

Question on Notice

No. 1080

Asked on 17 September 2025

MR N DAMETTO ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON B MICKELBERG)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Seymour River and Arnot Creek crossings on the Bruce Highway north of Ingham, which were closed no less than 16 times in the first three months of 2025, and noting the \$175m in joint funding committed to improve flood resilience along the highway—

Will the Minister advise (a) what plans, if any, the government has to reduce closures at these crossings, including project timelines and funding allocations and (b) what steps have been taken to date?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

Critical freight and community links in North Queensland have been subject to multiple significant flooding impacts—most recently following the North and Far North Tropical Low severe weather event earlier this year which highlighted the need for improved flood resilience.

The Crisafulli Government is committed to addressing longstanding impacts of flooding on North Queensland communities.

- (a) In the Seymour River area north of Ingham, the Department of Transport and Main Roads is progressing the Gairloch Floodway project with an investment of \$48 million (fully funded by the Australian Government). This project will reduce the duration of closures due to flooding by upgrading this section to an equivalent flood immunity level as the highway immediately north and south. Detailed design is complete.

The Gairloch to Ripple Creek section of the Bruce Highway has been identified as a high priority for resilience improvements, with plans underway for drainage and culvert improvements.

- (b) Following the severe flooding in North Queensland earlier this year, the Crisafulli Government acted quickly to request assistance under the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) to enable building back key sites on the Bruce Highway and inland connection routes to a more resilient standard.

An initial list of candidate projects was provided to the Commonwealth as part of the Queensland Government's broader Category C and D Exceptional Circumstances DRFA package request.

This list identified several potential sites for resilience improvements on the Bruce Highway, including the Ed Kratzmann Bridge at Ollera Creek which was cut by a major washout during the flooding and reinstated within just eight days.

Of the \$205 million in infrastructure betterment funding made available, \$175 million was allocated to projects on the Bruce Highway, to be funded on an 80:20 basis in line with other Bruce Highway infrastructure projects.

Following high-level concept design development to identify cost-effective and timely solutions within the available funding, my department has provided preferred infrastructure betterment project options to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, to be lodged with the National Emergency Management Agency for approval.

The Crisafulli Government stands ready to commence detailed design immediately on approved betterment projects.

While these significant projects will take time to deliver, I am confident betterment works at these locations will help minimise damage and reduce road closures during and after future severe weather events.