



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

Senator supports upgrading of Tanami Track

11th September 2009

Western Australian Senator Alan Eggleston today supported the Shire of Halls Creek in its commissioning of Cummings Economics to carry out an analysis of the Tanami Track between Alice Springs and Halls Creek.

Senator Eggleston said that he has long supported the upgrading of the Tanami Track to highway status.

“There are a number of positive outcomes that would come out of the upgrading of the Tanami Track to fully surfaced major highway,” Senator Eggleston said.

“By upgrading the Tanami Track, there would be a consistent link between the Kimberley and south eastern Australia, and there are a number of economic benefits for the nation.”

Economic benefits can be found for:

- The cattle industry;
- The mining industry;
- Indigenous community access; and
- The tourism industry.

Further to that, it provides a means of getting Kununurra produce to the Ghan Railway and south eastern Australia.

Senator Eggleston also pointed out that the upgrading of the Tanami Track would have defence implications, in providing quicker land access to the North West coast and the RAAF Curtin airbase in Derby, Western Australia.

“There are currently insufficient properly sealed east/west links in Australia. At this point, the only options are the Eyre Highway in the south, and the Great Northern and Victoria Highways in the North. There is nothing in between and while the Tanami Track is already functioning as a major highway, it is really a dirt and gravel track with substantial corrugations from Alice Springs to Halls Creek,” Senator Eggleston said.

The 702 kilometres of the Tanami Track in the Northern Territory is federally funded and will benefit from a \$106 million Tanami Road Development Strategy, but the Shire of Halls Creek cannot afford the estimated \$60 million required to upgrade the remaining 311 kilometres within its Shire boundaries.

“I challenge the Federal Government to support the vision of the Shire of Halls Creek to provide access to the Kimberley and join the east and west coasts of Australia through the centre, and urge the Rudd Government to provide funding.”

Ends