

CAPE LEVEQUE ROAD - UPGRADE

4165. Hon Ken Baston to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure

Freight charges to the communities and pearl farms on the Cape Leveque Road have recently risen by 20 percent to cover major damage to plant and equipment caused by poor condition of the road to local communities. Will the Minister -

- (a) provide a timetable to seal the road between the 102.6 to 172.1 kilometre section; and
- (b) provide a timetable to upgrade and seal the road between the 12.7 to 102.6 kilometre section?

Hon ADELE FARINA replied:

(a)-(b) The 202 km Broome-Cape Leveque Road is a local government road - the Shire of Broome is responsible for funding any improvements to this road.

In recognition of the significant cost impost on the Shire's limited resources, the State has been providing significant funding contributions to assist the progressive upgrade of the road to the standard recommended by the Broome-Cape Leveque Road Steering Committee which includes the Shire of Broome, Indigenous Communities, Main Roads, DPI and also the Kimberley Development Commission.

The northern 102 km section of the Broome-Cape Leveque Road between Beagle Bay and Cape Leveque is the top priority for improvement and funding by both the State and the Shire of Broome is focused on improving this section of road.

As at 30 June 2006, Labor has spent \$10.3M in State funding between 2001/02 to 2005/06 on upgrading sections of the northern 102 km of the road.

By comparison, during the last term of the coalition government, only \$1.1M in state funding was spent on upgrading the road between 1997/98 to 2000/01.

Approximately \$18M state funding will be spent by Labor on upgrading this local road by 2009/10 when the funding allocated in the 2006 Budget and Forward Estimates is taken into account. This includes an additional \$1M announced on 4 September 2006.

The State Government's 2001 election commitment was to contribute \$10M towards the then costed \$12.5M upgrade of the road (Shire of Broome was to provide \$2.5M) to formed gravel standard. This has far exceeded the election funding commitment.

As at 30 June 2006, 46 km of the 102 km northern section had been upgraded to formed gravel sheeted standard and 32 km had been sealed.

In August 2006, work commenced to seal a further 26 km of this northern section from 6 km south of Bobby's Crossing to 20 km north of Bobby's Crossing towards the Lombadina/Djarindjin community access road at an estimated cost of \$3.9M. The Beagle Bay intersection will also be constructed to a seal standard as part of the works. These works are expected to be completed in October 2006.

43 km of the top 102 km of the road would be left to be upgraded to a sealed standard at an estimated cost of \$7.6M in 2006 dollars (19 km of formed and gravelled road and 24 km of unformed pindan). Only \$5.6M is funded in the Forward Estimates leaving a \$2M shortfall of funding to complete the top 102 km of this road.

Until recently the communities had not determined the standard of upgrade required for the 90 km southern section from the end of the existing seal to Beagle Bay which is the cause of recent community complaints.

A special meeting of various representatives of the Dampier Peninsula Transport Reference Group was held on 7 September 2006. At this meeting, a clear preference to seal the southern 90 km has now been confirmed.

The estimated cost to seal the remainder of the Broome-Cape Leveque Road is \$33.5M in 2006 dollars (southern 90 km is \$31.5M and \$2M shortfall to complete the top 102km), based on the work being undertaken by direct management. I have asked that the Broome-Cape Leveque Road Steering Committee be reformed under the Chair of Ms Carol Martin MLA, and that it prepare a funding submission for consideration in future budgetary processes.

In the interim, Council is working up a maintenance regime to provide an adequate level of service for the bottom 90 km until this section can be upgraded to sealed standard.