

# On road to progress thanks to spirit of co-operation

IT IS great to see the State and Federal governments work together to provide funding for crucial regional roads, such as the sealing of the Hann Highway.

Work recently started on the \$53 million upgrade of the Hann Highway, which will see the final 36km stretch sealed over the next three years. Sealing the highway will help all businesses and tourists save hours of travel between far north Queensland and southern markets in Victoria and South Australia. While this road project will deliver a more reliable freight and tourist route for the North, it will also provide hundreds of much needed jobs for the region over the next few years.

This road project has come to fruition thanks to the work and lobbying of the Hann Highway Action Group, the Flinders and Etheridge shire councils and Flinders Mayor Jane McNamara, who is also a member of the Northern Australia Advisory Council.

As chair of the Inland Queensland Roads Action Plan (IQ-RAP) I know all too well what can be achieved when regional councils come together in a united voice and with a common goal to improve regional sustainability, productivity and safety on Queensland's inland road network.

The IQ-RAP prioritises upgrades over the next 18 years and is designed to assist governments and stakeholders to assess and prioritise projects for funding. The plan identified over 3000km of road that requires upgrades, which included the Hann Highway.

I am pleased to see State and Federal governments recognising that regional roads are the key to economic growth in the North and I look forward to further commitments to Queensland's inland road network.

CR RICK BRITTON, Chair IQ-RAP Working Group, Mayor of Boulia Shire Council.