




Speech By
Hon. Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Sunshine Coast, Marine Incident; Country Roads Connect

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.23 pm): Members would be aware of the tragic incident that occurred in Mooloolaba this morning where a boat has capsized. On behalf of Sunshine Coast members and the government, I want to acknowledge the passing of Mr Rob Smith, a well-known boat captain in our community. We send our thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.

Last week during community cabinet in Emerald, alongside the Premier and the member for Gregory, I was pleased to announce that 22 projects have been funded under the Country Roads Connect Program—a key commitment made by the LNP at the last election, aimed at improving the connectivity and resilience of Queensland's regional road network after it was left to rot under a decade of Labor. From Rockhampton to Richmond, the Maranoa to the Whitsundays and all the way up to Wujal Wujal, we are delivering regional road upgrades for our regional towns that were failed for far too long by the former Labor government.

The program is a \$100 million funding program that delivers targeted investment to pave regional unsealed roads which would otherwise become impassable during weather events. Sealing these roads ensures that critical roads are not cut off in times of disaster, allowing graziers and growers to get their produce to market more reliably.

We are backing our rural and remote communities by working in partnership with councils that know their roads best and understand the unique and complex needs of their regions. These country roads are the arteries of our rural and regional communities. It is the difference between kids getting to school safely, farmers and industry having reliable freight access and emergency services being able to get to people in their times of need. We look forward to working with councils to deliver these targeted investments that will make a real difference to the lives of regional Queenslanders.

Some 22 projects have been funded under this program, so I am not going to sit here and name them all. What I will say is that each of those projects represents a significant positive impact on a community. I have met with or visited a number of those local councils and I congratulate them all on this outcome. I share their excitement and I cannot wait to see the projects get underway. I will be working alongside those councils to get those projects out of the ground as quickly as possible.

We are delivering for Queensland and the Country Roads Connect Program is delivering safer, more dependable roads that support families, producers and small businesses right across regional Queensland. After 10 years of decline, the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queenslanders. We are delivering more in the first 10 months than those opposite ever could. The Country Roads Connect Program is the latest example of that.