



## Ken O'Dowd MP

Federal Member for Flynn

22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2018

Ref: KOWD:LHB

Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann  
Minister for Finance  
Special Minister of State  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear ~~Minister~~ *mathias*

**Re: Support for the "Better Roads for Regional Development" pre-Budget submission made on behalf of the IQ-RAP Working Group by RDA Townsville and North West Queensland**

As the Member for Flynn, with offices in Gladstone and Emerald in regional Queensland, I have met with the IQ-RAP Working Group and Secretariat and wish to demonstrate my support of their pre-budget submission.

As my local governments (Banana Shire Council, Central Highlands Regional Council and Gladstone Regional Council) are partners in the IQ-RAP, I have a strong interest in this project and am convinced that it can achieve a wide range of government objectives in our region and more broadly including job creation, closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage, improving productivity for all businesses and especially exporters, creating more resilient networks, improving safety and opening up new opportunities to diversify local economies through tourism.

This is a first of its kind project in terms of scale of collaboration, coverage, timelines and potential impact on regional sustainability. Thirty three (33) regional Queensland councils have partnered together with five RDA committees and RACQ to collaborate on developing the strategic freight and tourism planning tool for the 82% of the state that lies west of the Bruce Highway and outside South East Queensland.

After the initial launch of the IQ-RAP in 2016, IQ-RAP is now being updated and is the basis for the proposed research projects to inform the business case for IQ-RAP, and other regional roads planning across Australia.

To take the IQ-RAP forward, the Working Group requires \$2 million in funding support to complement their work with more economic and social data.

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**Gladstone Office:** 76 Goondoon Street, Gladstone Qld 4680; Ph: 07 4972 5465; Fax: 07 4972 0888  
**Emerald:** 2/115 Egerton Street, PO Box 432, Emerald Qld 4720; Ph: 07 4982 4266; Fax: 07 4982 4025  
**Toll free:** 1300 131 690; **Email:** ken.o'dowd.mp@aph.gov.au;  
**Website:** [www.kenodowd.com.au](http://www.kenodowd.com.au); **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ken.odowdmp](https://www.facebook.com/ken.odowdmp)

This will help form the business case and answer questions that have been put forward to them by parliamentarians and funding decision-makers. For example, where specifically will the 31,500 jobs be created; how will this help close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage across rural and remote areas; what will be the productivity gains on each road and bridge upgrade that is critical for freight movements; what tourism opportunities can be leveraged from upgrades to roads and safety.

As regional Queensland stakeholders have already contributed \$400,000 in cash and nearly \$400,000 in-kind to this project to date, I recommend that the Australian Government fund the \$2 million required to deliver the nine research projects that will benefit not only local governments in Queensland but other regional organisations across Australia that are involved in planning and funding regional roads.

I attach a summary of the pre-Budget submission and look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely



**Ken O'Dowd MP**  
**Federal Member for Flynn**

Enc x 3 : Inland Queensland Action Plan, Support Letter Central Highlands Regional Council, Tablelands Regional Council

Cc:

The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

The Hon Matt Canavan, Minister for Resources and Northern Australia

The Hon John McVeigh, Minister for Regional Development

The Hon David Littleproud, Minister for Agriculture and Water

Senator the Hon James McGrath

Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald

Senator Barry O'Sullivan

Ms Glenys Schuntner, Secretariat, IQ-RAP Working Group c/ RDA Townsville and North West Queensland

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**Toll free:** 1300 131 690; **Email:** ken.o'dowd.mp@aph.gov.au;  
**Website:** [www.kenodowd.com.au](http://www.kenodowd.com.au); **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ken.odowdmp](http://www.facebook.com/ken.odowdmp)



# Inland Queensland Roads Action Plan

*Driving Productivity  
in Australia's Transport Network*

## BETTER ROADS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Australian Government and regional Australia can benefit through the support of this pre-budget submission. Its scope and goals align with the government's work on the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy, the White Papers on Developing Northern Australia and Agricultural Competitiveness and the goals to encourage decentralisation, build capacity for economic diversity through opening up tourism opportunities, close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and increase Australia's productivity, particularly in exporting.

