

**NICK DAMETTO**  
Member for Hinchinbrook

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## MEDIA RELEASE

17/1/2020

### Works to start next year on highway blackspot

FUNDING has been allocated and will be spent upgrading a dangerous stretch of the Bruce Highway at Black River that has been the site of several fatal accidents.

Transport and Main Roads (TMR) officials revealed works were set to start by Easter next year on a duplication of the highway between Veales Rd and Pope Road in a key meeting with stakeholders earlier this week involving Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto, Thuringowa MP Aaron Harper, Division 1 Councillor Margie Ryder and members of the Philpots family, who lost their son Kurt in a car accident south of the Black River bridge late last year.

Mr Dametto said the upgrade would be welcome news for motorists frequently travelling through the troubled section of highway, which was highlighted in a parliamentary e-petition started by the Philpots last month.

"I was proud to sponsor this petition on behalf of the Philpots family to help highlight the issue at Black River and I thank TMR for their proactive approach on this issue," Mr Dametto said.

"There have been too many needless deaths on this road over the years and everyone at the meeting was united in their desire to minimise the chance of more fatal accidents in future.

"There are many contributing factors to each road fatality that happens on our highway. In many cases, segregation of north and southbound traffic will play a significant role in reducing head on crashes. TMR have assured me projects of this significance are a priority and they are working as quickly as possible to get it started."

In addition to the duplication of the highway, which would provide double lanes travelling in either direction between Veales Rd and Pope Road, TMR will also be installing a second bridge over Black River, separating northbound and southbound traffic.

"TMR has confirmed to me that a business case for the project had progressed with the State Government just prior to Christmas last year and that the project is one Federal Government tick off being fully funded with consultation set to start with residents in the area as part of the design process," Mr Dametto said.

"A tender for works is then expected to go out towards the end of this year."

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Funding for the project is an 80/20 split between the Federal and State governments respectively, with the Federal Government expected to give final approval for the joint funding arrangement shortly.

Installing high impact signage in the area was also discussed at the meeting as an interim solution until works start next year.

"A decision to reduce the speed limit to 80km/h until road safety improvements are completed will be left in the hands of Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey. A temporary speed limit reduction was requested by the Philpots in their petition, but additional signage could be an alternative in the short term," Mr Dametto said.

The parliamentary e-petition runs until April 27, 2020 and will then be tabled in parliament before being assigned to the relevant government minister for a written response within 30 days.

To view the e-petition, click [here](#).

—ENDS—

### **Media Enquiries**

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