

Cape York Region Package: Peninsula Developmental Road

Cultural Heritage Obligations

October 2015

About the project

The Australian Government committed \$208.4 million to the Cape York Region Package from 2013-14 to 2018-19, with the Queensland Government contributing \$52.1 million.

The package will upgrade infrastructure including significant works on the Peninsula Developmental Road. These works will improve accessibility to Cape York, support the growth of the local industry and secondary economies and strengthen local and Indigenous communities.

It is expected that \$200 million from the available funding will be allocated to the Peninsula Developmental Road, which is the main transport link within the Cape York Peninsula.

How does the Department of Transport and Main Roads protect Indigenous Cultural Heritage?

Transport and Main Roads takes its cultural heritage obligations seriously and works closely with Traditional Owners and Native Title applicants to deliver important roadwork projects.

The department has developed a Cultural Heritage Process Manual and an Indigenous and Historical Cultural Heritage Organisational Policy which aligns with the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003. These documents provide the department with an operational frameworks for heritage management which will be followed throughout the Cape York Region Package works.

How is the department engaging Traditional Owners in roadwork projects?

Before a road construction project begins, planning takes place to define the road alignment and to locate and secure resources, such as water and gravel, to help build the road.

As part of this process, a desktop Cultural Heritage Risk Assessment is carried out to determine the project's risk level under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003. If deemed high risk, Transport and Main Roads carries out a cultural heritage survey and engages Traditional Owners.

In early 2015, Transport and Main Roads became aware of the Native Title, Cape York United #1 claim, over Cape York and its registration with the Federal Court on 6 February 2015. As a result of this claim, Transport and Main Roads commenced working directly with the Native Title claim applicants and the relevant Traditional Owners who are party to the claim.

Transport and Main Roads has negotiated a Priority Project Agreement and Cultural Heritage Protection Agreement with the Native Title claimants and Traditional Owners. The completion of Cultural Heritage surveys and the provision of onsite monitoring are allowing works to proceed on the 2015 Early Works projects including the Mein Deviation and water storage and gravel sources required for 2016 works.

A short summary of the agreements is available at <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Projects/Name/C/Cape-York-Region-Package-Peninsula-Developmental-Road.aspx>

Further information

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