




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Inland Highway, Upgrade

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.16 pm): In the last 10 years the Bruce Highway has been cut off many times after cyclones and floods. During those times many politicians have parachuted in and promised to upgrade the inland highway. During Cyclone Larry it was Peter Beattie, during Cyclone Yasi it was Premier Bligh and after a minicyclone two years ago many Newman government ministers parachuted in and promised to upgrade the inland highway. At the time of these extreme weather events the Bruce Highway is cut off for a period of up to 10 days. Talking about upgrading the inland highway sounds good and relieves everyone's anger and frustration as trucks are being backed up for tens of kilometres.

We do have an inland route and there are areas that need to be upgraded. It has been a long drawn-out process for many years. Upgrading the Gregory Development Road leading from the Lynd Highway right through to Clermont would relieve traffic congestion on the coast and would create an inland route for tourism. It would breathe life into those country towns. Bridges, such as the one over the Cape River about 110 kilometres south of Charters Towers, need to be heightened. The bridge over Hann Creek, which is about 30 kilometres north of Charters Towers, needs to be heightened. Likewise the bridges over the Basalt River, the Clarke River, Snake Creek and Stockyard Creek, which is in the Ewan area. The old Jack McEwan Beef Road from Mount Garnet through to the Lynd Junction needs about 10 kilometres widened. These are small narrow roads. From 25 kilometres south of Greenvale there is about a 12-kilometre section that needs to be widened, and a 15- to 19-kilometre section from Bluff Downs to the Harvey's Range turn off also needs widening. By widening those sections and lifting the height of those bridges it would create that inland highway. It would relieve the traffic congestion on the coast.

We have support from all the communities, the councils, the Charters Towers Chamber of Commerce, the Greenvale Progress Association and the Bluewater Springs Progress Association. We keep hearing politicians promising to do it, but we are not seeing it. Hopefully we can get the support to upgrade that road.