

Question on Notice

No. 1215

Asked on 3 December 2020

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the Innisfail-Japoon-Silkwood Road (a major regional connector used by heavy vehicles, refrigerated trucks, caravans and local and tourist traffic) having eroded edges, rough and uneven surfaces, narrow one lane sections and unsafe winding sections—

Will the Minister commit to funding to fix and upgrade the many issues along this stretch of road?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Hill for the question.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is aware of the importance of the roads between Innisfail and Silkwood for freight and tourism, and undertakes regular inspections and repairs as part of its routine maintenance program.

In September 2020, TMR completed a \$2.7 million project to repair and reseal a section of Innisfail Japoon Road. This project has improved road conditions for residents, businesses, farmers and cane haulage operators and supported an average of 13 jobs over its duration.

On 7 December 2020, TMR completed maintenance works on Liverpool Creek bridge, which is also located on Silkwood Japoon Road. These works were undertaken as part of TMR's regular bridge maintenance program to ensure the continued safety and reliability of the bridge.

TMR is progressing several important planning and construction projects in the Cassowary Coast area. TMR is also progressing a \$9 million project to carry out planning for a potential future bypass of Innisfail to maintain the safety and efficiency of the Bruce Highway, in the medium to long term.

TMR is also progressing the \$7.1 million Boogan Road Upgrade project. This project will widen Boogan Road to improve safety for all road users. When the project is complete, Boogan Road will typically include the provision of 3.5-metre traffic lanes and 1.25-metre shoulders. TMR is currently undertaking design and will continue to consult with the property owners before finalising the scope of work.

The Boogan Road project is one of several projects in Far North Queensland that play an important part of the Australian and Queensland governments' stimulus packages to help the Queensland economy recover from COVID-19.

The recently released *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2020–21 to 2023–24* represents a record investment in road and transport infrastructure for the fifth year in a row, with \$26.9 billion committed over the next four years, supporting an average of approximately 23,600 direct jobs over the life of the program. Approximately \$1.862 billion is committed across TMR's Far North District, which is estimated to support an average of approximately 1700 direct jobs over the life of the program.

As part of our COVID-19 economic recovery response, in partnership with the Australian Government, the Palaszczuk Government has announced \$1 billion in new and accelerated funding for road improvements right across Queensland. This funding injection will deliver freight efficiency benefits, improve road safety, sustain local jobs and lift the State's economy. Overall, this \$1 billion of investment in road network improvements is estimated to support approximately 1000 jobs.

This includes more than \$400 million funding in projects announced by the Palaszczuk Government for Queensland roads to supercharge the State's economy through the COVID-19 recovery. This was announced as part of Queensland's Economic Recovery Strategy: *Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs*, to help the State recover from COVID-19 with a focus on backing Queensland jobs.