



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

THIRD RAIL LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENT IN HINCHINBROOK IN THREE YEARS

Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, has welcomed advice from the Minister for Transport that there will be a full investigation into the rail level crossing accident at Bambaroo, south of Ingham, the third such accident in the Hinchinbrook electorate in the last three years.

Mr Cripps said the two previous rail level crossing accidents, at Rungoo north of Ingham in November 2008 and at Mundoo south of Innisfail on new years' day 2009, had resulted in fatalities that still haunted locals and the emergency services officers that responded.

"There was a major investigation after the Rungoo and Mundoo accidents. There were fast tracked upgrades at rail level crossings across North Queensland, including several in my electorate. This incident at Bambaroo may indicate that more are required" said Mr Cripps.

"The upgrades were to crossings considered by the Taskforce set up after Rungoo and Mundoo to be the most risky were welcome, but they were only the start of what is required to achieve a meaningful level of rail crossing safety across North Queensland" he said.

Mr Cripps said the Minister for Transport needed to indicate what the Taskforce report said about the perceived the level of risk at the rail level crossing in question at Bambaroo, if an upgrade was recommended and if not, whether that recommendation would be reviewed.

"If no upgrade to this crossing was recommended and we now have an accident, the question follows whether the recommendations relating to other crossings need to be reviewed. Three accidents in my electorate in three years is just too many" said Mr Cripps.

"I have raised matters in parliament contained in the Taskforce report in relation to incomplete passenger manifests. The Minister for Transport needs to indicate if lessons had been learnt from Rungoo and Mundoo, or if the government has failed to act" he said.

Mr Cripps said he was relieved that, although three people had been badly hurt in the accident at Bambaroo, there had been no fatalities on this occasion and he strongly urged all road users to be on the look out for trains when crossing railway lines at all locations.

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