

Submission
No 8

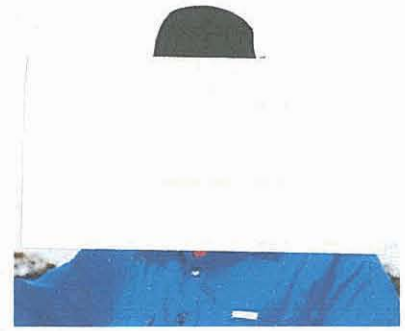
**INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN CENTRAL WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr John Elliott

Date received: 22/08/2011

Partially Confidential

From the office of
JOHN ELLIOTT
Home of Black Hat Legend's Gear



16th August 2011

The Director
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

I welcome the opportunity to submit a paper to your Inquiry into economic and social development in central western New South Wales.

In particular, I refer to the only two unsealed State Highways in New South Wales – the Cobb and Silver City Highways. The fact that these two State Highways remain unsealed is an absolute disgrace. The Cobb Highway unsealed section, which is part of The Long Paddock, stretches from Ivanhoe to Wilcannia and the Silver City Highway runs from Broken Hill to Tibooburra.

The residents of far western NSW who rely on these State Highways for business and pleasure are being treated as second class citizens. We don't want anything special, just what everyone else takes for granted.

Accompanying this letter is a submission that was prepared by The Hon Rick Collass MLC and Mr John Williams, Member for Murray Darling, last February at the invitation of now deputy Premier Mr Andrew Stoner.

I personally accompanied Mr Collass and Mr Williams on the Cobb Highway inspection and recommend you all read this important document which covers all aspects of the present situation. I want you to particularly note the business known as Gates Goats situated halfway along the Cobb Highway and the difficulties experienced when this highway is regularly closed.

Last week the highway was closed for four days in a row. Today it is closed again and expected to be closed for a couple of days as slow moving rain progresses across the western division. Could you imagine the uproar if the M 1,2,3,4 or 5 were closed for four days?

Just because we are out west we are not out of touch. Our individual businesses have to carry on, the tourists are still wanting to come and the western division wants to continue to survive and grow like the rest of NSW. The rural industries and tourism are two vital parts of this growth but not when you have State Highways forgotten about.

In the past few months, five new grids with 5 metres of seal each side have been installed so it can be done, but prior to this no major sealing work has been carried out on the Cobb highway for fourteen years.

I urge your committee to recommend that funding be secured immediately to recommence vital sealing works on the Cobb highway from Ivanhoe to Wilcannia.

It is interesting to note that many years ago the then Minister for Roads, Matt Singleton accompanied by MLC Judy Jakins were bogged on the remaining unsealed section of the Mossgiel/Ivanhoe road for some considerable time. That part of the highway was sealed immediately!

As well as the initial report, I have attached various press reports, photos and associated papers to support this submission.

I look forward to receiving feed back/and or attending a public hearing.

Yours faithfully



CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Tuesday August 09, 2011 11:21

ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
BARRIER HWY - WILCANNIA TO COBAR SH8	OPEN	
COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (B)	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	OPEN	Light Traffic Only
WILCANNIA TO WANAARING SR5	CLOSED	Open from Mandalay Road North
WILCANNIA TO WHITE CLIFFS MR435	OPEN	Caution Flood Damage
WHITE CLIFFS TO MUTAWINTJI MR428	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MANDALAY SR6	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MONOLON SR4	OPEN	
TILPA TO LOUTH SR2	OPEN	
TILPA TO TONGO SR3	OPEN	Caution Water Over Road
DRY LAKE ROAD SR7	OPEN	
SPRINGDALE TO CULTOWA SR20	OPEN	
CULTOWA TO TREVALLYN SR22	OPEN	

Council reviews road conditions twice daily at 10AM and 4PM. More frequent reviews may occur during periods of bad weather. Updates of the 24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155 and re-issues the ROAD CONDITION REPORT occur only when road conditions change.

CONTACT NOS: AFTER HOURS:
 (08) 8083 8800 SHIRE OFFICE 0429 915 992 MANAGER OF TECHNICAL AND
 ENGINEERING SERVICES
 0429 915 988 OVERSEER - WILCANNIA

WARNING: Council is wasting valuable resources repairing damage done by vehicles using closed or wet roads. Police have been asked to prosecute offenders who may be liable for a \$1000 penalty plus repair costs.

