The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Kon Vatskalis, today announced the Government has allocated a further $2 million in next month’s Territory Budget to continue upgrading and sealing the Tanami Road in Central Australia.

Mr Vatskalis said this followed the $1.5 million allocated for work on the road in the 2002/03 Budget.

"This continues the Government’s commitment to upgrading this important road," he said.

Mr Vatskalis said tenders for sealing another 10 kilometres of the Tanami Road closed two weeks ago.

"It’s expected this contract will be filled by next month, with roadworks to be completed by the end of September."

Mr Vatskalis acknowledged the concerns held by mining transport companies and local business operators over the condition of Tanami Road, particularly during the Wet season when heavy rains can lead to flooding in some sections.

"The Government appreciates those who frequently use this road do experience access difficulties during certain times of the year," he said.

"But we have to be realistic – this is a 700-kilometre stretch of road, of which about 160 kilometres is sealed," he said.

"The Government will continue to address the sections of road that have been causing problems, and we will look at further funding in future Budgets."

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