

MEDIA RELEASE – 23 July 2020

RDA Townsville and North West QLD's key initiative delivers \$1.4b in funding for inland QLD roads.

Regional Development Australia Townsville and North West QLD (RDA) released a new report today regarding the implementation and achievements of the Inland Queensland Roads Action Project (IQ-RAP). IQ-RAP, a key initiative of RDA, has secured \$1.4 billion in funding over the past four years, which equates to approximately 4,100 jobs. We expect this to increase when the 2020/21 Queensland Transport and Road Investment Program (QTRIP) is released later this year. RDA recognizes that investment into strategic freight networks is critical during this difficult time in the economy and welcomes recent road funding announcements by Federal and State Governments.

“By taking a long-term, strategic and collaborative approach to planning and funding of our major freight routes, we have secured \$1.4 billion in funding in just four years – way more than we could have achieved individually. RDA has played an important role in bringing all 28 local governments, 5 RDA Committees and RACQ together as partners and managing the project since 2014:, **said Cr Rick Britton, Chair of the IQ-RAP Working Group and Mayor of Boulia Shire Council.**

“Two more critical components of our success have been building a strong evidence base for the funding needs through the plans and strategies we have delivered and the more than 200 key stakeholder we have briefed in Canberra, Brisbane and wherever else we needed to be to make our case.”

The IQ-RAP vision is to increase the quality and accessibility of the inland Queensland road network, contributing to Australia's productivity, quality of life, safety and equity outcomes.

“Working collaboratively across local government areas and RDA regions makes good sense. We all have an interest in being connected by safer and more efficient road networks for the benefit of industry, tourism and communities. However as roads do not stop at organisational boundaries, collaboration to get the best outcomes has been critical,” **said Cr Jane McNamara, Deputy Chair, IQ-RAP Working Group and Mayor of Flinders Shire Council.**

“I am also excited that we are very close to sealing the inland freight route from Mareeba in the Far North via Hughenden to Melbourne to save 500km and thousands of dollars for industry and freight companies and those savings will flow through to businesses and consumers.”

“RDA has been incredibly proud to have driven this project. From the very beginning we could see the massive benefits that could be achieved for safety, productivity and connectivity for all users of our inland Queensland road network and also the significant boost that would be given to regional councils, companies and employment,” **said Regional Development Australia Townsville and North West Queensland CEO Glenys Schuntner.**





“The \$1.4 billion secured in funding translates into roughly 4,100 jobs. At this difficult time in our economy, continuing investment into strategic freight networks will be important for jobs and also industry, tourism and communities.”

RDA developed and has provided secretariat and project management to IQ-RAP since 2013. The project covers nearly 70% of Queensland (16% of Australia) across 28 local government areas. Partners include the 28 local governments, five Regional Development Australia committees and RACQ.

The strategic inland Queensland road network was named as a nationally significant priority on Infrastructure Australia’s *2020 Infrastructure Priority List* in February 2020, an important step in gaining the recognition of the importance of road and bridge upgrades to businesses and communities across inland QLD.

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