

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY****WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mr Elferink

to Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

**Palmer River bridge**

The Commonwealth Government has allocated \$6 million to the Northern Territory Government for the construction of a bridge at Palmer River. When will work be completed on this bridge?

**ANSWER**

It is anticipated that construction work for the new bridge on the Palmer River will be completed towards the end of the 2004-05 financial year.

The Federal Government gave approval to proceed with the design of a new high level bridge at the Stuart Highway crossing of the Palmer River on 9 April 2002.

There are two alignments currently being investigated for the new bridge. Option 1 is to offset the new bridge and approach roads about 50 metres upstream of the existing alignment. Option 2 is located about 1.1 km upstream of the existing alignment.

The advantage of Option 2 is that the approach road works will be located outside the Palmer River floodplain, but capital costs may be higher. Should this alignment be selected then resolution of from Native Title issues will be required.

Currently, concept designs and estimates are being completed for both alignments and Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority clearances have been requested.

A decision on the alignment option to be selected is expected in December 2003, provided the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority clearances are received, following which it is anticipated that design and documentation will be completed by April 2004.

Construction is targeted to commence early in the 2004-05 financial year, subject to resolution of Native Title issues, should Option 2 be selected.

The procurement process will take about two months and the contract will have a six to seven month construction period.