

BROOME CAPE LEVEQUE ROAD

695. Hon KEN BASTON to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

I refer to the Labor government's broken commitment made in 2001 to make the Broome Cape Leveque Road an all-weather road in its first four years of office.

- (1) Is the minister aware that the cost to deliver a tonne of freight from Perth to Broome is \$260 and from Broome to One Arm Point at Cape Leveque is \$247?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the additional cost is attributed to abnormal wear and tear on trucks caused by the poor condition of the Broome Cape Leveque Road, which, if sealed, would reduce the freight cost to approximately \$60 per tonne?
- (3) Is the minister aware that, because of the condition of the road, the freight service to the communities and pearl farms on the Cape Leveque peninsula has been cancelled, effective from 14 September?
- (4) Given the impact on the communities and industry, what immediate action will the minister take to ensure continuity of freight and food supplies to the 1 100 people who live and work on the peninsula?

Hon KATE DOUST replied:

I reply on behalf of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. I have been provided with a very lengthy response. I seek leave to table the response and have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

[See paper 1833.]

The following material was incorporated -

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- (1)-(4) The Broome-Cape Leveque Road is a local government road under the care and control of the Shire of Broome. As such, the Shire of Broome is responsible for funding any improvements to this 200 km length of road.

However, in recognition of the significant cost impost upgrading such a length of road would have on the Shire of Broome's limited resources, the State Government has been providing significant funding contributions to assist Council to progressively upgrade the road to the standard recommended by the Broome-Cape Leveque Road Steering Committee.

Our 2001-election commitment was to spend \$4m in our first term of Government. In that time we spent \$8.2m.

As at 30 June 2006, the Labor Government has spent \$10.3M in State funding on upgrading the Broome-Cape Leveque Road for the period between 2001/02 to 2005/06.

By sharp contrast, during the last term of the Coalition Government, only \$1.1M in State funding was spent on upgrading the Broome-Cape Leveque Road in the four year period, 1997/98 to 2000/01.

The priority and standard of upgrade to the road has been determined by the Broome-Cape Leveque Road Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, which includes representation from the Shire of Broome, Kimberley Development Commission, local Indigenous communities, Main Roads and Department for Planning and Infrastructure has determined that the 100 km section of the Broome-Cape Leveque Road between Beagle Bay and Cape Leveque is the top priority for improvement. As a consequence, funding by both the State and the Shire of Broome is focused on improving the northern section of the Broome-Cape Leveque Road.

The Steering Committee has not yet determined the standard of upgrade required for the 90 kilometre gravel southern section of the Broome-Cape Leveque Road from the end of the existing seal to Beagle Bay which is the cause of the current concerns. There is also discord within the community itself about the standard of upgrade for this southern section which needs to be addressed. Some in the community are concerned that a fully sealed road will create considerable social problems.

I have asked Main Roads to assist the Shire resolve the immediate problem by grading this section in the next two weeks. However a longer solution will need to be found.

Once the upgrade strategy has been determined by the Steering Committee, an upgrade timetable and funding requirements can be considered.

Apart from the very significant State Government funding contribution to this road under the Labor Government, the Shire of Broome also has the option of seeking Federal Government assistance towards upgrading this regionally significant local road.
