Tenders have been called for the construction of a new bridge over the Finke River crossing, south of Alice Springs.

The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Kon Vatskalis, said a new high level bridge was needed as part of ongoing flood immunity works in the region.

"The existing Finke River Bridge was built in 1969 and has seen a lot of traffic over the last three decades," Mr Vatskalis said.

"It is part of a key southern link to and from Alice Springs, and is also situated along the primary tourist route to Uluru.

"Current traffic volumes within the vicinity of the bridge are around 470 vehicles per day, but can peak to 700 vehicles per day during the tourist season.

"Importantly, the construction of a new high level bridge will also have increased flood immunity and be widened to meet new National Highway standards."

Mr Vatskalis said tenders for the project close on 9 July 2003.

Construction is expected to take up to six months, with the new high level bridge due for completion around February next year.