Tuesday, 9 August 2011



CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Wednesday August 10, 2011 14:31

ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
BARRIER HWY - WILCANNIA TO COBAR SH8	OPEN	
COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (R)	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	OPEN	Light Traffic Only
WILCANNIA TO WANAARING SR5	CLOSED	Open from Mandalay Road North
WILCANNIA TO WHITE CLIFFS MR435	OPEN	Caution Flood Damage
WHITE CLIFFS TO MUTAWINTJI MR428	CLOSED	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MANDALAY SR6	CLOSED	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MONOLON SR4	CLOSED	
TILPA TO LOUTH SR2	OPEN	
TILPA TO TONGO SR3	OPEN	Caution Water Over Road
DRY LAKE ROAD SR7	OPEN	
SPRINGDALE TO CULTOWA SR20	OPEN	
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CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Thursday August 11, 2011 9:29

ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
BARRIER HWY - WILCANNIA TO COBAR SH8	OPEN	
COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (B)	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	OPEN	Light Traffic Only
WILCANNIA TO WANAARING SR5	CLOSED	Open from Mandalay Rd North
WILCANNIA TO WHITE CLIFFS MR435	OPEN	Caution Flood Damage
WHITE CLIFFS TO MUTAWINTJI MR428	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MANDALAY SR6	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MONOLON SR4	OPEN	
TILPA TO LOUTH SR2	OPEN	
TILPA TO TONGO SR3	OPEN	Caution Water Over Road
DRY LAKE ROAD SR7	OPEN	
SPRINGDALE TO CULTOWA SR20	OPEN	
CULTOWA TO TREVALLYN SR22	OPEN	

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CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Thursday August 11, 2011 10:53

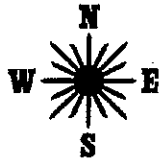
ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
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COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	OPEN	
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (B)	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	OPEN	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	OPEN	Light Traffic Only
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WHITE CLIFFS TO MONOLON SR4	OPEN	
TILPA TO LOUTH SR2	OPEN	
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SPRINGDALE TO CULTOWA SR20	OPEN	
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Thursday, 11 August 2011



CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

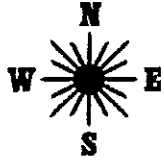
ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Wednesday August 17, 2011 8:22

ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
BARRIER HWY - WILCANNIA TO COBAR SH8	OPEN	
COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (B)	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO WANAARING SR5	CLOSED	Open From Mandalay Rd North
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 0429 915 988 **OVERSEER - WILCANNIA**

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CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL ROAD CONDITION REPORT

24 HOUR ROAD INFORMATION LINE (08) 8091 5155

ROAD CONDITIONS WITHIN CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE Thursday August 18, 2011 9:33

ROAD DESCRIPTION	STATUS	COMMENTS
BARRIER HWY - BROKEN HILL TO WILCANNIA	OPEN	
BARRIER HWY - WILCANNIA TO COBAR SH8	OPEN	
COBB HWY - WILCANNIA TO IVANHOE SH21	CLOSED	
COBB HWY - IVANHOE TO HAY SH21	OPEN	Caution Water Over Road
IVANHOE TO BALRANALD MR67	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO COBAR MR416	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO TRIDA SR18	CLOSED	
IVANHOE TO MENINDEE MR433	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO POONCARIE MR68 (C)	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO BROKEN HILL MR66	OPEN	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (EAST SIDE) SR10	CLOSED	
MENINDEE TO WILCANNIA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (R)	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (EAST SIDE) SR1	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO TILPA (WEST SIDE) MR68 (A)	CLOSED	
WILCANNIA TO WANAARING SR5	CLOSED	Open From Mandalay Road North
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WHITE CLIFFS TO MUTAWINTJI MR428	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MANDALAY SR6	OPEN	
WHITE CLIFFS TO MONOLON SR4	OPEN	
TILPA TO LOUTH SR2	OPEN	
TILPA TO TONGO SR3	OPEN	Caution Water Over Road
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[Home](#) [Hansard](#) [Legislative Assembly by date](#) 5 May 2011

Cobb Highway

About this Item

Speakers

[Williams Mr John](#)

Business

Private Members Statements, PRIV

COBB HIGHWAY

Page: 288

Mr JOHN WILLIAMS (Murray-Darling) [7.09 p.m.]: Tonight I speak about yet another road issue in western New South Wales. It relates to a section of the Cobb Highway between Ivanhoe and Wilcannia that remains unsealed. Prior to the election I travelled with Rick Colless, local grazier John Elliott and members of the Central Darling Shire on that road to assess its condition. This approximately 200 kilometres of unsealed road services the grazing industry in the area and provides a thoroughfare for those who are prepared to drive on an unsealed road from Melbourne to the township of White Cliffs.