The Australian Government can:

1. Further demonstrate its interest in the future of regional Australia by collaborating with 34 regional partners on a first of its kind project – the IQ-RAP, recognising and encouraging cross-regional collaboration and long-term strategic planning;
2. Support the development of a more robust evidence base to inform not only regional Queensland in planning and prioritising their strategic freight and tourism routes, but also regional areas across Australia;
3. Be informed of how the forecast 31,500 jobs from IQ-RAP implementation can impact local employment, especially in rural and remote areas including opportunities for Indigenous businesses and employment;
  - a. Outback Queensland, which makes up a large part of the IQ-RAP area, is experiencing extremely high unemployment at 13.1% with youth unemployment now over 60%.
  - b. Across the 28 local governments that are funding IQ-RAP 2, 17,000 people are unemployed. Neighbouring shires that will also benefit from IQ-RAP have another 25,000 people unemployed.
4. Be informed of the opportunities and impacts of increasing tourism as an economic diversifier in regional areas, especially in areas that rely heavily on mining or agriculture;
5. Be informed of opportunities and impacts to improve productivity through bitumen sealing, with reference to CSIRO TRANSIT data (which is also being referenced in the current update to IQ-RAP);
6. Be informed of opportunities to improve road safety; and
7. Be informed of opportunities and impacts of improving resilience in networks for the benefit of industries and communities.

The total cost to complete the nine proposed projects is \$2 million. This will be complemented by approximately \$200,000 of in-kind support. This new funding will leverage the \$400,000 in cash and nearly \$400,000 in-kind that has been committed to this project over the past four years by IQ-RAP partners, Working Group members and RDA Townsville and North West Queensland which has provided Secretariat and project management services.

Projects will be prioritised in consultation with the Australian Government and will take up to two years to complete.



# Inland Queensland Roads Action Plan

*Driving Productivity  
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## PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

The submission provides a Terms of Reference for individual projects with a description of the purpose, rationale, scope of works and outputs for each project. These were developed after extensive consultation. A brief summary is provided below.

- **Work Program Optimisation** will identify mechanisms to optimise road work efficiency and local government staffing by improving collaboration and delivering more predictable and consistent work flow.
- **Benefits of bitumen sealing of regional roads** will identify the economic, social and environmental impacts of the bitumen sealing of regional and remote roads by exploring road safety, travel time, road maintenance, vehicle maintenance, dust pollution and tourism implications.
- **Connecting with Inland Rail** identifies the opportunities for the IQ-RAP road network associated with the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail link and an intermodal facility at Toowoomba.
- **Learnings from the Outback Way** explores the successful advocacy, planning and delivery of the Outback Way upgrading from Queensland, through Northern Territory to Western Australia.
- **Road Safety Ratings** will star rate the Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) in the IQ-RAP network based on the road design, condition and use data, utilising accepted methodologies.
- **Reliable access for remote communities** will identify the long-term benefits from upgrading a remote road link to reduce the frequency and duration of road closures from extreme weather.
- **Remote and Indigenous Employment Impacts** will identify the wider economic and social impacts of road construction jobs on youth unemployment, long-term unemployment and training and skills development across regional, remote and indigenous communities.
- **Drive tourism potential across IQ-RAP** will establish the potential for increased drive and coach tourism visits resulting from road network improvements across the outback.
- **Incorporate learnings in IQ-RAP 3** will assemble the learnings and data from the eight prior projects and use these to update IQ-RAP and other road planning exercises in 2020.
- **IQ-RAP Social and Economic Program Management** will ensure all projects take account of prior learnings and are effectively managed and delivered on time and budget, and that outcomes are made available to all stakeholders across Australia.

The IQ-RAP Working Group will be the responsible Steering Committee and would welcome Federal and State Government representation. Program management will occur within the Secretariat.

**Contact Name:** Cr Kerry Hayes  
**Telephone:** 1300 242 686  
**Fax:** 1300 242 687  
**Email:** mayor@chrc.qld.gov.au  
**Address:** PO Box 21, Emerald QLD 4720

20 February 2018

Mr Ken O'Dowd MP  
Federal Member for Flynn  
PO Box 432  
EMERALD QLD 4720

Dear Ken

**Letter of Support – Inland Queensland Road Action Plan (IQ-RAP)**

Central Highlands Regional Council provides this correspondence to support the application by IQ-RAP to secure funding and continuing their important planning for Inland Australia.

