

Deputy Premier
Treasurer
Minister for Infrastructure

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Mr Mark Shelton
Liberal Member for Lyons
Email: mark.shelton@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Shelton

In Parliament on 11 June 2024 you requested information from me as Minister for Infrastructure on behalf of a constituent in Westbury as follows:

A Lyons resident in Westbury has requested a response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the following question: the Liberal Government announced a lot of road upgrades in the lead-up to the Tasmanian election earlier this year, including works on the Bass Highway. Can the Minister please give a time frame for the duplication of the Bass Highway between Hadspen - or more accurately, Hadspen Bridge - and Deloraine, and how will this be completed with the \$20 million that has been committed to it?

In response to this question I can advise as follows:

The Tasmanian Government commitment of \$20 million towards the duplication of the Bass Highway into a consistent four-lane link between Launceston and Deloraine requires a commitment of \$80 million from the Australian Government under the well-established precedent of the Commonwealth contributing 80 per cent for regional highways.

Timing of these projects is therefore dependent upon a commitment (and budget profiling) of Commonwealth funds.

As you are aware, the Bass Highway is a key corridor linking major population centres, transport hubs and ports and agricultural districts. The Bass Highway Corridor Strategy – Launceston to Devonport identifies 66 potential improvements for the 91 kilometre section of the Highway between Hadspen and Port Sorell Road.

The Tasmanian Liberals promised in the 2024 election campaign to prioritise this section and now that we have formed Government we remain committed to deliver this important upgrade, subject to an Australian Government co-contribution.

The Highway between Hadspen and Deloraine has been progressively realigned to bypass towns, enabling full duplication.

Given the rate of traffic growth on this section of the Highway at 2 per cent a year (and 4 per cent for heavy vehicles), the demand for a safer and more efficient Bass Highway is well established.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Ferguson'.

Michael Ferguson MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Infrastructure

19/6/2024