



# MEDIA RELEASE

17 December 2008

## NEW KARUAH TO BULAHDELAH PACIFIC HIGHWAY STRETCH OPENS TODAY

Today traffic will switch to a new seven-kilometre section of the future southbound carriageway as part of the 23km upgrade of the Pacific Highway from Karuah to Bulahdelah.

“Weather permitting, traffic will be switched to the new section of the southbound carriageway, which starts at Grey Gum Gully just north of Nerong and finishes at the northern end of the project one kilometre south of Booral Road,” a spokesperson for the RTA said.

“Once traffic has been switched to the new southbound carriageway, the existing section of highway - with the exception of the new deviation at Burdekin’s Gap - will be rebuilt to form the northbound carriageway.

“This is the second of three traffic switches that will result in motorists travelling on new road over the full length of the project.”

The spokesperson said the first traffic switch took place on October 31, and the third traffic switch around Nerong is expected in February 2009, weather permitting.

“The full 23km project starts about two kilometres north of Myall Way and ends about 1km south of Booral Road, which is about 3km south of Bulahdelah,” the spokesperson said.

“The work, which is jointly funded by the Federal and State governments, includes building seven new twin bridges and rest areas on the northbound carriageway at Nerong Waterholes and the southbound carriageway at Browns Flat.

“The new highway will also connect a number of existing local roads such as Viney Creek Road West, Viney Creek Road East, Whimbrel Drive and Myall River Road.

“An extensive environmental assessment has also been carried out along the way, with eight fauna crossings and about nine kilometres of fauna exclusion fencing included in the proposal.”

The spokesperson said the project's other features included:

- a truck stopping area with emergency telephones and emergency turning points;
- bus bays and turn around areas on major side roads;
- provision for cyclists; and
- drainage crossings, fauna underpasses and crossings at Nerong Road, Waterholes Gap and Burdekin's Gap.

"Motorists will find driving conditions greatly improved since last year, but as the project is still a construction site, they are asked to observe all project signs and traffic control directions," the spokesperson said.

"During the upgrade the RTA and the contractors, Abigroup Contractors Pty Ltd, have strived to keep the local community and all road users up-to-date by holding community meetings, issuing updates, doing letterbox drops, liaising with property owners and providing a free community information line.

"The NSW Government thanks motorists for their patience throughout this important work."