Frequently Asked Questions

What are the works?

- Works are underway to repair damaged piles and pile caps (footings) on the Bowen Road Bridge, over Ross River.

- The works are progressing in stages underneath the bridge and involve the construction of a wall around the section to be repaired. That section is then drained of water and excavated to assess the damage and undertake repairs.

Why are they being done?

- Since the bridge’s construction in 1952, some of the foundations of the bridge have deteriorated. While the bridge is still structurally sound, if left untreated, this would eventually impact the operation of the bridge and access to vehicles would be restricted.

- The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is committed to ensuring this vital link between Townsville and its southern and western suburbs remains strong, safe and open for use by the many commuters who travel it daily.

Timeframes

- TMR will be undertaking repair works under the bridge until May 2019.

Detours / road closures during the works

- During the works, access for vehicles less than 13 tonnes (approximately a bus or smaller) will be maintained. Larger vehicles will need to use alternative routes during the works.

- Detour signage is in place, to guide heavy vehicles toward alternative routes.

- Transport and Main Roads' Compliance Inspectors are on site to help ensure that heavy vehicles abide by the load restriction, and to ensure the safety of all road users, as well as those working under the bridge.

- There may be some delays along Bowen Road while these works are underway, especially if heavy vehicles need to be redirected away from the bridge.

- Every effort will be made to reduce the impact on motorists. However, safety remains our number one priority.

- Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. However, detours are required to guide pedestrians safely through the construction zone. These detours are appropriately signed.

- Provision has been made for Emergency Service vehicles to maintain access across the bridge during the works.
Environmental protections

- There were a number of environmental and cultural heritage considerations and permits required during the planning phase of the project.
- TMR worked closely with The Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, Department of Environment and Science, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and Townsville City Council to meet these requirements.
- Environmental management measures include:
  - Retaining tidal flow and fish passage
  - Netting and relocating fish from within the bunded area

Management and treatment of water quality

- Ross River forms part of the boundary between two Native Title claimants, the Bindal People and the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba People. Both groups have been engaged and will be monitoring excavations in areas at risk of disturbing artefacts.

Wet season impacts, potential flooding

- Works will progress in stages underneath the bridge and will involve the construction of a wall around the section to be repaired. That section will then be drained of water and excavated.

- The sheet pile walls have been designed to be high enough to keep out water during high tides. There are also pumps in place to drain any section impacted by rain water.

- The site will be carefully monitored throughout the wet season, to preserve the work site and make sure that the project doesn't increase any flooding on nearby properties. If a significant rain event is predicted, TMR has procedures in place to reduce the impact of the works on river flow.