

Question on Notice

No. 1518

Asked on Tuesday 30 October 2018

MR S ANDREW ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the dangerous conditions for motorists using the narrow Mount Morgan Range—

Will the Minister action a review into the safety of this Range including heavy vehicle use of the Range?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mirani for the question.

The Mount Morgan Range crossing forms part of the Burnett Highway connecting Rockhampton, Mount Morgan and the surrounding lower Bowen Basin communities in Central Queensland.

The range section of the Burnett Highway was reconstructed following ex-tropical Cyclone Oswald (January 2013), which closed the highway and impacted access to Mount Morgan and surrounding communities.

In delivering the \$21.7 million Mount Morgan Range reconstruction, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) took the opportunity to resurface the 2.7 kilometre range crossing and install two kilometres of new guardrail to improve safety for motorists. The Mount Morgan Range reopened to traffic on 22 June 2014.

TMR traffic data records an average of 2642 vehicles using the range daily. Of these, 175 are heavy vehicles, representing approximately 6.6 per cent of the daily traffic volumes. TMR acknowledges the steep grade of the range and tight radius turns are not suitable for all vehicle types. The Queensland Government's Multi-combination Routes for Heavy Vehicle Access restricts access to vehicles larger than a semi-trailer using the Burnett Highway between Poison Creek Road (at the bottom of the range) and Razorback Road (near Mount Morgan). These maps are published on TMR's website for operators to plan their journey when travelling in Central Queensland. To access the maps, visit www.tmr.qld.gov.au and click on (1) 'Business and industry', (2) 'Heavy vehicles' and (3) 'Heavy vehicle routes and restrictions'.

Alternate routes for B-double vehicles to access Mount Morgan and surrounding communities is via the Capricorn Highway and Leichhardt Highway through Dululu. Because there are safe access options for both freight and commuter traffic, TMR does not support undertaking a further review of the Mount Morgan Range (Burnett Highway) between Mount Morgan and Rockhampton. Furthermore, TMR has no plans to change the as-of-right access for semi-trailer vehicles on the section of Burnett Highway north of Mount Morgan.

TMR will continue conducting routine maintenance inspections on a weekly basis to ensure the Mount Morgan Range crossing remains safe for road users.