

Communique

Cape York Region Package Taskforce and Sub-Working Group – November 2020

The Cape York Region Package (CYRP) Taskforce and Sub-Working Group (SWG) met on 16 November 2020. The meeting was held in Weipa and via teleconference.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) provided updates on the progress of CYRP Stage 1, the Social Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment (SEEIA), CYRP Stage 2, the Community Access Roads Program (CARP) and the Peninsula Developmental Road (PDR) Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) scholarships program.

CYRP Stage 1

The \$276 million CYRP Stage 1 was jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments on an 80:20 basis and was delivered over five years (2014-15 to 2018-19). It comprised of:

- \$215.5 million to seal priority gravel sections of the Peninsula Developmental Road (PDR)
- \$10 million for sealing works on the Endeavour Valley Road (EVR) between Cooktown and Hope Vale
- \$50.5 million for priority community infrastructure upgrades.

SEEIA

- Consultants 'Just Add Lime' have completed development of the SEEIA framework. This evaluation tool is used to 'look back' and evaluate the impacts that have occurred.
- Development of the methodology and data strategy commenced in October 2020.

CYRP Stage 2

CYRP Stage 2 is a \$237.5 million program of works to continue upgrading priority road infrastructure on Cape York Peninsula. The program is jointly funded by the Australian Government and Queensland Government on an 80:20 basis, with the Australian Government contributing \$190 million and the Queensland Government contributing \$47.5 million.

PDR program

The CYRP Stage 2 PDR program was developed to ensure a geographic spread of construction work to maximise economic benefits across Cape York throughout the five-year delivery period. Projects were also selected in consideration of the availability of key resources, such as water and gravel along the PDR.

The CYRP Stage 2 PDR program includes 11 projects to seal about 55 kilometres of the PDR:

- eight pave and seal projects between Laura and Coen
- one pave and seal project north of the Archer River, including the Aurukun Access Road intersection
- construction of the Archer River Bridge southern approach
- construction of the Archer River Bridge.

The CYRP Stage 2 early works program commenced in 2020. This includes two projects that will complete a further 15.6 kilometres of bitumen seal between Laura and Musgrave. TMR completed the Fairview West (Part B) project on 6 November 2020. The Kennedy to Rocky Creek project is due for completion in mid-2021, weather permitting.

PDR projects commencing in 2021 and 2022 include:

- Archer River Crossing
- Archer River Crossing Southern Approach
- Merluna to York Downs Part B
- Musgrave to Red Blanket Part A

CARP

In partnership with the Torres and Cape Indigenous Council Alliance, TMR identified a program of works to upgrade unsealed sections of primary access roads to remote communities under CYRP Stage 2.

On 28 October 2020, the Honourable Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development approved the CARP Project Proposal Report. This program will seal a total of about 72 kilometres of four community access roads that connect to the PDR:

- 20.3 kilometres of Northern Peninsula Road
- 9.7 kilometres of Portland Roads Road (Lockhart River Access Road)
- 21.8 kilometres of the Aurukun Access Road
- 20.4 kilometres of Strathgordon Road (Pormpuraaw Access Road)

TMR is currently finalising agreements for the proposed works.

PDR scholarships

- Applications opened on 17 July 2020 and closed on 18 September 2020.
- TMR received 14 secondary and 14 tertiary scholarship applications
- A panel including representatives from TMR, Cape York Land Council and traditional owners completed shortlisting in October 2020.
- Successful applicants will be advised before the start of the 2021 academic year.

General business

The CYRP Taskforce and SWG raised the importance of ongoing Indigenous training, employment and business opportunities throughout the program.

The CYRP Taskforce and SWG also recognised the significant contribution, cooperation and collaboration by local, state and federal government organisations in the development and delivery of the CYRP and noted it as being a strong contributing factor for its success to date. Such collaboration and cooperation are noted as a principle that will be upheld by the CYRP Taskforce and SWG as and when future CYRP works are developed and delivered.

It was agreed that future CYRP Taskforce and SWG meetings will be scheduled every six months. CYRP Taskforce and SWG meetings will be held in Cape York in either Laura, Coen, Cooktown or Weipa to support effective communication and engagement with Cape York communities.

- Next CYRP Taskforce and SWG meeting – TBC (May 2021)
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Further information:

TMR updates and information available here:

- <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/projects/cape-york-region-package>
- <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/projects/cape-york-region-package-stage-2>

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- <https://www.rdatropicalnorth.org.au/>