

Question on Notice

No. 516

Asked on Wednesday 3 April 2019

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the much-needed upgrade of the Mount Crosby Road and Warrego Highway intersection—

Will the Minister confirm if it is the State's responsibility to prepare a business case for this project and submit it to Infrastructure Australia to enable the Federal Government to commit its share of this project?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Chatsworth for the question.

The Warrego Highway forms part of the National Land Transport Network, for which the Australian Government has primary funding responsibility. Accordingly, the Palaszczuk Government expects to receive 80 per cent Australian Government funding for future upgrades to the Warrego Highway, consistent with existing federal funding arrangements in this corridor.

In 2012, the Bligh Labor Government released the Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy (the strategy) to improve the safety, reliability, capacity, transport efficiency and flood immunity on the highway.

The strategy outlines a 20-year vision to increase the standard of the Warrego Highway, and includes short-, medium- and long-term priorities spanning the length of the highway between Brisbane and Charleville.

This strategy identifies the need for safety and capacity improvements between the Brisbane to Toowoomba section, which includes the Mount Crosby interchange.

Unfortunately, no major capacity upgrades of the Mount Crosby interchange were delivered during the life of the Newman LNP Government, in which the Member was an Assistant Minister.

In 2017, the Department of Transport and Main Roads completed an investigation for an interim upgrade of the Mount Crosby Road and Warrego Highway interchange. The investigation reviewed options for minor upgrade works to reduce vehicle queuing on the highway ramps, improve the function of the roundabouts and improve active transport safety. The estimated cost of this interim upgrade is \$22 million.

In 2018, the Palaszczuk Government submitted a Stage 1 submission for the eastern section of the Warrego Highway (Brisbane to Toowoomba) to Infrastructure Australia (IA) for inclusion in its Infrastructure Priority List as a nationally-significant initiative.

Following a positive assessment by IA, the 'Warrego Highway East Corridor Improvements' proposal was included on the Infrastructure Priority List, released in February 2019, as a 'Priority Initiative'.

In the 2019 Federal Budget, the Australian Government announced:

- \$320 million additional funding for the Warrego Highway, based on 80:20 federal:state funding arrangements. However, only \$30 million of this funding is allocated in 2022–23, with the balance of \$290 million allocated from 2023–24 onwards
- \$60 million for the Warrego Highway, between Ipswich and Toowoomba, under the 10-year Roads of Strategic Importance initiative, based on 80:20 federal:state funding arrangements. However, only \$11.02 million of this is allocated over three years from 2020–21, with the balance of \$48.98 million allocated from 2023–24 onwards.

The Australian Government did not specifically identify funding for an upgrade of the Mount Crosby Road and Warrego Highway intersection. However, on 3 May 2019, the Federal Labor Opposition announced \$11 million to upgrade the Mount Crosby interchange.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to delivering safety and capacity improvements to the Warrego Highway and will work with the incoming Australian Government to prioritise funding for important upgrades.