Transport Capital Works for Central Australia

24 May 2016

The Country Liberals Budget 2016 will deliver economic strength, access, and growth for Central Australia.

Transport Minister Peter Chandler said “infrastructure is a high priority for the Northern Territory Government and roads, in particular, are of great importance to business, industry and the community in the Northern Territory.

“We all know that without reliable roads, efficient ports, good rail services and effective logistics infrastructure, we cannot sustain business activity, attract new investment, or expand our industries – all essential for growing the Territory’s economy.”

A total of $589.6 million is being invested in 2016-17 to deliver transport infrastructure for Territorians.

This includes:

- $495.9 million in Capital Works, including minor new works of $10.7 million for roads and $9.4 million for transport assets;
- $10 million to continue the Regional Economic Infrastructure Fund Grants;
- $81.5 million in repairs and maintenance; and
- $2.25 million for infrastructure related expenses to plan for the future transport needs of Territorians.

“The focus of this Government is to unlock the potential of the Northern Territory by developing and maintaining a road network that supports job creation and economic development and growth.

The Country Liberals Government is pleased to announce the following Capital Works in Central Australia for the 2016-17 Budget.

Maryvale Road upgrades - $16.5 million over two years

- The 2016-17 budget announced new funding of $16.5 million over two years for Maryvale Road. A total of $5 million will be provided in 2016-17.

- The objective of this proposal is to upgrade and seal an additional 20 kilometres of priority sections along Maryvale Road to improve connectivity to Alice Springs.
Maryvale Road is a 104 kilometres unsealed gravel and formed road connecting Maryvale (Titjikala) Station to Alice Springs. Currently, only the first 2 kilometres of the road is sealed. The link forms part of the Northern Territory Government’s Rural Secondary Road Network, traversing through pastoral and Aboriginal land.

Maryvale Road services a number of Aboriginal communities, pastoral leases and is the main access route for the tourist destinations of the Ewaninga Rock Carvings and Chambers Pillar Park.

**Tanami Road upgrade and seal - $5.45 million**

- The Northern Territory Government will continue to upgrade the Tanami Road with a further new allocation of $3 million in 2016-17. The new $3 million will be used to continue to seal towards Yuendumu.

- The Northern Territory Government has continued to invest in the Tanami Road over many years.

- The full Tanami Road upgrade has been included on Infrastructure Australia’s National Infrastructure Priority List.

**Open speed extension on the Stuart Highway north of Ali Curung turnoff - $1 million**

- $1 million has been allocated to extend the open speed zone from towards Tennant Creek.

- The extension will start just north of the Ali Curung turnoff and extend north towards Tennant Creek on the Stuart Highway.

- This work will be an extension of the existing open speed section of the Stuart Highway.

- The $1 million will extend the zone by 17 kilometres.

- Works will include line marking, signage, fencing and guardrails.

**Sandover Highway upgrade - $6 million over two years**

- $6 million has been provided for over two years to be able to extend the seal on the Sandover Highway from the end of the seal north of Arlparra to the health clinic.

- Provision of a sealed access to the health clinic will provide substantial benefits for the Utopia region.

- The extension of the seal on the Sandover Highway will provide a better connection between the health clinic and the Utopia Aerodrome which was also recently upgraded by the Northern Territory Government. This upgraded connection is important in emergency situations as a sealed road will provide a much quicker access to emergency health care and air lifts from the aerodrome.

- The $1 million allocated in 2016-17 will allow design work to be undertaken for construction to go ahead in the 2017 dry season.

- The Sandover Highway also services a number of cattle stations.
“These new initiatives build on the works currently funded in Central Australia including completing the seal of the Mereenie Inner Loop and upgrades to the Outback Way (Plenty Highway and Tjukaruru Road).

“Transport infrastructure is a key driver of economic development and has been specifically identified by the agricultural, resource, tourism and transport industries as requiring investment to improve industry performance and growth.

“Both Government and industry need to invest in improving our basic infrastructure to expand and maintain high standards for our road, port and rail networks.

“The Country Liberals Government recognises Transport access is an economic enabler. Increased Transport connectivity creates jobs, community, and prosperity for the Territory,” Mr Chandler said.

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