

Question on Notice

No. 864

Asked on 17 June 2021

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

QUESTION:

With reference to roadworks at Smiths Gap on the El Arish Range, Bruce Highway, having been underway for nearly 12 months and which now appear to have stopped, causing confusion, red light delays, anger and frustration and dangerous conditions for road users—

Will the Minister take action, before an accident occurs, to (a) investigate why works are taking so long, (b) outline if there is an issue with the completion of road works and (c) provide an anticipated completion date?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Hill for the question, although I do not accept its premise.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is progressing a \$13.824 million project to construct a southbound overtaking lane and a fauna crossing on the Smiths Gap section of the Bruce Highway, south of El Arish, a known corridor for cassowaries.

As a result of damage sustained during recent wet weather events, works were required to complete pavement repairs and a temporary lane closure was necessary for the safety of motorists and construction crews. Several days of fine weather were required to undertake asphalt treatments and final seal to complete the repairs, however due to weather conditions and the availability of the asphalt contractor, works were delayed.

Asphalt resurfacing works on the Smiths Gap section of the Bruce Highway, south of El Arish, commenced at 7 pm on 22 June 2021 and were completed on 25 June 2021. Works were carried out at night to minimise impacts to traffic on this busy section of the Bruce Highway. The southbound traffic lane was reopened to traffic at 11.30 pm on 25 June 2021.

Works to complete the fauna crossing have been delayed due to additional slope stabilisation work required on batters adjacent to the Queensland Rail corridor and rail infrastructure. TMR is currently carrying out further investigations, and consultation with Queensland Rail is underway to determine the best way to approach the issue. TMR also continues to work closely with the Cassowary Recovery Team throughout the project. I can assure the Member work will recommence on site as soon as possible.