce wear and tear on tyres and trailers for vehicles and trucks and reduce pressure on truck drivers with regards to fatigue management.

The LRTAQ look forward to hearing of a most favorable outcome for this submission to the Queensland Government.

Yours sincerely



Gerard Johnson
President
Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Queensland