




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Barron River Electorate, Infrastructure Projects

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (2.57 pm): I wish to update the House on some infrastructure projects in the Cairns area. Construction is well underway on the new \$25 million Cairns State Special School being constructed by Hutchinson Builders. The first buildings will be the administration, information services and ancillary services buildings and will be handed over in December. Three junior learning centres, an early childhood development centre, senior learning centres, community hub and multipurpose skills centre will also be completed in December. Remaining facilities, including outdoor learning areas, staff centre and landscape, are on track for completion in January 2017. This project is supporting around 24 apprentices.

Construction is nearing completion on the new senior learning centre at the Tropical North Learning Academy, Trinity Beach campus, in the electorate of Barron River. The Tropical North Learning Academy is a strategic partnership between Trinity Beach State School, Smithfield State High School and James Cook University. The new building will add an additional 12 general learning areas and is forecast to be completed in December. The project is supporting around 11 apprentices and is worth \$5 million.

The replacement Smithfield Fire Station is funded through the State Infrastructure Fund's \$180 million Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program. It will provide enhanced fire and emergency facilities to Smithfield and the surrounding areas of the northern beaches at an approximate cost of \$3.8 million and should support an estimated 10 jobs. Construction is expected to commence in the first half of 2017 and be completed in 2018.

There is one project that is neither underway nor progressing at anywhere near the pace it needs to. The Captain Cook Highway is the principal road connecting Cairns to the domestic and international airport terminals, the northern suburbs and major tourist destinations, including Palm Cove, Port Douglas and the Atherton Tablelands. The highway through Cairns's northern suburbs suffers from heavy congestion during peak periods. The intersection of the Captain Cook Highway and Airport Avenue experiences large queues and excessive delays, particularly during the morning peak period due to the high inbound traffic flow, with approximately 3,000 vehicles per hour and a right-turn demand to Airport Avenue. The intersection has a high crash history with 20 crashes, which rates higher than other sections of the highway.

The \$6 million airport access upgrade was eligible for funding under the Northern Australia Roads Program, or NARP. The project currently remains unfunded by the Australian government. It is consistent with the NARP criteria outlined in the government's NARP project submission template. It is a central hub between an airport that has over five million passenger movements annually and the booming tourist industry of Cairns and the northern beaches. The federal government has said a lot

about northern Australia funding when it comes to road infrastructure. They have left Queensland out. It is time our federal representatives in Queensland stood up to their leaders in Canberra and stopped playing games with our motorists and tourists. If you are going to have a northern Australia roads package, make it count.