

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

9 May 2022

FLINDERS OVERTAKING LANES ON ROAD TO NOWHERE

Katter's Australian Party Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has slammed the Department of Transport and Main Roads for its snail's-pace approach to installing potentially lifesaving overtaking lanes on the Flinders Highway between Townsville and Charters Towers.

The desperately-needed upgrades had been in the works for almost two years, with DTMR Minister Mark Bailey confirming to Mr Katter in writing in September 2020 that three new lanes would be "under construction as soon as detailed design and procurement are completed".

Mr Katter publicly called for the works to be fast-tracked at the time but two years on, North Queenslanders are still waiting.

He said the lack of overtaking lanes on the stretch of highway had been a constant cause of concern to road-users.

"The safety issues on this stretch of road are compounded by high numbers of caravans during tourist season and large amounts of road haulage vehicles transporting goods from North-West Queensland to the Townsville Port," Mr Katter said.

"We have seen tragedies time and time again along this road.

"There are long stretches of road with no passing lanes and the increase in use by road trains and tourists drastically impacts traffic flow and sometimes sees light vehicles making seemingly dangerous overtaking moves."

Mr Katter was aware that overtaking lanes wouldn't solve all the problems, but said they would certainly reduce some of the risks currently posed by the inadequate piece of infrastructure.

Mr Katter said in recent weeks he was provided advice from the Government that

The Department of Transport and Main Roads advised it would commence construction on three new overtaking lanes in June, but Mr Katter warned that if nothing had been started by July 1, he would take action.

"If we don't see the sod turned on these projects by July 1, it will require some drastic efforts on behalf of myself and the wider community to make clear to the Minister and his Department that we have run out of patience," he said.

KAP Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter said it was always curious which projects were fast-tracked.

"The Flinders Highway is notoriously bad for fatal traffic accidents and the three new overtaking lanes would save lives," he said.

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

"The State Labor Government pours billions into tunnels in Brisbane and the South-East.

"We've been waiting two or three years for these overtaking lanes to go in. The time for excuses is over; we need to see the graders on the road and bitumen being poured."

Mr Katter accused Labor and the LNP of saying things at election time and then doing nothing, and said the KAP was there to keep the major parties accountable.

"The Premier stood out the front of the Mount Isa Mines and said, 'we will build Copperstring', well two years on and she hasn't facilitated the legislation needed to get the projects started.

"Both parties at state and federal levels have committed money for Big Rocks Weir, and yet they are still doing studies and reports."

Robbie Katter also expressed his frustration.

"Billions of dollars are being spent on facilities to host the Olympics, which is ten years down the track, and we are yet to see a few million up this way to bring this important stretch of road up to a semblance of a decent standard," he said.

"We have waited long enough, and I now look forward to seeing work on these overtaking lanes commence."

—ENDS—

Media inquiries: 4787 2139