

Media Release

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Road Advocacy Pays Off For Top of the Yorke

Barunga West Council's persistent advocacy for road safety improvements on the Upper Yorke Road between Bute and Port Broughton has paid off, with the State Government to undertake heavy patching works valued at around \$600,000.

The Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) is also exploring improvements along Upper Yorke Road as part of a joint federal-state \$1.68 billion Road Safety Program. This includes funding for new regional works such as shoulder sealing, audio-tactile line markings, delineation, roadside barriers, lane/curve widening and pavement works.

This will see regional roads where work is undertaken improved to at least a 3-star safety rating level. The projects and locations will be determined throughout 2024, and Barunga West Council is hopeful Upper Yorke Road will be favourably considered.

Barunga West Mayor Leonie Kerley and Council CEO Maree Wauchope welcomed the State Government's confirmation of a significant safety upgrade to a critical stretch of road between Bute and Port Broughton, which came in response to the council's and elected members' concerted efforts.

Following extensive discussions, presentations to Community Cabinet, and direct correspondence with the Premier before Christmas, the Minister for Regional Roads Geoff Brock has advised three locations along Upper Yorke Road have been identified to receive targeted heavy patching works.

These sections are located 15km, 23km, and 28km south of Port Broughton. These works are scheduled for completion by the end of March 2024, weather permitting.

"These upgrades to sections of Upper Yorke Road will go a long way to helping reduce the South Australian road toll," Minister Brock said.

Ms Wauchope said the upgrades are a testament to the Council's unwavering commitment to road safety and infrastructure improvement within the region.

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Mayor Kerley, who has been a steadfast advocate for this upgrade during the past three years, emphasised the road's importance as a vital link that supports not only local tourism but also serves as an essential route for the community's daily activities.

"This upgrade is a critical step forward in our ongoing mission to ensure the safety of our roads and the people who travel on them," Mayor Kerley said.

"The Bute to Port Broughton section of the Upper Yorke Road serves as a vital artery connecting Adelaide to the Top of the Yorke Peninsula and the mid-north region. It plays a pivotal role as an essential route for the community's daily activities and promotes tourism, a sector that is of growing importance to our local economy.

"For the residents of Barunga West, the state of our roads is of paramount concern. Roads are not merely conduits for transportation; they serve as pathways to employment, education, healthcare, and essential services. They are integral to ensuring public safety, enhancing the tourism experience, and fostering economic growth."

Charles Mountain, RAA Senior Manager for Safety & Infrastructure, said greater infrastructure investment across the state's road network was overdue.

"Road and infrastructure upgrades make our roads safer and can help save lives and prevent injuries – which is more important than ever," he said.

Barunga West Council extends its gratitude to the State Government, Premier Peter Malinauskas, Minister Brock and Member for Narungga Fraser Ellis for recognising the urgency of the issue and taking decisive action.

This development not only reflects the power of effective advocacy and partnership between local and state governments but also marks a significant victory for the residents of Barunga West and all who rely on the Upper Yorke Road for safe travel.

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