

It's time to upgrade inland road network

THE unprecedented floods have had a devastating impact on the people in the communities of North West Queensland.

Also during these weather events we realise we can become isolated and cut off from essential supplies when roads are either flooded over or left in disrepair.

I would, therefore, like to thank the Department of Main Roads and Transport for the fast action in working on the Flinders Highway and regional development roads since the flood waters receded.

To this end I would like to once again recommend the Inland Queensland

Roads Action Project (IQ-RAP) which identified that nearly 3000km of important roads and more than 300 bridges and culverts require upgrading within the shires who are a part of this group.

This is an excellent opportunity to address the identified pinch points through "betterment" to the required standards when carrying out flood repairs.

The IQ-RAP partner local government areas alone contribute \$43.5 billion to the national economy. In real terms that is nearly as much as the contribution of Tasmania and the Northern Territory com-

bined. The Inland Queensland Roads Action Report is an economic development initiative to further develop local industries and attract new investment.

It is vital we increase the quality and accessibility of the inland road network to secure the economic growth of rural and regional Queensland.

It is time to improve the quality of our roads with a "Betterment" program that is fit for purpose across our freight corridors.

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Flinders Shire Council Mayor.

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IQRAP LETTER TO EDITOR.