The section of the road from Wilcannia to White Cliffs was sealed some years back and when the remaining section is sealed we will find out its true benefits to the people in western New South Wales. Obviously the use of that road for stock transport is one of the reasons people use it at the moment. Gates Goats is run by Rick Gates who is one of the leading goat exporters in Australia at the moment. He is a very hardworking young man and with his wife they have set up a magnificent business. They have incorporated the township of Ivanhoe to use as a spelling yard for some of the stock they move up and down the Cobb Highway.

As an exporter Ricks needs to set up a contract to export his goats by air transit from Adelaide airport into Asian ports. Air transit creates a lot of issues in relation booking an aircraft and getting the product to that aircraft to meet the scheduled timetables. Obviously, if the highway is put out of action at any time Rick incurs financial penalties that adversely affect his business. It was a clear indication to Rick Colless and me at the time that the sealing of that road could provide great opportunities. The sealing of the road was never expected under a Labor Government but with our Liberals-Nationals Government today, together with a commitment to support regional New South Wales, I think there is great potential for a number of roads and the Cobb Highway. It is sad that in my electorate two highways remain unsealed, including that section of the Cobb Highway which is partially sealed.

[Interruption]

I am encouraged by the Government Whip who well knows the Ivanhoe community and this section of road to which I am referring.

Mr Daryl Maguire: I support what you are saying.

Mr JOHN WILLIAMS: He supports me so this is definitely a coalition between—

Mr Greg Smith: An outpouring of goodwill.

Mr JOHN WILLIAMS: The Attorney General also sings his support. I am encouraged by those remarks and I can tell the people in western New South Wales that this type of progress is endorsed by both the Government Whip and the Attorney General. I can confidently say that we are going to see some action on this highway. It is a disgrace that in Australia today two highways remain unsealed. It would not happen in Queensland and it is not going to continue in New South Wales.

Barrier Daily Truth

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Roads to ruin

Published Wednesday, 8th December, 2010

Businesses in the Far West are facing ruin because the poor condition of the roads is keeping visitors away, according to Regional Development Australia (RDA).

RDA Far West said visitor numbers in some areas had fallen by as much as 90 per cent this year because heavy rainfall had kept hundreds of kilometres of unsealed roads closed.

It said businesses in Tibooburra, Packsaddle and Cameron's Corner have been "significantly affected" by the dropoff in tourists, and wants the sealing of the Silver City and Cobb highways completed as a matter of urgency.

Chairman Kym Fuller said the problem had become a priority for RDA Far West as the incomplete works "threaten the region's economic sustainability".

"These communities rely on tourism for sustainability and without a constant flow of visitors to the region the future of these communities is grim," Mr Fuller said.

"The substantial downturn in visitors has left businesses in these communities little choice but to consider reducing staff or closing and leaving their community."

Almost 120km of the Silver City Highway between Broken Hill and Tibooburra remains unsealed, while 135km of the Cobb Highway is still unsealed.

The issue will be raised with several government ministers at next week's Regional Development Australia (RDA) and Catchment Management Authority (CMA) networks meeting.

Mr Fuller said while alternative methods for road sealing were being investigated, the issue of the incomplete works needed addressing immediately as the entire Far West was affected.

"Tourists who could be visiting centres such as Broken Hill, Menindee or Wilcannia via Cameron's Corner are being discouraged by this unsealed road.

"We have the same issue with the Cobb Highway, which is a State highway that remains unsealed and hinders access for tourists travelling through to Victoria via Wilcannia and Ivanhoe.

"Unsealed roads and extreme weather conditions throughout the year make these communities inaccessible, and given that tourists spend long periods of time travelling, having safe, sealed and accessible roads across the Far West is vital."

