

Jenny Aitchison

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads



Media Release

A safer Kamilaroi Highway

Monday, 29 April 2024

Vision pack available to download here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/2iesj5rzxebidb6rgnggz/AMhJA0LnIjNo6CcAsPUeYg?rlkey=53xx3t0laz7u543zra6iwk8ub&st=gfe5bi2e&dl=0>

A \$34.6 million project to boost safety on a 17-kilometre stretch of the Kamilaroi Highway in north-west NSW has been completed, providing smoother, safer journeys for local residents, tourists and freight operators.

Work on an upgrade of the Kamilaroi Highway between Baan Baa and Turrawan started in December 2019 on the section of road between Narrabri and Gunnedah due to its crash history.

The final safety barriers have been installed to provide protection for motorists leaving the road as well as wide centre lines, audio tactile line marking (rumble strips), widened clear zones and other safety measures to help prevent run-off road and head-on crashes and their severity.

The work was funded by the NSW Government through the Safer Roads Program after a 2014 review by the Centre for Road Safety identified speeding and driver fatigue as the major hazards on this section of the highway.

Community consultation after the review identified the need for new overtaking lanes to provide safe passing opportunities for motorists stuck behind slower moving vehicles, easing frustration for all drivers and improving safety. A pull-over bay was constructed for Over Size Over Mass (OSOM) vehicles about 7.5 kilometres north of Baan Baa.

Other safety measures incorporated into the project include:

- Designated school bus stopping and turning bay near the Turrawan Road intersection
- 2.5-metre wide sealed shoulders providing more room for vehicles
- Widened roadside clear zones
- Raised retroreflective pavement markers
- Flatter roadside batters (or slopes)

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison said:

“Safety is our number one priority on all NSW roads and the work completed between Baan Baa and Turrawan reflects our commitment to making much-needed improvements wherever they are needed.

“Between July 2012 and October 2019 there were 18 crashes recorded in this area, including four fatal crashes, seven serious injury crashes and four moderate injury crashes.

“A high proportion of these crashes were the result of vehicles crossing the centre lines and safety improvements such as these can increase the distance between oncoming traffic and alert drivers when they leave their lane.

“Evidence shows that wire rope barriers can significantly reduce the risk of death and serious injury in crashes because they dissipate the energy of a crash away from people in cars, and because the rope deflects and contains the vehicle from hitting other objects, such as trees and other vehicles.”

Barwon Duty MLC Stephen Lawrence said:

“The Baan Baa to Turrawan safety upgrade has delivered a significant suite of changes that will not only improve safety for all motorists in the area but has also delivered a significant boost to the local economy.

“Each of the four sections of work supported about 160 local jobs, including staff from an average of 22 different contractors/suppliers who assisted with resources and skills per section.

“In all, 52 different contractors and suppliers conducted work on the project and they should all be very proud of the job they’ve delivered, despite several delays due to heavy rain in the area and the relocation of crews to other emergency patching jobs across the NSW roads network.”

Independent Member for Barwon Roy Butler MP said:

“This stretch of road sees a lot of heavy vehicles working on the mines, along with a lot of tourists and everyday traffic, any upgrade that improves safety is more than welcome.

“Work crews have laid 422,589 tonnes of locally-sourced crushed gravel and aggregate to build and seal the full length of highway and installed, laid audio tactile line marking (rumble strips) and installed other safety measures to help prevent run-off road and head-on crashes.

“I welcome any improvements to the road that make it safer and better to drive on.”

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