



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Minister for Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development
and Local Government
Leader of the House

Reference: 03040-2008

Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

14 APR 2008

Dear Mrs Irwin

Thank you for your letter dated 17 March 2008 about a petition calling for an upgrade of the Port Keats Road in the Northern Territory and referring a copy of the petition for my attention.

The Australian Government understands the access difficulties faced by communities relying on the Port Keats Road, which can be impassable for extended periods during the wet season.

The Australian Government has announced a range of commitments that will form the basis of a future land transport program from 2009-10 to 2013-14. A total of \$386 million has been committed towards projects in the Northern Territory, which includes a package of \$52 million for a range of projects on community, beef and mining roads. This package includes \$10 million towards upgrading the Port Keats Road in partnership with the Northern Territory Government.

The proposed upgrade works include a high level bridge over the Daly River and bridges over the Moyle and Tommy Turners Crossings on the Moyle River flood plain. The Australian Government will progress the shape of the future program during 2008 through negotiations with state and territory governments and I look forward to announcing the timing of funding availability following the finalisation of program details.

The Australian Government is already providing \$4.95 million towards a \$9.9 million Port Keats Road upgrade project, which is an AusLink Strategic Regional project. The Northern Territory Government is also contributing \$4.95 million towards the project, which is expected to be completed by early 2009.

The project involves the sealing and upgrading of floodways between the Port Keats T junction and Palumpa and selected floodways between Palumpa and the Daly River. These include Anopheles Creek, Chalanyi Creek, Wait a While Creek, Sandy Creek, Moyle River and Little Moyle Creek. Dangerous sections of road between Palumpa and Peppimenarti will be widened and dangerous bends between Peppimenarti and Sandy Creek realigned.

Thank you again for bringing this matter to my attention and I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

~~ANTHONY~~ ALBANESE