



Speech by
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Hansard Tuesday, 18 August 2009

M1 UPGRADE

Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.31 pm): According to the Oxford dictionary, ‘fast-track’ is to develop, complete or advance something with great speed. Therefore, I ask the Minister for Main Roads what his interpretation of fast-track is? Some \$158 million in funding was announced in December 2008 to fast-track the widening of the M1 between Nerang and Worongary, and yesterday there was a further announcement of the same long-awaited upgrade to commence mid-2010 and to be completed in 2012. According to the website of the department of main roads, tenders are not going to be called for this project until the fourth quarter of this year. Clearly this project is not being undertaken with great speed. Further, it is extraordinary that this small stretch of road—a mere four kilometres—will take two years to construct and will only serve to move the congestion from the Nerang South interchange further south to Gooding Drive.

Given this government’s abysmal record in road building, I call on the minister to put the lives of Gold Coast motorists first and approve the installation of interim safety barriers on this most dangerous section of the M1 between Nerang and Mudgeeraba before another life is lost. We need barriers for the entire eight kilometres of the M1 from Nerang to Mudgeeraba and not just the four-kilometre portion that will eventually be upgraded with the six laning. We have endured three ministers for main roads over the past three years and still motorists continue to die on this dangerous motorway with no safety barriers. Former main roads minister Warren Pitt recognised the need for safety barriers and had them installed in the Coomera area following similar fatalities. Warren Pitt said—

Wire rope and other safety barriers ... significantly reduced the risk of crashes involving vehicles crossing to the wrong side of the road.

It is time for the minister to stop grandstanding on this issue. Safety barriers save lives. It is as simple as that. I call on the minister when he comes to the Gold Coast this Friday to open the long-awaited Nerang South interchange, which is seven years too late, to actually go for a drive both north and south on the M1 between Nerang and Mudgeeraba to see for himself what Gold Coast motorists have to drive on every day and then ask himself this: what price does this government put on a life? Families and motorists demand action now. Enough is enough!