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North's road projects named

Northern roads get funding greenlight

IN TOWNSVILLE last week Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Barnaby Joyce announced approximately \$81 million in funding support has been earmarked for northern road upgrades.

Under the Northern Australia Roads Programme, more than \$33 million has been set aside for two projects along the Flinders Highway, one between Townsville and Torrens Creek and the other between Charters Towers and Richmond.

Close to \$43 million will be spent on widening and sealing works on the Kennedy Developmental Road, and \$5 million will go towards intersection upgrades on the Barkly Highway in Mount Isa.

Minister Joyce said the programme was created to fund high-priority projects essential to northern economic development.

"The North has vast potential for economic growth to benefit local communities and the national economy," he said.

"But to deliver on this potential, it's essential we have an efficient and safe transport network that makes the north accessible for both freight and everyday transport.

"This type of investment has a pay-off for both the

local region and for the national economy.

"We'll continue to identify projects to further enhance the liveability and productivity of North Queensland."

The projects are jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments.

Queensland Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports Mark Bailey said the State Government shares the Federal Government's commitment to improving key roads in the North.

"The Flinders Highway is a critical hinterland road link to major northern centres and this investment will address issues such as ageing road surfaces, flooding and safety risks posed by traffic ranging from road trains to tourist vehicles," he said.

Senator Ian Macdonald said the road from Townsville to Mount Isa is such an important part of the economy of north Queensland and this upgrade will mean efficiencies and therefore benefits and jobs for the north.

"These works will also complement the recently announced Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor Project

and the new Port Road and provide tangible evidence of the Federal Government's development plans for Northern Australia," Senator McDonald said.

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Minister Barnaby Joyce



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ROAD REPAIR: Under the Northern Australia Roads Programme, more than \$33 million has been set aside for two projects along the Flinders Highway one of which encompasses the stretch between Townsville and Torrens Creek.