



Inland Queensland Roads Action Project

*Driving Productivity
in Australia's Transport Network*

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Labor's policy on roads funding step in the right direction

Federal Labor's promise to invest \$500 million into upgrading Queensland's inland road network, if elected, is a step in the right direction to boosting struggling rural and regional economies, according to the Inland Queensland Road Action Project (IQ-RAP) Working Group.

The federal opposition leader Bill Shorten has pledged funding to upgrade regional Queensland roads, which is estimated to create over 13,000 direct and indirect jobs in Queensland over the next decade.

Chair of the IQ-RAP Working Group and Mayor of Boulia, Cr Rick Britton, said the commitment had followed the strong advocacy and work of the IQ-RAP.

"Labor's policy decision is in recognition of the Inland Queensland Road Network Strategy (IQRNS), which our Working Group presented to Mr Shorten and his colleagues just over two weeks ago in Canberra," Cr Britton said.

"The Network Strategy identifies three thousand kilometres of road and three hundred bridges which are unfit for purpose and are limiting the use of modern freight efficient transport options to the great detriment of both industry and the communities at large."

Mr Shorten announced on the weekend that if elected, a Labor Government will provide funding to deliver a staged upgrade of the Queensland inland road network, meaning up to 3000 kilometres of better, safer roads and up to 300 wider, stronger bridges.

The IQRNS has been a collaboration of 28 local governments, five Regional Development Australia Committees and RACQ, to develop a bi-partisan approach to the prioritisation of funding and development of inland Queensland roads.

Cr Britton said for too long the productive areas of the state have been denied the benefit of a road network suitable to current and future transport needs.

"This national recognition of the urgent need to upgrade road infrastructure is the beginning of long term investment in the inland road network, which is critical to the current and future economic development of 80% of the land area of Queensland," he said.

"If we follow the IQRNS, which has been adopted as policy by the Labor opposition, we will reduce the cost of freight into these areas remote from markets, improve the viability of local businesses and bring sustainable employment opportunities to areas with the nation's highest youth unemployment."

For further information, log on to: <http://www.rdanwq.org.au/iq-rap>

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