

MEDIA STATEMENT

16 June 2021

Smithfield Bypass traffic controller goes above call of duty

A traffic controller working on the Smithfield Bypass has gone above the call of duty to help a student safely navigate floodwaters.

A20 Traffic Solutions traffic controller Gus Gardiner was working on the 3.8km Smithfield Bypass during recent torrential rain when he noticed a school student attempting to navigate floodwaters alongside the project site. Recognising the imminent danger, Mr Gardiner jumped into action.

"I could see that the student was going to be in trouble if they kept going and it was a 'no brainer' to avoid a potential rescue situation," Mr Gardiner said.

Transport and Main Roads North Queensland Regional Director Sanjay Ram said Mr Gardiner's quick-thinking actions likely prevented a tragedy.

Caravonica State School Deputy Principal Joanne Ladner said the incident was an important learning for the school and students.

"We were impressed by the way Mr Gardiner handled the situation and we are grateful for his support," Ms Ladner said.

"It was an important learning for our school community, and through a consistent approach to road safety education, we are working hard to ensure it never happens again."

The school partnered with the construction contractor, Highway Construction and Albem Operations Joint Venture (HAJV), to reinforce the road safety message, with Mr Gardner addressing a recent school assembly. The Smithfield Bypass is expected to be completed late 2021, weather permitting.

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Photo caption:

Traffic controller Gus Gardiner addresses a student assembly at Caravonica State School on road safety.

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