



## **The Hon Scott Morrison MP**

Prime Minister

## **The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP**

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

## **The Hon David Littleproud MP**

Deputy Leader of the Nationals

Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia

Federal Member for Maranoa

## **The Hon Rick Wilson MP**

Federal Member for O'Connor

## **Senator Susan McDonald**

Senator for Queensland

Special Envoy for Northern Australia

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 21 February 2022

### **\$678 MILLION TO FURTHER SEAL AND UPGRADE OUTBACK WAY**

The Morrison-Joyce Government will invest an additional \$678 million to seal another 1,000 kilometres of road and deliver further upgrades along Australia's longest shortcut, Outback Way, creating thousands of jobs and better connecting regional industries and communities.

As part of the works, the remaining unsealed and substandard sections of Outback Way in Queensland and Western Australia will be sealed. Additional priority sections on the Plenty Highway and Tjukaruru Road in the Northern Territory will also be upgraded.

The Government is committed to sealing the entire 2,720 kilometres of Outback Way and today's funding commitment will help get the job done, cutting travel times for freight and tourists while giving residents along the route improved access to the supplies they need to live.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the upgrades would support 2,197 jobs, and deliver an important economic boost across Australia's centre.

"Our additional investment of \$678 million in Outback Way is part of our plan for a strong economy across Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia," the Prime Minister said.

"Investing in infrastructure right across Australia will keep our economy strong and growing while ensuring Australians, regardless of where they live, have jobs.

"Our investment locks in a pipeline of works that will drive investment in regional Australia and boost economies from Winton in Queensland to Laverton in Western Australia, helping regional and remote communities and those who call them home to grow and prosper."

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the Government was delivering on its commitment to seal the entire length of Outback Way.

“The Nationals and Liberals had the vision to start these upgrades and we are driving ahead with the sealing of the third road that runs east to west across our nation, from Winton to Laverton,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

“Outback Way is a vital piece of national transport infrastructure that supports regional economies the length of the 2,720 kilometre route and connects them to the rest of Australia.

“This additional funding builds on the \$330 million we’ve invested since 2013 to seal over 600 kilometres of Outback Way, giving freight, tourists and locals a smoother, safer drive.

“\$124 million will be spent on upgrades in the Northern Territory alone, creating 442 jobs for locals and delivering a much-needed economic injection in the Territory.

“These upgrades will spark new opportunities for industries along the route, including the critical earth precincts north of Alice Springs, the gold precincts around Laverton and the massive beef industry, while ensuring communities and people on the corridor have better access to supplies.”

Federal Member for Maranoa David Littleproud said \$154 million would be invested in the Queensland section of Outback Way, creating 671 jobs across the state and driving economic growth.

“Sealing and upgrading Outback Way will reduce the long and unreliable travel times that freight and motorists experience along sections of the route,” Mr Littleproud said.

“The upgrades will also drive economic growth in remote communities, bring more tourists, improve connections between people, jobs and services, and goods with markets.”

Federal Member for O’Connor Rick Wilson said the Federal Government had put \$400 million on the table to seal the full length of Outback Way in Western Australia.

“This funding commitment will create 1,084 jobs in Western Australia, delivering a significant boost to our regional and remote towns,” Mr Wilson said.

“A sealed route will also deliver social benefits for communities by improving access to goods and services and increased employment opportunities, particularly for Indigenous communities.”

Senator for Queensland and Special Envoy for Northern Australia Susan McDonald said mining and agriculture businesses would benefit from the Government’s investment in in western Queensland.

“\$41.5 million of this funding will go towards progressively sealing the remaining unsealed sections of the Donohue Highway in Queensland, to improve safety and efficiency,” Senator McDonald said.

“Solely-funded by the Australian Government, the Donohue Highway sealing works will support around 124 jobs during construction, providing a major boost to the local economy.”

The Government’s additional funding for Outback Way means upgrades can continue to be rolled out as previously funded works are completed.

The Australian Government’s funding commitment represents 80 per cent of the total funding package, with state and territory governments providing the remaining 20 per cent.

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