



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

Hansard Thursday 13 May 2004

TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (5.15 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As members would be aware, transport and its infrastructure play a very important part in my electorate. It takes me 11 hours to travel from Georgetown to Alpha. One particular road that I would bring to the House's attention is the Gregory Development Road, and also the road that runs from Charters Towers to Lynd. Those roads form a general topic of conversation within the pubs, the clubs and the township of Greenvale.

Today I heard two members speak about the road between Townsville and Cairns and the difficulty they have when it floods. When that road does flood, many of the people who use it divert and travel down the Gregory Development Road. That road does not even have the capacity to accommodate the locals. It is only three metres wide in places. Trucks carrying super concentrate travel down that road. Ever since the Greenvale line was ripped up and they stopped taking the ore by train to Yabulu those trucks use the road. One of the difficulties with the road is that it is only three metres wide in places. Tourists are not accustomed to small roads or to moving onto embankments out of the way of the big trucks.

Each day 22 trucks carrying super concentrate travel on that road, as do livestock carriers, suppliers and the general public. When the tourists are on that road, they do not move out of the way of the trucks. There have been a number of accidents on that road. A couple of trucks rolled over last year. Before I was to deliver this speech I tried to do a little research to find out how many tourists have had accidents and how many trucks have rolled over on that road. There were quite a number. The general talk in the pubs and the township revolves around what can be done about this road.

The other day I was asked to go out and look at the road. I am glad the Hon. Minister for Transport is present. There is a section seven or eight kilometres out from the Charters Towers cemetery, which is about eight kilometres before Titley Road. After the rain along that entire section the edges can be washed away for up to three, four or five inches. Along a percentage of that road one will see different tyres. One will hear blokes complaining. They ring me up and complain about losing their tyres and nearly having accidents. I believe that this is a very important issue.

It does not worry me who is responsible for sealing the road, whether it is the federal government, the state government or the Dalrymple Shire Council. I believe it is a very important issue and I ask the minister to take this road into consideration and look especially at the area from the cemetery to eight or so kilometres from Titley Road. It is a very important issue and I ask him to take it into consideration. I commend the bill to the House.