

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics:

The Plenty Highway

- 1. Please provide a detailed schedule of all work done on the Plenty Highway in the 2020 calendar year, including road maintenance and upgrades.**

Capital Works

- Upgrade and seal from 152.075km to 167.110km, being a total of 15.035km, commenced on 18 September 2019 and completed on 7 May 2020.

Maintenance

- Three full length grades from end of seal to the Queensland Border were undertaken in February, July and October 2020.
- Various isolated pavement repairs using maintenance crews were undertaken as follows:
 - Chainage 389.21km to 498.99km;
 - Chainage 389km to 459km;
 - Chainage 376.67km to 382.67km;
 - Chainage 394km to 400km; and
 - Chainage 410km to 416km.

- 2. How much Government funding was allocated for the upgrade and maintenance of the Plenty Highway in 2020?**

In the 2020 calendar year, \$41.83 million was allocated for projects on the Plenty Highway.

This approved funding is scheduled for delivery over several financial years that takes into account likely weather conditions, industry capacity and resource priorities across the Northern Territory.

- 3. How much Government funding was spent on the upgrade and maintenance of the Plenty Highway in 2020?**

In the 2020 calendar year, \$10.995 million was spent on works on the Plenty Highway.

4. Why is the Plenty Highway in such a terrible state of disrepair?

Roads are impacted by weather conditions and traffic use.

The Department closely monitors the conditions on the unsealed sections of the Plenty Highway. Scheduled maintenance repairs are prioritised and undertaken when defects reach intervention levels.

Urgent flood repairs, which include grading and gravel repair works are in progress.

Targeted gravel re-sheeting between chainages 394km – 400km and 410km – 414km are scheduled to commence at the end of March 2021.

5. Why has the Plenty Highway been allowed to decline to this state?

The Plenty Highway currently has 330km of unsealed road.

The most effective form of maintenance is to balance and manage available resources and funding to progressively upgrade the high priority sections to a sealed road standard while continuing to maintain the unsealed sections.

This is evidenced by the 2021 repairs and maintenance spend on the unsealed section that includes 10kms of gravel re-sheeting works.

A strategy to upgrade the Plenty Highway has been developed in conjunction with the Australian Government and sections are being upgraded as funding is made available.

From 2016-2020, 70km of unsealed sections of the Plenty Highway have been upgraded to two lane seal and 15km of seal widening works have been completed. These works, combined with programmed maintenance activities have improved the overall standard of travel on the Plenty Highway.

6. What is the maintenance and upgrade plan for the Plenty Highway in 2021, including funding allocated?

In the 2021 calendar year, it is estimated that a total of \$19.44 million will be expended for works on the Plenty Highway, including progressive sealing of the Outback Way and new truck parking bays on Plenty Highway.

A further \$62.5 million has been committed to Outback Way upgrades across Tjukururu Road and Plenty Highway. Further planning and investigation work will be undertaken to confirm the allocation for Plenty Highway.