

INFRASTRUCTURE AUSTRALIA RECOMMENDATIONS – SA DOESN'T MAKE THE CUT....AGAIN!

The failure of any of South Australia's worst roads to make this week's Infrastructure Australia list of highest priority projects, and with that early Federal Government funding, has been slammed by the Civil Contractors Federation – South Australia as completely unacceptable and totally lamentable.

Infrastructure Australia is the independent statutory body that is the key source of advice for the Federal Government on nationally significant infrastructure needs. The Federal Government pays close attention to Infrastructure Australia when deciding on projects to be funded.

"It is a matter of very serious concern that there is not a single new road or rail project earmarked for SA on Infrastructure Australia's updated high priority list. Alarming, this has been the case for several years" CCF (SA) Chief Executive, Mr Phil Sutherland said today.

Mr Sutherland says when it comes to Federal Government road funding, compared with the investment in the other states; South Australia is the poor relation. He says this is not helped when the State's roads are not even on Infrastructure Australia's lists.

"You have to ask the question. Why aren't those South Australian roads with high casualty rates and roads critical to the social and economic development of the State, on Infrastructure Australia's radar?"

"Where is the disconnect, is it that business cases are not being prepared by our State Government agencies and submitted to Infrastructure Australia?"

"Hopefully, the promised 20 year plan being developed by Infrastructure SA may help to remedy the situation," Mr Sutherland said.

"The only so called priority initiative projects on the Infrastructure Australia lists are the North-South corridor, AdeLINK tram network, Strzelecki Track and Sturt Highway improvements. Of these, the North-South corridor upgrade has just about come to a stand-still, and the current State Government is not committed to the tram network project.

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“The economic stimulus generated from public investment in roads is now critical given the downturn in State revenues as a result of the fires, the coronavirus and a sluggish State economy.

“We are calling on the Federal and State Governments to fast track road and rail projects to boost SA’s economy and grow jobs.

“It beggars belief that none of South Australia’s 10 worst roads made the Infrastructure Australia cut. These are:

1. Port Wakefield – Port Augusta (Augusta Highway)
2. Tailem Bend – SA/VIC Boarder (Dukes Highway)
3. Keith – Mt Gambier (Riddoch Highway)
4. Gawler – Clare (Horrocks Highway)
5. Port Augusta – Port Lincoln (Lincoln Highway)
6. Old Noarlunga – Victor Harbor (Victor Harbor Road)
7. Wistow – Goolwa (Long Valley Road / Alexandrina Road)
8. Tailem Bend – Mt Gambier (Princes Highway)
9. Barmera – Berri (Old Sturt Highway)
10. Loxton - Pinnaroo (Browns Well Highway)

“More than 500 people have been killed on our State’s regional roads alone in the past eight years. The Augusta Highway in particular has been responsible for the deaths of 20 motorists in the past three years, and been responsible for over 60 serious injuries.

“When it comes to Federal Government road funding, SA has 11% of the national road network but receives just 7% of the funding. Infrastructure Australia could help address that short fall.

“South Australia’s road network remains the worst in the nation and was largely built soon after the Second World War to service an entirely different economy. The economy then was much smaller, there were fewer people, the traffic was less, and the vehicles were smaller and lighter.

“Poor road infrastructure constrains mobility, raises vehicle operating costs including repairs, requires more fuel use, increases accident rates, aggravates isolation, poverty, poor health, and illiteracy and is a handbrake on the economy, hampering metropolitan and regional development alike.

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“What we need is better roads, and we need them now” Mr Sutherland said.

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ABOUT THE CIVIL CONTRACTORS FEDERATION: The Civil Contractors Federation (South Australian Branch) has 600 company members who in turn employ up to 40,000 South Australians. Members are involved in a variety of projects and activities (from small to very large) including the development and maintenance of civil or “horizontal” infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sewer, water and drainage pipelines, dams, wharves, commercial and housing land development. Members are also involved in the preparatory works for mining and other resource developments.

South Australia’s prosperity is dependent upon functional, efficient and cost effective civil infrastructure. Healthy, well-functioning and productive countries depend on infrastructure that civil contractors construct and maintain. Civil contractors play a prime role in working with both public sector and private sector clients in infrastructure delivery. **This is the business of civil construction which has historically played a pivotal role in the growth and prosperity of South Australia.**

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