

Question on Notice

No. 375

Asked on Thursday 8 March 2007

MS STONE asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the visit to south east Queensland this week by the Prime Minister and the announcement of billions of dollars for a half northern bypass of the Ipswich Motorway - Did the Prime Minister announce any funding for the urgently needed upgrade of the Pacific Motorway, especially the section through the Springwood Electorate and Logan City?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Springwood for her question.

Just like the Ipswich Motorway, parts of the Pacific Motorway are congested and facing increasing demands from a rapidly growing south-east Queensland population. Improvements are therefore essential if the motorway is to continue to play an effective role as a major transport spine in Queensland's south-east transport network.

The section of the motorway in Logan City, specifically between southern Springwood and Daisy Hill Road at Daisy Hill, is the highest priority. The upgrade of the congested Loganlea Road interchange is also urgently needed.

Despite the urgent need to upgrade the Pacific Motorway - an integral part of the AusLink National Network and therefore a joint state/federal government responsibility - the Prime Minister failed to announce any funding during his recent visit on to south-east Queensland on 5 March 2007.

Instead, the Prime Minister announced \$2.3 billion to build a bypass of the Ipswich Motorway that is opposed by the Ipswich City Council, Brisbane City Council, RACQ and indeed the Leader of the Liberal Party, Dr Bruce Flegg. The bypass will cost \$1.2 billion more than the preferred option of the State Government and all other stakeholders, which is upgrading the existing Motorway. That's \$1.2 billion that cannot be spent on other crucial road projects, such as the upgrade of the Pacific Motorway.

The Federal Government has provided no new money for the Pacific Motorway since its capped \$120 million contribution to the Tugun Bypass four years ago. While the Tugun Bypass is a critical project – for which the State Government is providing \$423 million – it does not finish the job on the Pacific Motorway. The section between the Gateway and Logan Motorways, including the Loganlea Road interchange, and between Nerang and Tugun, are in desperate need of improvement.

That's why the Beattie Government has put \$427 million over five years on the table for planning and construction of these vital sections. But the Motorway is part of the

Federal Government's AusLink National Network, and matching funding is required from them before work can begin. Despite repeated requests, the State Government is still waiting on the Federal Government to put up their fair share.

Notwithstanding the Federal Government's refusal to contribute, the State Government has been getting on with planning, design and consultation on these projects so that if money is forthcoming, we are ready to commence work more quickly. In particular, the planning to upgrade the section of the Pacific Motorway between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill (through part of the Springwood electorate) started in 2005 and, I'm glad to report, is nearing completion. I want to thank the Member for Springwood for her support of this planning process.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind the Member for Springwood that the amount of fuel excise expected to be collected by the Federal Government in 2006-07 is \$14.65 billion. Just 17.6% (\$2.58 billion) will be spent on Australian roads, with Queensland set to receive only \$560 million this year.

In contrast, Queensland vehicle registration revenues are currently directed towards maintaining and improving State-controlled roads and safety initiatives that benefit all Queensland road users. In 2006-07, the Beattie Government will spend \$1.5 billion on roads, almost double the estimated revenue of \$846 million from vehicle registrations.

Despite the lack of funding from Canberra, the Queensland government is getting on with the job of planning to ensure it's in a position to begin upgrading the Pacific Motorway, should the Federal Government finally decide to commit its half of the funding.

If federal funding is committed immediately, construction could start on the sections of the Pacific Motorway from Gateway Motorway to Daisy Hill Road by mid 2008 and be completed within three years.

I urge the Member for Springwood and her constituents to maintain the pressure on the Federal Government to deliver their fair share of road funding.