Mr Fuller said any loss of employment or population could also lead to a reduction in government services such as hospitals and schools, as well as shortages in volunteers to continue social and community services.

The state of the Cobb Highway was also hindering the region's landholders and their ability to recover from a decade of drought.

"Drought, dust storms and floods have hit the region's pastoral industry hard over the last ten years," Mr Fuller said.

"Now, pastoralists are finally able to re-stock but the incomplete sealing of the Cobb Highway has made transporting goats, sheep and cattle difficult as the road conditions are unsuitable, particularly when wet."

Mr Fuller said with the State election due in March the opportunity existed to obtain a commitment from both major parties to seal the highways.

"RDA Far West NSW has spoken to pastoralists regarding the Cobb Highway, and has made representations to the Federal Minister for Farrer, Sussan Ley, and State Member for Murray-Darling, John Williams, on behalf of the Milparinka Heritage and Tourism Association affected by the downturn in visitors to the region."

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Today's Forecast



17°C Rain

Current Edition: Wednesday 17 August

THE NATIONALS

JOHN WILLIAMS, MP
MEMBER FOR MURRAY-DARLING

MEDIA RELEASE

6 May 2011

Williams Raises Cobb Highway As Another Road Issue

The unsealed section of the Cobb Highway between Ivanhoe and Wilcannia was raised to the Government as another road issue in western NSW by John Williams The National Member for Murray-Darling through his Private Members Statement on Thursday.

Mr Williams said prior to the election, he travelled that road with Upper House Member Rick Colless, local grazier John Elliott and members of the Central Darling Shire, to assess its condition.

'This approximately 200 kilometres of unsealed road services the grazing industry in the area and provides a thoroughfare for those, particularly tourists, who are prepared to drive on an unsealed road from Melbourne to Wilcannia, then onto the township of White Cliffs.

'The section of the road from Wilcannia to White Cliffs was sealed some years back and when the remaining section of the Cobb Highway is sealed, we will find out its true benefits to the people in western New South Wales,' Mr Williams said.

Mr Williams said stock transport is one of the main uses of the road and if the road cannot be used, this severely impacts on businesses.

'Gates Goats is run by Rick Gates who is one of the leading goat exporters in Australia at the moment. He is a very hardworking young man and with his wife they have set up a magnificent business. They have incorporated the township of Ivanhoe to use as a spelling yard for some of the stock they move up and down the Cobb Highway.

'As an exporter, Rick sets up contracts to export his goats by air transit from Adelaide airport to Asian ports. Obviously, if the highway is put out of action at any time, Rick incurs financial penalties that adversely affect his business,' Mr Williams said.

Mr Williams said the sealing of the road was never expected under a Labor Government but with the Liberals-Nationals Government today, together with a commitment to support regional New South Wales, there is potential for sealing of roads in the State, such as the Cobb Highway.

'It is sad that in my electorate two State highways remain unsealed, and one of them is that section of the Cobb Highway.

'It is a disgrace that in Australia today, two highways remain unsealed. It would not happen in Queensland and it is not going to continue in New South Wales,' Mr Williams concluded.

-ENDS-

Contact: John Williams 0438 808 722

John Elliott

From: "Gates Goats"
To: "John Elliott"
Sent: Thursday, 3 February 2011 10:50 AM
Subject: Letter of support - Cobb Highway

John

Our family owns and manages a rangeland goat trading business between Ivanhoe and Wilcannia on the Cobb Highway.

Our average output is 3 B-double trucks/week and to supply these numbers, 15 – 20 smaller trucks would deliver to our property per week.

The sealing of the Cobb Highway is essential for communities and businesses like ours to ensure continuity of supply. The Cobb Highway is the main access to southern markets for all towns and primary producers north of Ivanhoe to the Queensland border. This is a huge area. 10 – 15 mls of rain causes abattoir kill dates to be cancelled at short notice. Aircraft for live export animals due for delivery to Malaysia also have to be cancelled at great cost to the industry.

This cost is not only short term monetary but also our reputation as reliable suppliers of lucrative markets.

I urge the coalition to recommence the sealing of the Cobb Highway to give the Western Communities all weather access to southern markets.

Regards
Rick Gates

17/08/2011