



Speech by

**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS**

Hansard Tuesday, 31 October 2006

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### **TAMBO-CLERMONT, ROAD SEALING**

**Mr KNUTH** (Charters Towers—NPA) (10.18 pm): Today, on behalf of the residents of Clermont and Alpha, I tabled a petition calling on the state government to take action and seal the Clermont-Alpha-Tambo road. For more than 25 years, residents of the mining and rural communities have lobbied governments to completely seal this road, but those pleas have fallen on deaf ears. In the 2001 RACQ unroadworthy roads survey, the Alpha-Clermont road was regarded as a disaster. The comment was, 'It was a goat track 50 years ago and still is today.' Road users are constantly faced with a rough loose surface, poor road shoulders, dangerous washouts and deep ruts, and any slight veering will send a driver down an embankment and into a tree or into an oncoming prime mover.

In the past 10 years, a high number of accidents have been reported. At least 12 accidents have involved government employees attempting to do their jobs. One local constituent who was involved in an accident 25 years ago stated that, after all these years, the condition of the road is worse than it has ever been, yet traffic has increased and it is a frightening experience when passing triples on the highway.

Every day, students attending the Mistake Creek State School travel in excess of 100 kilometres on a road that even seasoned travellers decline to use. Their safety is in jeopardy and should be of the utmost importance. There would be mass hysteria if children in the more densely populated areas had to face the dangers that those children face on a daily basis.

This is a state road. It is not under the jurisdiction of the local authorities, yet the plight of all road users has been conveniently ignored by the state for years. The road boasts spectacular scenic sites of the Narrien and Drummond ranges. Tourists who seek an outback experience are missing out, as locals will not recommend travelling this road. Tourism Queensland has sent a letter to the Mistake Creek community, supporting the sealing of this road, and I table it for the minister for transport.

*Tabled paper:* Letter dated 25 September 2006 from Regional Director, Whitsundays and Mackay, Tourism Queensland to Rhiannon Moriarty.

The Clermont-Alpha-Tambo road is often used by livestock carriers, general suppliers, locals and tourists. It is also a major trucking route for companies from as far south as Adelaide. It is part of the type 2 road train route that links the west to the north and the south and, as I said, it is home to the magnificent Narrien and Drummond ranges.

Sealing the road makes plain common sense. It would relieve transport pressure on the coastal highways, create a new inland highway, increase tourism, save lives, reduce accidents and provide a much-needed boost to the local communities of Clermont, Tambo, Alpha, Jericho and western Queensland. I call on the Minister for Transport to recognise the importance of sealing this road and to seek extra funding through the Cabinet Budget Review Committee. Main Roads has conservatively estimated the cost to seal at approximately \$20,000 a kilometre. At this rate and with the current expenditure, the road could be sealed within six to eight years.