Our LGA has embarked on a significant agricultural initiative around securing a complete industry capability document and critical data that shows that our region is a major contributor to an industry that this year became the largest dollar component of national income.

Importantly the linkages between our region in all directions as part of the IQ-RAP strategy will enhance the logistical improvements required to keep our products first and freshest and competitive.

Our data has improved and enhanced the CSIRO TransIT model showing that there is a very clear and urgent need for investment along the transport and freight corridors identified in the IQ-RAP project.

The development of the CQIP further highlights the capacity building required in regional Queensland and the intermodal hubs that will contribute to cost savings and mitigate recurring road maintenance expenditure.

We urge the Federal Government to consider this application favourably to ensure that we continue to build Regional Australia and its communities.

Kind regards



**Cr Kerry Hayes**  
Mayor  
Central Highlands Regional Council



PO Box 573, Atherton QLD 4883  
Telephone: 1300 362 242  
Facsimile: (07) 4091 4300  
info@trc.qld.gov.au

Office of the Mayor

20 February 2018

File Ref: GOV-GEN  
Your Ref:

The Mr Ken O'Dowd MP  
Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth  
P O Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: [ken.o'dowd.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:ken.o'dowd.mp@aph.gov.au)

Dear Sir

**BETTER ROADS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Re: Support for the "Better Roads for Regional Development" pre-Budget submission made on behalf of the IQ-RAP Working Group by RDA Townsville and North West Queensland

As Tablelands Regional Council has been a funding partner in IQ-RAP since 2015, I write to you to seek your funding support of the "Better Roads for Regional Development" submission to enable the proposed research to ensure more appropriate assessment of regional roads and the economic and social benefits that can be achieved. Current cost benefit analysis used on metropolitan roads is not well suited to regional roads planning and investment decision-making. Please see our attachments for more details.

I note that our council is part of an overall partnership of 28 local governments, 5 RDA committees and RACQ that are funding IQ-RAP's on-going development and this submission.

As you know, the inland road network is of critical significance to the sustainability of our regional communities and their industries.

I also note that the IQ-RAP Working Group has secured many letters of support for IQ-RAP, including from the Infrastructure Association of Queensland, MITEZ, Outback Queensland Tourism Association, National Farmers' Federation, Queensland Farmers' Federation, Agforce, Growcom and Queensland Tourism Industry Council as peak industry bodies and Brisbane Markets Limited and Hancock Prospecting as major operators.

This is a first of its kind project in terms of scale of collaboration, coverage, timelines and potential impact on regional sustainability. After the initial launch of the IQ-RAP in 2016, IQ-RAP is now being updated and is the basis for the proposed research projects to inform the business case for IQ-RAP, and other regional roads planning across Australia.

To take the IQ-RAP forward, the Working Group requires \$2 million in funding support to develop more economic and social data that is relevant to regional roads planning. It is estimated that approximately \$200,000 of in-kind support will be provided by the IQ-RAP Working Group and Secretariat.

This will help form the business case and answer questions that have been put forward to us by parliamentarians and departmental executives. For example, where specifically will the 31,500 jobs be created; how will this help close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage across rural and remote

areas; what will be the productivity gains on each road and bridge upgrade that is critical for freight movements; what tourism opportunities can be leveraged from upgrades to roads and safety.

As all councils, RDA committees, RACQ and other supporters have already contributed \$400,000 in cash and nearly \$400,000 in-kind to this project to date, I recommend that the Australian Government fund the \$2 million required to deliver the nine research projects that will benefit not only local governments in Queensland but other regional organisations across Australia that are involved in planning and funding regional roads.

I attach the full submission and a summary of the pre-Budget submission and look forward to your advocacy to help us gain funding for the "Better Roads for Regional Development" submission.

Yours faithfully



**CR JOE PARONELLA**  
**MAYOR**

Cc:  
Ms Glenys Schuntner, Secretariat, IQ-RAP Working Group c/ RDA Townsville and North West Queensland [ceo@rdanwq.org.au](mailto:ceo@rdanwq.org.au)