



**JAMES McGRATH**  
ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER  
LNP SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann  
Minister for Finance  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

**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**

I recently met with the IQ-RAP Working Group's Cr Britton, Cr McNamara and Cr Gilmore and the Secretariat's Ms Schuntner regarding their pre-budget submission. The purpose of this letter is to place on record my strong support for their submission.

The IQ-RAP project and their pre-budget submission are critical in achieving the Australian Government's objectives to increase our agricultural competitiveness, increase exports, develop the North, support decentralisation, and create jobs to sustain regional communities and local governments.

I also note that the IQ-RAP Working Group has secured support from a wide range of peak industry bodies, as well as the private sector.

This is a first of its kind project in terms of scale of collaboration, coverage, timelines and potential impact on regional sustainability. IQ-RAP was launched in 2016 and it is now being updated by 28 local governments, five RDA committees and the RACQ – it will be completed by May, 2018. IQ-RAP 2 will be the basis for the proposed research projects.

To take the IQ-RAP forward in 2018/19, the Working Group requires \$2 million in funding to support and complement their work with more economic and social data.

This data will help form the business case and answer questions that have been put forward by parliamentarians and department executives. For example, it will inform where the 31,500 jobs will be created; how will this help close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage across rural and remote areas; the productivity gains on each road and bridge upgrade that are critical for freight movements; and what tourism opportunities can be leveraged from upgrades to roads and road 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 the Australian Government fund the additional \$2 million required to deliver the nine research projects, which will benefit not only regional Queensland but others 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 to the *Better Roads for Regional Development* proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ja.', with a period at the end.

**James McGrath**  
**ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER**  
**LNP SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND**

Cc: The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport  
Senator the Hon Matt Canavan, Minister for Resources and Northern Australia  
The Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources  
The Hon Dr John McVeigh MP, Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government  
Ms Glenys Schuntner, Secretariat, IQ-RAP Working Group c/ RDA Townsville and North West Queensland