

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

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### **Creating economic opportunity and prosperity in the Northern Territory through our Comprehensive Roads Plan**

Road infrastructure is fundamental to the Northern Territory economy and is the key to our future prosperity. Currently, there are remote communities and towns across the Territory that are only connected by unsealed, and often unsafe roads. How can we ever expect to see economic development in remote communities if they remain disconnected? Truck drivers are forced to use corrugated roads to transport product to market from remote mines and cattle stations that is costing industry precious time and money. The defence of our nation requires vital supply lines, in the form of roads, to be well-maintained and accessible at all times. We never know when disaster may strike. All of these problems can be solved by a Comprehensive Plan to upgrade and seal the Northern Territory's road network and unlock the prosperity that has always been promised but yet to be realised. Ultimately, a modern, efficient and well-maintained road network unlocks jobs and economic opportunity for all Territorians.

The Country Liberal Party's Comprehensive Road Plan to Connect the NT is comprised of the following priorities:

- Sealing the Territory's primary economic roads and ensuring that these remain at a high standard
- Upgrading our unsealed trucking routes that have been left to erode and corrugate through the "rip and reform" method, ensuring they are safe now and ready for sealing into the future
- Bring forward already committed funding and works for the upgrading of identified Roads of Strategic Importance in the NT
- Upgrading of identified traffic trouble spots, with the Berrimah Road/Tiger Brennan Drive intersection being the primary example

Approximately, 70% of the Territory's roads are unsealed and have suffered from tightening maintenance schedules and budgets. Many of our key unsealed roads have been graded to the point of being "dug in" with pervasive corrugation.

The CLP recognise that well maintained unsealed roads are a cost effective way to improve connectivity across the Territory. In the first term of a CLP Government, we will invest in a "rip and reform" program, which removes defects and corrugation, whilst rebuilding and reforming the road to allow water drainage. This method prepares the road to be maintained until it is sealed.

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It is estimated that “rip and reform” is one-third of the cost of sealing a road, which means Territory taxpayer dollars can go further to improve the safety and efficiency of our road network. This method will be supported by a regular maintenance program that continues to shape and compact the road to optimal levels. Sealing can then be prioritised in sections in priority areas and packaged to support local contractors to win the work.

A core part of our Comprehensive Road Plan will be opening up economic opportunity for remote Aboriginal communities by improving access to regional centres and major transport routes.

Regional roads that will be prioritised by a CLP Government:

- Identified ‘Roads of Strategic Importance’, with Commonwealth funding:
  - Adelaide River to Wadeye Corridor: Port Keats Road, Daly River Road and Dorat Road – sealing and flood-proofing to ensure year-round access to Wadeye from the Stuart Highway
  - Mango Roads: sections of Chibnall Road, Mocatto Road, Horsnell Road and Kentish Road in the Litchfield Municipality – upgrades to improve transit times for getting mangoes to market
  - Alice Springs to Halls Creek Corridor: Tanami Road and Stuart Highway – sealing and weather-proofing to aid mining projects and cattle stations in getting product to market
  - Newman to Katherine Corridor: Victoria Highway – surface improvements and weather-proofing to ensure cattle stations can get product to market and export
  - Tennant Creek to Townsville Corridor: Barkly Highway - surface improvements and weather-proofing to ensure cattle stations can get product to market and export
- Roads aiding economic development of Aboriginal communities: Central Arnhem Road, Carpentaria Highway, Arnhem Link Road, Roper Highway, Port Melville Road (Pirlangimpi), Santa Teresa Road, Sandover Highway – sealing, flood-proofing and general upgrades to increase access for Aboriginal communities to enhance social connectivity and economic opportunity
- Other roads to open up industry and tourism: Buntine Highway (Cattle), Murandji Road (Cattle), Douglas-Daly Connector Road (Cotton/Mining/Timber), Larapinta Drive/Mereenie Inner Loop of the Red Centre Way (Tourism), Tablelands Highway Bridges (Cattle), Outback Way: Plenty Highway (Cattle/Tourism), Wologorang Road (Cattle/Tourism), Kakadu Roads (Tourism), Point Stuart Road (Fishing/Tourism)

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A CLP Government will plan and design “shovel ready” road projects for consideration by the Commonwealth Government as part of their infrastructure priorities. This is something that has been neglected over the past four years.

In addition to this state-building road infrastructure in regional NT, a CLP Government will ensure that our urban road network and capacity is ensuring road safety and best possible traffic distribution.

This will include urban road projects such as the Tiger Brennan Freeway Project Stage 1: Berrimah Road Intersection, which will be prioritised by a CLP Government.